

Minutes of the committee meeting held on 10th November 2025

Present

Graham Smith - Chairman
Gay Buckingham - Membership secretary
Meg Wilson - Publicity Co-ordinator
Eileen Monds - Secretary
Peter Stratford - Web Admin
Diana Wilson – Speakers Secretary
Tom Gardner – Beacon Admin

Apologies had been received from Debbie Milton -Treasurer,
Adrienne Evans -Venues Secretary and Michelle Smith- Groups co-ordinator

1) Minutes of the meeting on held on 13th October

The corrected minutes were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising

Remembrance Service

A small number of Ashu3a members had attended. It was agreed to encourage more participation next year. Graham suggested we consider making a wreath next year possibly asking the craft group/painting group to help. **Action Graham**

Most matter arising are contained in the agenda.

2) Document Control

Graham reported that all the documents on the Website need checking and re-signing. He suggested we have our own policies and not use the National office ones. Meg explained that we had adapted the National Office ones to be relevant to Ashu3a. **Action Graham**

3) Publicity

Meg has purchased 100 threefold advertising leaflets from National Office costing £36. She would welcome ideas of distribution usage. She also has 250 large postcards, costing £50 and distributed them to committee members to give to friends/ colleagues and anyone interested.

She has not yet contacted the Ash Centre regarding the notice Board. **Action Meg**

Meg now has an active Facebook Group which is “private”. Tom explained that a Facebook page is different to a group and would be “public” or “open” Meg will make more investigations. He also suggested advertising on Facebook which involves a fee. **Action Meg**

4) Membership

Gay reported that there are 375 subscribed members on Beacon. There are 28 on a non-renewals list. There were 43 new members this year of which 33 joined online. The membership form is now available on the Website.

6) Website Admin

There had been a small problem with the Website as Graham had made a few changes and caused a little confusion. This has been rectified.

7) Venues

Adrienne had confirmed that Victoria Hall booking is by sessions, but did not specify the times of the sessions. To be confirmed and also the booking times of other halls **Action Adrienne**
She also said she has given details of venues and charges to the new Creative Writing group.

8) Beacon

Tom advised that he had now had the official beacon administration training.

- During the course the attendees were advised that their role was to manage the local beacon administration module but were not responsible for what users do (admins can see some activities but not the content of emails, nor what was in any attachments).
- Admins can only help with the administration module, not the membership portal which was self service
- Tom, when taking up the post had said that he wouldn't be able to attend every committee meeting, and had learned in the course that admins are only on committees to gain access to the TAT insurance, he said that he will always advise if he's not attending.
- Also from the training was a decision that where a user had two beacon administration logins (e.g. a GL and committee post) then these are to be amalgamated into one, with the username changing to the person's name.
Tom is waiting on guidance on this, due this week.
- PayPal is an ongoing topic on the admin support forum, it's benefit is it feeds into Beacon, saving the membership secretary time. TAT is looking at other options, including stripe. Tom suggest we stay with PayPal until National office has an alternative.
- 2 factor authentication is on the radar for beacon administration logins but the beacon team are expecting resistance from groups.
- Tom passed on a request, from the beacon team regarding emails. Beacon sends out high volumes of emails daily, and a major concern is other email providers thinking beacon emails may be spam (partly because the sender address is always noreply@beacon.org.uk irrespective of the U3A). Certain coding is included in sent mail but it would be very helpful if all emails out of beacon were personalised to include the recipient's name, this is achieved by using the name tokens on the top right of the beacon email page. **Action ALL**
- It is a good idea to Back up Beacon in case it is accidently deleted . Agreed Tom will take a monthly backup and pass to Peter to add to the other backups. **Action Tom**

9) Monthly Meetings

Diana reported that the speaker from October was very rushed and has apologised. Meg commented that the chairs were put away too quickly and in future more time should be left for chatting. Agreed. The hall is booked from 2pm until 4.30.

Christmas Social on 16th December will be the same format as the previous 2 years.

- Tables seating 6/8 will be used **Meg** to bring decorations **Eileen** bring tablecloths
- Tea and biscuits served as people arrive. **Vivienne**
- Paper quiz organised by **Graham**
- Mulled wine and Mince pies served **Vivienne and helpers**
- Singing group will sing Christmas songs. **Danny Mathews**

10) Finance

Reports had been sent . Nothing to report.

11) Groups

Peter Churhcley is retiring from leading Table Tennis One. No-one is willing to take over.

A new group Creative Writing has started lead by Toni Allen.

The two training sessions for Group leaders went well. Another is planned.

Michelle and Graham will visit the Groups when convenient and Michelle will send an email introducing herself to group leaders.

Action Michelle

12) AOB

- **PA System** Peter reported that the Amplifier has an irreparable fault. There are several options
Do Nothing
Replace like for like Speakers and hand held microphones (cost Approx £380)
Purchase bookshelf speakers – this would need separate microphones
Purchase a small speaker.
The system is not used often and the cost of possible renting was queried especially for the AGM
No decision was made.
- Graham asked if the committee would reconsider purchasing a SUM UP machine. He feel it could be used at the AGM and by group leaders to collect subs. It was suggested he asked other u3a's for their experience of using these. **Action Graham**
- Could the Group leaders information be available on Beacon or the Website.
Suggested a password protected area. **Action Peter.**

Meeting finished at 15.40

Dates of next meetings

Jan 12th at 8a Eggars Hill

2026 dates will probably be bi-monthly

Mar 9th at Owls Hoot

May 11th

July 13th

AGM August 27th