

Aughton & Ormskirk u3a

Management Committee Meeting

Tuesday 26 May 2026 at 9.30am

Present: Pam Ball (Chair), Sheila Kierans, Kathy Rutherford, Derrick Fewings, Mike Rimmer, Liz Dixon, Paul Andrews, Alison Higham, Ann Roberts, David Blanchflower, Mia Faza, Caroline Donaldson (guest), Jane Ellison (guest).

1. Chair's Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Caroline Donaldson and Jane Ellison. It was agreed that they are co-opted onto the Management Committee, pending formal election at the AGM.

2. Apologies

Deirdre Slater.

3. Minutes of Previous meeting (24.02.26)

Accepted as a true record.

4. Matters arising

Bridge – PA to find out how the Bridge Group are coping with parking. PA has spoken to them and they are coping with it as best they can. **Action: PA Closed**

Holidays - The New Year holiday was advertised in February's enews. The wording was clear that it was not a u3a group but future inclusions should be under the heading of ACTIVITIES OFFERED BY OTHER PARTIES. MR has informed Bob Carlton. **Action: MR Closed**

Group Leaders' Guidance

Group Support should have a process in place to inform new group leaders of the Group Leaders' Guidance (LD has offered to help Jane E set up a standard email with a link in it). **Action: PA Carried Forward.** This is now happening some of the time. LD to assist JE with a standard process (including a standard email) to ensure it happens every time. **Action: LD/JE**

The List of Group Leaders has been withdrawn from the Welcome Desk while Group Leaders are contacted about their contact details being published. JE to give them a deadline of the end of June to respond. **Action: JE** JE to add 'obtaining permission' to the standard process for new Group Leaders (can be picked up with LD as part of the action above). **Action: JE**

Group Support to have Group Leaders' Guidance as a standard agenda item (an opportunity to discuss any changes and feed them to LD etc). KR now has this as a standard agenda item. **Action: PA Closed.**

TV Licence – AR to check whether HQ has a TV licence. AR has checked (licence not needed) **Action: AR Closed.** DF suggested the Scouts publish a paragraph to inform users/hirers of the rules regarding watching TV on their own devices. DF to provide AR with the wording that has been used for AVH. **Action: DF**

Gift Aid - LD check whether Beacon allows us to drop gift aid options. Yes it does. **Action: LD Closed**

Policies – Health & Safety, Privacy, and Data Protection are due for review. DS to review and recommend any changes ahead of formal approval at the next meeting. Done (see agenda item 9 below). **Action: DS Closed**

AGM - SK will make final amendments to the proxy forms (paper and online) and LD will help with final checks and getting a link in the email. Done. **Action: SK/LD Closed**

5. Correspondence

None

6. Treasurer's Report

This report relates to the 2025-2026 financial year which ran from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

Production of these accounts requires a set of ledgers, recording details of all financial transactions. I would like to thank John Tomlinson and Deirdre Slater for the time, effort and expertise put into creating those ledgers.

The Accounts

Our accountants, Accountants247 Ltd, have completed their inspection of the submitted Report and Accounts and raised no concerns. A copy of the Report and Accounts is available on our website, as is a copy of this Treasurer's Report. Today, you have a copy of the key sheets of financial information.

At the 2025 AGM, a commitment was given to reduce our bank balance. The first step was to extend the 2024-2025 membership year to run to 31st September 2026, without charging a membership renewal fee. Reflecting this commitment, our account balance fell from £99,949 to £92,840 over this 2025-2026 financial year.

Activities

The accounts show activity-related receipts of £114,909 and payments of £112,721. Key figures are:

- £46,633 received from members attending premises-based activities, versus £44,937 paid for hire of rooms.
- £38,313 received as contributions to cover the cost of tutors, versus £39,846 paid to tutors. The difference is caused by timing issues such as money received in one financial year and the tutor being paid in a different financial year.
- Trips, events organised by our Social Committee and shows offered by our Drama and Musical Theatre groups account for the bulk of the remaining receipts.

Administration

I use the term 'administration' to cover items such as our payments to the Third Age Trust, our magazine, equipment, website, and the usual office costs such as stationery, postage and photocopying. These costs are all paid for from members' annual subscriptions and the associated Gift Aid got from HMRC. In total, £7,983 was received and £17,282 was spent. The deficit of £9,299 is largely attributable to the absence of membership renewal subscriptions.

In line with the resolution at the 2025 AGM, we will continue to take steps to reduce our bank account balance.

I think it inappropriate to extend the 2025-2026 membership year, to run until 31st September 2027 without a membership renewal fee. The proposal at this AGM is that the established £10 membership renewal fee be charged for this coming membership year (1st October 2026 - 31st September 2027), and that an extension of the membership year, at no charge, be considered again in the future.

Gift Aid

A claim for Gift Aid on a donation has to be modified to take account of the personal benefit the donor receives. For two years, our national office (the Third Age Trust) has been discussing the definition of personal benefit with HMRC. The outcome of those discussions adds complexity relating to education gained from structured sessions run by paid tutors. Given the extra time and effort which will have to be invested in the process, our Management Committee will be reviewing the case for continuing to submit claims to HMRC for Gift Aid on some element of membership subscriptions.

Summary

We are in a healthy position financially to weather the challenges which businesses and charities currently face, while continuing to offer a wide-ranging set of activities to members. The money we spend on hiring rooms is a key factor in keeping local halls viable and ensuring their facilities remain available for the wider community.

Gift Aid decision – With reference to the Gift Aid section above, a discussion at this Management Committee meeting concluded that we should not continue to claim Gift Aid and we would stop requesting Gift Aid mandates from members.

7. Finance Committee Report

There were no requests for expenditure in the last period.

8. Membership Report

The current number of members is 1,716, up 42 in the last three months. The numbers are artificially high due to extending the membership period for existing members at the last renewal time but the number of new members is consistent with maintaining around 1,500 members a year in a normal year. About two thirds of new members joined online. The number of free members remains fairly static at 42 (43 in February 2026).

We have deleted records for those who haven't renewed for 7 years and destroyed all the paperwork that it is no longer necessary to keep.

9. Policy Reviews and Implementation

The following changes were recommended by DS/LD and approved at the meeting:

Health & Safety Policy

No changes required.

Data Protection Policy

Third Age Trust has recently recommended that we have a 'Legitimate Interest Assessment' to show why we rely on 'legitimate interest' as the legal basis for us processing members' personal data. This will be added as an appendix.

Privacy Policy

Both in this policy and Data Protection we refer to a 'Social Media' policy that was being drafted when these policies were signed-off last year. Its scope was broadened and it became the Communications Policy so the references need to be changed to Communications Policy.

LD to make necessary changes to the documentation and the website. **Action: LD**

In addition to this, DB is aware of some changes to data protection law that may need to be incorporated. DB to send information to DS. **Action: DB**

The Following policies are due for review during the next three months:

- Communications
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Safeguarding

Action LD to review and recommend any changes to Communications Policy ahead of formal approval at the next meeting. **Action: LD**

Action AH to review and recommend any changes to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Safeguarding Policies ahead of formal approval at the next meeting. **Action: AH**

10. Communications Report

LD has taken over as chair of Commscomm. She has spent time with all of the members on an individual basis to check they are happy to remain on the team and to get any ideas they have. The first meeting is scheduled for Thursday (28/5) to discuss those ideas and get a timetable sorted for the next magazine etc.

The Chair thanked MR for his work as the previous chair.

11. Social Committee Report

The next few events are:

Barn Dance 26th June at AVH – This may need to be cancelled because not many tickets have been sold. A decision will be made by the Social Committee chair in a week.

Gingerbread Festival 12 July – A stand position in Burscough Street has been allocated but it may not be taken up due to its location; instead, our volunteers may walk around Ormskirk and talk to people.

Quiz Night 9th October at HQ – This will have a Lancashire theme this year and teams will not be restricted to groups.

Christmas Lunch 4th December at AVH.

MR will take over the role of chair of this committee from now on.

12. Group Support Report

There has been some concern that Scarisbrick village hall may not be available for our groups that meet there. However, that issue seems to have disappeared for now.

There is the opportunity to offer a six-week beginners' course in British Sign Language (BSL) later this year. The cost of the tutor would be £30 per person, limited to 12 people. PA is following this up.

JE will take over as the Group Support representative in future meetings. The Chair thanked PA for his work in this role.

13. Arrangement for Future AGMs

This year's AGM will be on Thursday 11th June at 11am at the Ministry Centre.

Notifications (including options for proxy voting) have been sent out and so far 17 proxy vote forms have been completed.

There is a Keep Fit class at the venue until 10.30. PB will ask in advance if they can be quick to vacate that day so we can set up for the AGM. **Action: PB**

The chair thanked those who've worked on the proxy voting process.

14. AOB

Accident in Carpark – A local resident has video evidence of his car being damaged by another car at HQ. It was decided that this is not something we should pursue as it is a matter for him to take up with his insurance company and/or the police if he wishes to.

Art & Craft Showcase – Plans are progressing well. In addition to the creative groups who will be displaying their designs, five music groups have agreed to provide background music. It will take place on 24th October at AVH and will be open to the public.

Carparking – A second meeting took place in March between the church, Ministry Centre, Scouts and u3a. Following on from the previous agreement for u3a not to park in the Ministry Centre carpark on Tuesday and Friday mornings and all day Wednesday, it's now been agreed that the Drama Group can use it on Wednesday afternoons. Additionally, it was agreed that church members would be encouraged not to use The Sands on Thursdays. Nearer the time, PB will speak to Ann Henders regarding the choir practice date at Christmas since this was a particular problem last year.

Potholes – It was confirmed that the Scouts are responsible for the potholes on The Sands. They do fill them but unfortunately it doesn't last.

New Fire Doors at HQ – The Scouts have received a quote of £5,300 for the two doors. It was agreed that we would contribute 50% of the cost.

Departing Management Committee Member - Paul Andrews is leaving the Committee as his tenure is up. The chair thanked him for his years of dedicated service.

15. Date of next meeting 25 August 2026 at 9.30am HQ

SIGNED _____

PRINT NAME _____

DATE _____