

Furness U3A Committee

CONFIRMED MINUTES of the Meeting held at the Bedford Room, Ulverston Methodist Church on 14th July 2026

1 PRESENT:

Committee Members

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

2 APOLOGIES:

Committee Members

Adrian Morris, Dawn Morris.

By Invitation

Simon Baxter.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH JUNE

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 The Cumberland had enabled Richard to receive authorisation requests.

4.2 The Committee understood that Dawn had not yet been able to issue guidance to members about emergency contact information.

ACTION

Dawn to provide guidance on this matter in an article in the Newsletter.

- 4.3 The Committee understood that Simon had not yet been able to explore how to provide a link from the website to a list of venues for group activities, together with features such as access and capacity.

ACTION

Simon to explore the provision of providing venue information via a link from the website.

5 REVIEW OF THE JULY MONTHLY MEETING

The meeting was well attended, with 133 members present. Seven new members joined at the meeting.

The talk, on George Romney, was well received. The Committee agreed that the speaker was very knowledgeable and a good communicator.

6 FURNESS u3a 20TH ANNIVERSARY [29TH SEPTEMBER]

Duncan had submitted a detailed report on behalf of the Steering Committee.

Due to double booking, twice as many lanyards have been ordered as needed. The surplus lanyards would be available to u3a members as souvenirs at monthly meetings. The Committee **AGREED** that the member who placed the additional order should not be asked to pay.

Tickets had been issued to leaders of all participant groups at the July monthly meeting, and the Committee were issued with their tickets during the Committee meeting. Duncan would be available in the Coro on Tuesday mornings throughout the summer to issue further tickets. Neil indicated that the Coro had offered to make tickets available via the Box Office, so that members could collect tickets whenever the office was open. This offer was welcomed, but only 50 tickets are still to be issued, so the additional facility might not be necessary.

ACTION

Duncan to confirm summer ticket issuing arrangements with the Steering Committee.

Numerous u3a groups had agreed to provide entertainment. The Committee **AGREED** that it would be up to the Steering Committee whether also to ask non-u3a groups to provide entertainment, and noted that a u3a member had suggested that Furness Morris Dancers might be a suitable group.

ACTION

Duncan to finalise entertainment arrangements with the Steering Committee.

David Blanchflower, North West Region u3a Council Representative, had indicated at the recent AGM that he had attended anniversary events; he might be interested in attending our event.

ACTION

Neil to send Duncan David Blanchflower's email address.

Duncan to discuss with the Steering Committee whether to invite David Blanchflower.

A formal Risk Assessment will be needed for the event, but this will be done in liaison with the Coro.

ACTION

Duncan to liaise with Amy Whelan at the Coro to undertake a Risk Assessment.

The Committee **AGREED** a budget of £600 plus the fee for hiring the Coro.

ACTION

Duncan to advise the Steering Committee that expenditure claims should be made as soon as possible using the claim form on the website.

It was expected that u3a members would need to volunteer for several tasks in order to make the event a success.

ACTION

Duncan to ask the Steering Committee to consider what volunteering roles would be needed, and which roles might be undertaken by Steering Committee members, u3a Committee members and the Volunteering Group.

The Coro had advised that a corkage fee would be charged for wine. The Committee understood that no such fee had been charged in the past and advised the Steering Committee to liaise with Dawn Elsworth about the provision of wine.

ACTION

Duncan to liaise with Dawn Elsworth.

7 SILVER SATURDAY [17TH OCTOBER] AND u3a COFFEE MORNING [29TH OCTOBER]

These dates have now been agreed with the Coro.

The Committee **AGREED** that groups should be notified of these events, and invited to volunteer, as soon as possible.

ACTION

Neil to contact u3a groups about both events.

8 CHRISTMAS SOCIAL [8TH DECEMBER]

Linda's Volunteering Report gave a detailed account of developments relating to this event, and issues that needed to be resolved.

Sheila Bull and Marguerite Calvert have agreed to organise food; Dawn Elsworth has volunteered to buy and serve wine; and Chris Butler has agreed to act as adviser. The four members would meet on 14th July. The Committee welcomed this development, and expressed gratitude to the four members. The Committee **AGREED** to use the same catering suppliers, and to set the same budget, as in 2025.

The Committee **AGREED** the same timing as in 2025:

- 1200: Committee and other volunteers to set up the Hall.
- 1300: Doors open.
- 1330: Buffet meal.
- 1430: Entertainment.
- 1530: Quiz.
- 1630: Committee and other volunteers to clear up.

Entertainment would be provided by the Furness Music Centre choir, several members of which are u3a members. The committee **AGREED**:

- choir members would be invited to join u3a members for the buffet;
- choir members would not be asked to buy tickets;
- up to about 15 choir members would be fine [but this was not a rigid maximum];
- a break in the middle of the performance would be fine;
- the programme should include a mixture of Christmas songs and other pieces.

ACTION

Linda to liaise with the choir to discuss arrangements in detail.

It was confirmed that Tim Melville had again agreed to serve as quiz master.

The Committee **AGREED** that: the ticket prices should be held at the 2025 level; Gary would produce tickets; the tickets would be sold by members of the Volunteering Group at the October and November Monthly Meetings.

ACTION

Linda to liaise with the Volunteering Group.

Gary to produce tickets.

9 REVIEWING ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

Neil had amended the descriptions based on comments received, and the Committee **APPROVED** the revised version.

ACTION

Neil to prepare the final version for publication, then

Simon to upload the document to the website.

10 ORAL REPORT FROM THE NORTH WEST REGION AGM

This was attended online by Neil on 23rd June. For the first time, the event was fully online and did not include an annual conference. The new format had been intended to increase participation, but attendance did not appear to be higher than in previous years; Neil judged that the older format, giving members from different u3as a chance to meet and discuss common issues, was preferable.

ACTION

Neil to send feedback to the region.

The event took no more than 30 minutes; and nothing controversial was discussed. However, it was interesting to note that, although the Region are keen to resurrect local networks, there seemed to be an acceptance that the Bay Network would not be reinstated.

11 ORAL REPORT FROM THE u3a FESTIVAL

This was attended by Linda and Simon on 1st-3rd July.

The event takes place every 2 years. The 2026 event, held in York, was attended by 1000 people, so gave a good opportunity to meet fellow u3a members.

A wide variety of workshops were offered, run by and for u3a members; Linda and Simon attended workshops on music and writing. Overall, the festival was enjoyable, but some workshops could have been better organised.

12 VOLUNTEERING FOR FURNESS u3a

Linda had emailed a written report. This mainly covered the Christmas Social [cf item 8 above]. The rota for catering at Monthly Meetings was now complete for September, October and November.

With effect from September 2025, “volunteering” will be considered in the Reports section of the Committee Agenda.

ACTION

Neil to amend the Agenda template.

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 £15808.00.

14.3 Secretary

The Third Age Trust on 14th October will consider the following resolution from Haxby and Wigginton u3a:

- *This AGM calls on the Third Age Trust Board to conduct, within six months, a formal consultation with u3as on Trust involvement in advocacy, campaigning and public policy outside the promotion of lifelong learning, education and support for member u3as.*
- *The Board shall publish the responses together with a reasoned statement of its conclusions and proposed actions by 1 May 2027, and report to the 2027 AGM on how those conclusions have been acted upon*

The Committee **AGREED** not to submit an amendment to this resolution. However, some Committee members expressed concern about the resolution, so the matter will need to be considered carefully before deciding how to vote.

ACTION

Neil to add "Third Age Trust AGM" to the September Agenda.

The Third Age Trust have published a new "Mission and Values" document. The Committee **AGREED** this is a useful document that should be shared with u3a members.

ACTION

Neil to write an article for the Newsletter, drawing the document to the attention of all members of Furness u3a.

Adrian to ensure that all new members receive a copy.

13.4 Groups Liaison

Duncan had emailed a written report. It was noted that the trolley containing coffee and tea bags was available for Group Leaders meetings as well as Monthly Meetings.

13.5 Membership Secretary

Linda and Adrian had both emailed written reports. A formal handover from Linda to Adrian will take place in July. The Committee expressed its thanks to Linda for all she has done and achieved as Membership Secretary.

13.6 Speaker Finder

Harry had emailed a written report. The two potential speakers referred to in the report [one on Arthur Ransome and the other on Backbarrow Ironworks] have both indicated they are willing to speak; dates are to be confirmed.

13.7 Publicity Officer

Harry had emailed a written report. The Committee **AGREED** to have a stall at the Ulverston Family Fun Day in September.

13.8 Welfare and Inclusion

Dawn had emailed a written report. The report referred to EDI Zoom Training that Dawn had undertaken, which had raised a number of issues that warranted discussion by the Committee; it was **AGREED** to defer the discussion until the September meeting.

ACTION

Neil to add "u3a EDI Training" to the September Agenda.

13.9 Website Editor / Newsletter Editor

Simon had sent apologies to the meeting.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

15 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at **1200 noon** on **Tuesday 8th September**.