

Minutes of the committee meeting on 10 July 2026 10:00am, Golf Road Centre

<u>Agenda</u>	<u>Actions</u>
1. <u>Welcome and apologies</u> Present: Carol Fowler (Chair), Denise McCoy, John McCoy and Jan Poynter. Apologies: Sara Miller and Ponda Thomas. In Attendance: Philip Whiteman and Gus Ege. Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Philip and Gus, who were in attendance to observe with a view to joining or supporting the committee.	
2. <u>Minutes of the previous meeting</u> a. The minutes were accepted as a true record with the addition of the groups go live date.	
3. <u>Matters arising</u> a. The actions log was discussed and updated.	
4. <u>Committee</u> a. Carol had invited Philip and Gus to the committee to observe and inform their decision regarding taking on the roles of Membership Secretary and Groups Coordinator respectively. Carol had also discussed with Philip becoming a bank signatory should he agree to become a Trustee. Contingency measures are under discussion to mitigate risk in the event of a delay from the bank in updating signatories. Discussions are also taking place concerning continuity in the roles of Membership Secretary and Groups Coordinator as Ponda and Jan will not be standing for re-election at the AGM. b. It was agreed that the following standard wording will be used (adapted as appropriate) for responses to requests for talks and other events which do not fit with the role of the u3a: <i>"The committee decided not to **** due to the risk of involving our charity in matters which could be perceived to be political and contrary to our (Charities Commission approved) constitution."</i>	
5. <u>Finance</u> a. Carol signed off the June accounts and confirmed that Beacon matches the bank statement. b. John reported changes in PayPal transaction fees mean that a payment of £10 can result in a charge of up to 42p. It was noted that this highlights the importance of encouraging members to pay by BACS when possible, unless paying for membership (when PayPal is preferred as this automates many of the membership renewal processes). c. John explained that the most recent financial forecast that he had shared with the committee appears to show a £2.3k overspend, however, this will be offset by the commission from Riviera Travel. Therefore the underlying forecast overspend is actually around £1.4k, which is not a concern. The committee noted that, as previously agreed, it is likely that the membership fee will need to be increased by a small amount next year.	

d. John reported that WCCu3a is now in a position to claim Gift Aid (GA) for the previous two years for a combined total of £635. Since approximately 170 members have not registered with WCCu3a for GA, using HMRC guidance, he has drafted an email with a link to an online WCCu3a GA form. John will circulate the draft email within the committee for feedback and to test the form. He will aim to send the agreed version of the email and form to members in mid-August, after the 30th anniversary celebrations. The committee thanked John for all his hard work on GA.	d. JM
6. <u>Membership</u> a. There are currently 459 members, up from 450 last month. b. At the New Members' Meeting on 19 June, responses to the question "How did you hear about us?" were as follows: word of mouth:10, online:2, social media:2, email marketing:1, web search:1 and was member of another u3a:1.	
7. <u>Talks</u> a. The coffee morning at the Astor on 17 June was attended by 20 members and the talk at the Astor on "The Secret Life of a Farm Reservoir" on 1 July was attended by 65 members and one guest. b. Carol has booked a stall at the Braderie on 13 September. Jan will support Carol with planning. Group Leaders and the "Meet and Greet" team will be asked to help with the rota to staff the stall. Carol has booked access to the High Street, which is available from 6:30am on the day in case this is needed. c. A member had asked Ponda about options for the u3a to support the publication of poetry from one of WCCu3a's groups, and opportunities to read poems at talks and events. This is being followed up in various ways by the committee. Denise will ask them to submit a seasonal poem for each WCCu3a newsletter. Ponda/Sara will be asked for an update at the next meeting. d. Sara has completed the risk assessments for Elizabeth House and GRC. She has contacted a number of people regarding entertainment at the AGM as well as arranging talks in the Dover area. e. A member has approached Carol to offer talks on the Tower of London and possibly a talk on a "DNA Journey". Carol and Sara will pursue this with them.	c. DM c. PT/ SM e. CF/ SM
8. <u>Groups update</u> a. Jan reported that some lapsed members have now renewed their membership in order to continue to attend groups. b. It is expected that there will be around 40 groups from September. c. Jan reported that it has been a very busy time. She is encouraging members to prepare to enrol on groups themselves making use of the IT support and help offered (see 8f and 8g below). Information about groups on Beacon and the Website is in the process of being updated ready for the "go live" date. d. Carol proposed that a sub-committee is formed to make recommendations to the committee about how registration should be managed. It was noted that there are broadly two categories of group: "interest groups" that meet at a venue (hall, home, pub, etc) and "activity groups" that visit places like gardens or go on walks or cycle rides. The sub-committee will consider whether membership of "activity groups" should roll over from the previous year. It was agreed that Jan would lead the group with Gus, Bill, Mary and two Group Leaders to be invited as members. The sub-committee would be asked to report back at the August committee meeting, with an update and/or making recommendations. e. It was agreed that it would be beneficial if Group Leaders had sufficient Beacon access to enable them to have the autonomy to manage their groups themselves. The committee agreed that enhanced Beacon access should be tested with one or two Group Leaders. f. Bill and Mary will hold an IT drop-in at the Landmark on 10 August 10:00 -12:00. Bill has also agreed to be available on 17 August from 10am for contact by email only. Jan will discuss the details with Bill and Mary before circulating to members. g. John has developed guidance documents for using our administration system, Beacon, including logging on and joining groups. These will be circulated for comments by the	e. JP/ BV* f. JP/ BV*/ MV* g. JM

committee, with the provision of less IT style wording, ensuring all members could find these workable. It is the committee intention to publish the documents on the website. h. Jan has sent information about joining groups in Beacon to local library "IT buddies" to provide another avenue of support for members struggling with IT.	
9. <u>Secretary</u> a. Carol reported the trial livestream of a talk using Zoom was successful and it was agreed that Zoom should be used to offer this facility for the AGM. Bill has a camera that will capture the committee and the microphone on Bill's laptop will be used. Carol will have a microphone and there will be a roving microphone. Carol will warn members in the communication about the livestream for the AGM that their conversations could be overheard if they sit near the laptop with the microphone. The committee thanked Bill and Mary for all their support. b. The AGM members' pack was agreed with two amendments: - To include the roles of Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Groups Coordinator, Talks Coordinator and Membership Secretary in the nomination form. These roles are a priority and critical to the operation of WCCu3a and its committee. - To amend the Chair's report to reflect the recent updates to the committee members from this meeting. c. Denise will contact Jill Jones, the Returning Officer, regarding the process at the AGM and discuss with Carol. d. Denise will book meeting rooms at GRC for committee meetings for 2027. e. Denise requested articles for the newsletter by the end of July, except for the Chair's update, which will be drafted after the 30th anniversary celebration. f. The storage of risk assessments (RA) was discussed. Denise will scan them and store them electronically and hard copies will be kept with the archives. Carol will trial using a generic trips RA for the next WCCu3a trip. g. The storage of equipment and documents was discussed. Denise will rationalise the paperwork from the archives and that received by the committee as part of the history project. John will review the financial records that he holds. Carol will liaise with Bill and Konrad about equipment stored in the cupboard in GRC to identify which items belong to WCCu3a. Once the size of storage needed is known, a secure cupboard or similar will be sourced to keep documents and equipment.	b. CF c. DM d. DM e. CF/ JP/ SM f. CF g. DM g. JM g. CF
10. <u>IT/website</u> a. Carol has met with Bill and Mary and reported that they are happy to continue IT support for WCCu3a. They are both members of the national Beacon team. Bill has changed his preferred email address for IT queries so John will liaise with him to ensure any website contact form(s) is/are up to date. Carol proposed that in the future the committee should investigate appointing a webmaster for the WCCu3a website.	a. JM
11. <u>Network and TAT updates</u> a. Carol had received notification that Kent Network's AGM had not been quorate. An online AGM/EGM is being held on 16 September and Carol will join. The committee were asked to provide feedback to the network on the help and support that it provides. b. The committee agreed that the resolution for the TAT AGM regarding a consultation on Trust involvement in advocacy, campaigning and public policy outside the promotion of lifelong learning, education and support of member u3as does not need amending.	a. All
12. <u>Trips</u> a. Members are arranging transport for the 30th anniversary event themselves, as parking is limited. Carol has asked Chris Bell for one member of the "Meet and Greet" team to be stationed inside the building and another outside. Carol has provided a briefing document for the Lord Warden. All arrangements are proceeding well, including a flyer on the history of the WCCu3a for each table and a table of memorabilia. Carol will email members closer to the time with the final details including a "smart casual" dress code. Denise will request a 30th anniversary certificate from TAT and is following up on publicity with local papers and	a. CF a. DM

magazines. Carol has given permission for the Lord Warden and Confederation of Cinque Ports to publish an article about the event. b. The feedback from the “Hever in Bloom” trip was excellent. c. Carol has produced a flyer for the next WCCu3a trip and will send out a “save the date” in advance as usual. d. GLs’ thank you event – carried over to the next meeting. e. New day trip early for early 2027 – carried over to the next meeting.	
13. <u>AOB</u> a. Philip agreed to be co-opted onto the committee as Membership Secretary. Consequently, the meeting agreed for Philip to be added as an authorised user of PayPal and should be added to the Bank Mandate (and Bankline) with the same privileges as Ponda Thomas currently has. b. Gus agreed to be co-opted onto the committee as Groups Coordinator. c. Denise will arrange for Philip and Gus to sign the Trustee Declaration form and WCCu3a Trustee Code of Conduct and, when completed, will inform Kent Network and the Charity Commission of their appointments.	c. DM
14. <u>Next meeting</u> Next meeting Friday 14 August at from 10:00 to 12:30 in Golf Road Centre, Training Room.	

*BV – Bill Venables

*MV – Mary Venables