

Furness U3A Committee

CONFIRMED MINUTES of the Meeting held at the Bedford Room, Ulverston Methodist Church on 13th January 2026

1 PRESENT:

Committee Members

Harry Knowles, Richard Lewis, Linda Marshall, Neil McLaughlin Cook and Gary Thompson.

By Invitation

Simon Baxter, Dawn Morris and Adrian Morris.

2 APOLOGIES:

Christine Butler and Duncan Platts.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH NOVEMBER

The Minutes (previously circulated) were formally agreed.

ACTION

Neil to send the Minutes to Simon, for uploading to the website.

4 ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES THAT ARE NOT COVERED IN THE AGENDA

4.1 Richard was still not receiving emails from The Cumberland, despite his application to become a signatory apparently having been approved. Gary is considering how this matter might be explored further with the Cumberland.

ACTION

Gary to continue to explore this matter.

4.2 [From Item 14] The Furness u3a banner: banner has now arrived and was displayed at the monthly meeting.

4.3 All other Actions had either been undertaken or were discussed under items 5-13 below.

5 REVIEW OF THE JANUARY MONTHLY MEETING

Members welcomed the installation of a new audio system at Coronation Hall and noted that the temporary audio arrangements for the monthly meeting had worked well.

The speaker was considered excellent, and attendance of 169 was one of the highest recorded.

6 REVIEW OF THE COFFEE MORNING

The event was considered very successful, with over 20 activity groups in attendance. The Committee expressed its appreciation to Duncan for his work in liaising with and motivating the groups, resulting in such a strong participation.

The coffee morning was confirmed as booked again for 2026 on 29th October.

7 REVIEW OF THE CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

The Bach choir was considered very good, with singing effectively interspersed with readings.

The food was deemed excellent, and thanks were extended to Christine and her team. The lack of gluten-free options and the broader issue of catering for special dietary requirements were noted. It was **AGREED** that these requirements should be fully addressed at the next Christmas social.

8 FURNESS u3a AGM

Neil had circulated 5 documents before the meeting: a draft of the first mailing to be sent to members; draft Minutes of the 2025 AGM; a draft Committee Nominations Form; a draft form for u3a members to use when submitting resolutions; and a draft set of resolutions to be proposed by the Committee.

The Committee **AGREED** that the first four documents could be issued without amendment, and the discussion focussed on the Committees' own resolutions, as follows.

- Resolution 1 [acceptance of the Final Accounts] would be put to the AGM unamended, with Neil as Proposer and Harry as Secunder
- Resolution 2 [acceptance of the 2025 Minutes] would be put to the AGM unamended, with Gary as Proposer and Linda as Secunder.
- Resolution 3 [appointment of Financial Examiners] would be amended to reflect the fact that the Examiners appointed in 2025 had closed their local office. It was **AGREED** that the revised resolution would be to the effect that the Committee, on behalf of Furness u3a, should review potential Financial Examiners for 2026/27, and appoint a company judged by the Committee to meet the needs of this u3a. Gary would be the Proposer and Neil the Secunder.

- Resolution 4 [membership subscriptions for Full Members] was discussed in detail. In view of the fact that the end-of-year balance is likely to be significantly higher than the current target of £8,000, it was **AGREED** to propose that the fee be reduced from £14 to £10; it was also **AGREED** to raise the target to £9,000 in the light of inflation since the target had been set several years ago. Gary would be the Proposer and Harry the Seconder.
- Resolution 5 [membership subscriptions for Associate Members] would be worded to propose maintaining the current position, whereby Associates who are Full Members of Grange and District u3a are not charged a fee, but Associates who are Full Members of any other u3a are charged 50% of the fee charged to our Full Members. Gary would be the Proposer and Harry the Seconder.
- Resolution 6 [the door charge for monthly meetings] was discussed in detail. After a lengthy discussion, it was **AGREED**, by majority vote, to propose that the door charge be held at £3.00. Gary would be the Proposer and Linda the Seconder.

ACTION

Neil to amend the 5 resolutions as indicated above, and prepare draft rationales based on the Committee's discussion and data supplied by Gary. **Neil** then to circulate the revised document to all Committee members for final comments before the mailing is issued.

9 FURNESS u3a 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Neil had contacted those members of our u3a who, according to Beacon records were the most long-standing embers; three had expressed an interest in joining a subgroup to plan events: Veronique Bonnard, Carol Green and Diane Hill. In addition, Diane Hill, who was the founding Chair, has copies of Newsletters from the 10th anniversary in 2016, which may be a useful source of ideas.

It was **AGREED** that a Committee member should take his project forward and establish a planning group. Richard would ask Duncan if he would be willing to do take on this role.

ACTION

Richard to contact Duncan.

The Committee was not sure of the date in 2026 when Furness u3a became formally accepted as a u3a by the national movement.

ACTION

Neil to ask the national office for clarification of the date on which Furness u3a had been accepted as a u3a.

10 VOLUNTEERING FOR FURNESS u3a

Documentation provided to new members has been revised by the Membership Secretary to emphasise the importance of volunteering. This message is also reinforced through a stand-up poster at the membership desk and the updated membership application form. The overall objective is to support existing volunteers while encouraging more members to become involved

A volunteering tag is now live on the website. It was **AGREED** that a short item on volunteering should appear regularly in the newsletter. The Chair's address in the next newsletter will also reference the upcoming AGM and current committee vacancies.

ACTION

Duncan and **Linda** to include a monthly item on volunteering in the newsletter.
Richard to refer to the AGM and Committee vacancies in the February newsletter.

It was **AGREED** to establish a dedicated volunteering group on Beacon.

ACTION

Simon to add a volunteering group.

National Volunteer Week will take place again in June.

ACTION

Duncan and **Linda** to explore how Furness u3a might both benefit from and contribute to this initiative.

Volunteering will remain a standing agenda item.

ACTION

Neil to ensure volunteering remains a standing agenda item.

11 REVIEWING ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

Linda highlighted the need to update role descriptions, many of which are now out of date, and emphasised the importance of having an induction pack for new committee members.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to defer this item and return to it in May or June.

ACTION

Neil to place "Reviewing Role Descriptions" on the May Agenda.

12 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Adrian and Dawn had attended the meeting as observers, with a view to deciding whether they wished to serve on the Committee. Towards the end of the meeting, they both agreed to volunteer to serve on the Committee, with Dawn intending to pick up the Welfare and Inclusion remit, and Adrian's role to be decided. The Committee **AGREED** to co-opt Adrian and Dawn until the AGM, when all Committee members would either seek re-election or stand down.

ACTION

Neil to send Dawn and Adrian the Data Protection Agreement and Trustee Declaration forms.

Adrian and **Dawn** to return the completed forms to Neil; **Neil** then to register Dawn and Adrian as Trustees.

13 REPORTS

13.1 Chair

Nothing further to report.

13.2 Treasurer

Gary had emailed a written report. All accounts were balanced and reconciled, and the net cash position was £14333.00.

13.3 Secretary

All u3as have been invited to join the national Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee for an online coffee morning, to "share experiences, raise awareness and help everyone increase their knowledge and understanding". The events will be held from 10.00-11.30 to 1130 on 3rd February and 11th May.

ACTION

Neil to draw this to Dawn's attention.

13.4 Groups Liaison

Duncan had emailed a written report, which was received without further discussion.

13.5 Membership Secretary

Linda had emailed a written report. The Committee also noted that the 5 new members had joined in person at the January Monthly Meeting.

13.6 Speaker Finder

Harry had emailed a written report, which was received without further discussion.

13.7 Welfare and Inclusion

This post had been vacant before the meeting.

13.8 Website Editor / Newsletter Editor

Simon had emailed a written report. Simon had noticed that a large proportion of group clicks had been for walking groups. The reasons for this were not clear.

ACTION

Simon to explore more fully the phenomenon of variability across groups in relation to the number of clicks.

13.9 Publicity Officer

Harry had emailed a written report. The Committee **AGREED** that Furness u3a should be represented at both EcoFair on Saturday 18th April and Retro Rendezvous on Saturday 30th May.

13.10 Hospitality Officer

Christine had sent her apologies.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

15 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at **12.00 noon** on **Tuesday 10th February**.