

Furness U3A Committee

CONFIRMED MINUTES of the Meeting held at the Bedford Room, Ulverston Methodist Church on 10th March 2026

1 PRESENT:

Committee Members

Harry Knowles, Richard Lewis, Linda Marshall, Neil McLaughlin Cook, Adrian Morris, Dawn Morris, Duncan Platts and Gary Thompson.

By Invitation

Simon Baxter.

2 APOLOGIES:

None.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH FEBRUARY

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 Simon was exploring the phenomenon of variability across groups in relation to the number of clicks on the website.

ACTION

Simon to explore this further.

4.2 The Coro were not planning to provide repeater screens for those with visual impairments. However, they were planning improvements to the quality of images on the big screen, and might be able to provide small screens on an ad hoc basis if we had a speaker's slides on a memory stick.

- 4.3 Several additional members had been added to the Volunteer Group. All tellers for the AGM had been recruited to the role via this group.
- 4.4 All other Actions had either been undertaken or were discussed under items 5-9 below.

5 REVIEW OF THE MARCH MONTHLY MEETING AND AGM

There had been issues with the sound before and during the meeting. Technical staff at the Coro are aware of this, which was due to ongoing works; the matter should be rectified before the April meeting. The Coro had suggested that, in future, speakers might be offered a choice of either a lapel microphone [ideal for speakers who like to move around the stage] or a lectern microphone [ideal for speakers who prefer to stand at a lectern with notes]. The Committee **AGREED** that this would be a good idea.

ACTION

Harry to offer future speakers a choice of microphones.

A u3a member had suggested that tea and coffee should no longer be served at monthly meetings. However, the Committee **AGREED** that refreshments were an essential part of the meetings, and so should continue to be offered.

The AGM was the first to be held according to the new Standing Orders, and the Committee **AGREED** that it had gone well. The attendance [143 members] was lower than in recent months, but this was to be expected for an AGM, and was well above the threshold for quoracy. The Committee noted that there had been no questions on the accounts, and congratulated Gary on presenting the accounts so clearly. A u3a member had submitted an amendment to the Committee's resolution on door charges; the meeting voted overwhelmingly against the amendment, and therefore in favour of the Committee's resolution to hold the door charges at £3.00. The Committee were pleased to see the democratic process operating effectively in our u3a, and were grateful to the team of tellers for efficiently counting the votes.

A u3a member had suggested that, in addition to the list of assets presented to the AGM, our u3a owned a projection screen. It was suggested that Peter Quiggin might have this equipment.

ACTION

Neil to explore whether Peter Quiggin is storing a u3a projection screen.

Following the formal meeting, members enjoyed a talk on "the Scottish Colourists" by Dudley Clark, a member of our u3a.

6 ROLES IN, AND OPERATION OF, THE 2026/26 COMMITTEE

The Committee **AGREED** that Adrian would staff the New Members Help Desk at Monthly Meetings and that, in order to gain more awareness of the activities our u3a has to offer new members, he would also shadow Duncan in his Groups Liaison role.

ACTION

Adrian to shadow Duncan and serve on the New Members Help Desk.

The Committee also noted that Dawn would attend a meeting of Group Leaders, to discuss matters relating to Inclusion.

ACTION

Dawn and Duncan to set up the meeting with Group Leaders.

With Chris Butler having stood down at the AGM, no member of the Committee had a specific remit for Hospitality. It was understood that members of the Volunteer Group would be prepared to help as necessary, and that Chris was prepared to continue having a hospitality role for Monthly Meetings and the Christmas Social. However, the Committee was not sure exactly what Chris would be willing to do.

ACTION

Neil to approach Chris to explore further what roles she might undertake for Monthly Meetings and the Christmas Social.

Otherwise, Committee members would continue in the roles they had undertaken in 2025/26, and the Committee **AGREED** to continue to meet at 1200 noon on the second Tuesday of the month.

7 FURNESS u3a 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Duncan had circulated an update, including Minutes of the Steering Committee's meeting on 25th February. This was discussed in detail.

The Steering Committee had proposed holding the event on Tuesday 8th September, but after their meeting had wished to change the date. The u3a Committee **AGREED** that the event should be held on a Tuesday morning in September. However, the morning of Tuesday 8th would not be possible because the Monthly Meeting was already booked for that time. It was understood that lunch would be included in the programme.

ACTION

Neil to find the availability of the Coro for Tuesdays in September.

The u3a Committee also **AGREED** that Adrian would join the Steering Committee and that the event could be subsidised up to £500.

The Steering Committee would meet again on 1st April.

ACTION

Duncan to convene the next meeting of the Steering Committee, and prepare detailed proposals for consideration at the April u3a Committee meeting.

8 VOLUNTEERING FOR FURNESS u3a

The Volunteer Group seems to be working well and, as noted in 4.3 above, had supplied the tellers for the AGM.

9 REPORTS

9.1 Chair

Nothing further to report.

9.2 Treasurer

Gary had emailed a written report. All accounts were balanced and reconciled, and the net cash position was £15746.00.

Richard was still not receiving requests from The Cumberland to authorise payments.

ACTION

Gary and Richard to liaise with The Cumberland to resolve this matter.

9.3 Secretary

In common with other Officers, Neil had received an email from David Blanchflower from the North West Region, noting that none of the 8 u3as in the Bay Network had either attended an online forum on 9th March or sent apologies. The Committee noted that neither Neil nor any other Officer had in fact received a notification of the forum, and it had been understood by our u3a that the Bay Network had in fact ceased to operate several years ago.

ACTION

Harry to reply to David Blanchflower, explaining that we had not received an invitation to the Forum, and noting that we were not interested in participating in the Bay Network.

9.4 Groups Liaison

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

9.5 Membership Secretary

Linda had emailed a written report. The Committee welcomed the development of an enhanced membership card in PDF format, and thanked Linda for developing it.

9.6 Speaker Finder

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

9.7 Welfare and Inclusion

Dawn had emailed a written report, and will have a regular slot in the Newsletter.

9.8 Website Editor / Newsletter Editor

The Newsletter and Website were going well. The membership page had been renewed to handle membership renewals; further work will be undertaken over the summer to rationalise this page.

9.9 Publicity Officer

Harry had emailed a written report. Linda still has a banner.

ACTION

Harry to collect the banner.

9.10 Hospitality Officer

No Committee member currently has a Hospitality remit, so this item will be removed from future Agendas.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 14th April**. Time to be notified.