

## NOTES FROM GROUP LEADERS' MEETING

Friday 20 March 2026 at 2 pm

Of the theoretical maximum attendance of 70 (all group leaders, co-leaders and committee members who are not also group leaders) 41 members were present (slightly up from 2025) with 22 apologies received.

### Item 1: Welcome and Introduction by Ray Hodgson.

- Groups summer meetings survey issued 5 March – still awaiting responses from some GLs.
- Updated Group Leaders' Handbook published on website.

### Item 2: Group News by Ray Hodgson.

- Perth u3a in excellent health financially and membership.
- 76 active groups – 72 in 2025.
  - Defunct groups due primarily to no leader (the most common cause of groups disbanding).
  - 7 new groups – some by expansion of existing groups, others new to Perth u3a.
  - Unit 6 now in use but needs forward planning by group leaders for access.
- Customary plea to keep Beacon group membership updated.

### Item 3: Perth u3a Strategy by Richard Coles.

- Initial strategy as briefed at 2025 Group Leaders' meeting strongly financially focussed.
- Why is a strategy necessary?
- Work done since 2025 – committee subgroup formed in November 2025.
  - Set 9 strategic goals – approved by full committee in early March 2026.
  - Less ambiguous than original strategy.
- Work to continue with new committee after AGM, aiming to implement in the new session.
- Good discussion followed.

### Item 4: Website Matters by Anne Trant.

- A live tour of some parts of the website.
- Proposed changes (**Home** page to be removed).
- New 'Words and Languages' category editor sought.
- Group Leader web page edit authority discussed – agreed in principle.
- Yvonne Connell discussion on proposed change to Group Meeting Dates document.

### Item 5: Finance Matters by Irene Twinn.

- Income – current and social accounts.
- Cash flows.
- Costs (rentals, bank charges etc).
- Unit 7 vs external lettings vs home venue.
- Finance Policy and Procedures to be distributed before AGM on 4<sup>th</sup> May.
- Lively discussion followed, especially over accommodation.

### Item 6: 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Plans by Wilma Coleman.

- Events planned to coincide with AGM on 4<sup>th</sup> May in St Matthews – a Perth u3a only event.
- Lunch will be at cost to individuals.
- Display boards promoting groups – set up on Sunday prior to AGM.
- Music groups, ceilidh dancing, tai chi etc will be performing.

**Item 7: Membership Matters** by Dave Smith.

- Historical membership growth apart from Covid period – currently 552 members.
- 93% join/renew on or before Registration Day.
- 109 new members in 2025–26 but net membership only increased by 28 (81 did not renew).
- Beacon analysis show that 31 members (30% of all leavers) left after 1 year.
- 54% of leavers leave in the first 2 years – reasons unclear but could include:
  - Difficulty in joining the group ‘I wanted to’.
  - Mindset of joining a particular group vs the wider u3a.
- Actions taken to improve membership retention in the first 2 years include:
  - Active management of waiting lists.
  - Section on the website for ‘Groups seeking members’.
  - Allowing new members to join before Registration Day (period 4<sup>th</sup> July – 24<sup>th</sup> August).
  - Seek to alter the mindset of new joiners.
  - Survey carried out within small groups of attendees – results to be published in due course.

**Item 8: Open Discussion** by Ray Hodgson.

- Concerns over difficult walking for some members to Unit 7 from Dewars Centre/Leisure Pool.
  - Suggested use of Lidl car park (ANPR cameras now removed).
  - Suggested leave Lidl shopping bag visible in car while parked.
- Cups disappearing from Unit 7 and being left in kitchen – Wilma Coleman will refresh housekeeping rules.
- Group equipment held in Unit 7 to be identified with an owner – Equipment Coordinator will compile inventory of u3a equipment.

**Item 9: Closing remarks** by Ray Hodgson. The meeting concluded at 16:20.

Ray Hodgson (Groups Coordinator)

23 March 2026