

Minutes of Perth u3a Committee Meeting

Held on Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at 10am in Unit 7

Present

Richard Coles	RC (Chair)		
Irene Twinn	IT	Yvonne Connell	YC
Sue Hendry	SH	Wilma Coleman	WC
Don Deeney	DD	Ray Hodgson	RH
Anne Rutherford	AR	Dave Smith	DS
John Seavers	JS	Jon Babb	JB

In attendance: Vicky Gardner (VG)

1. Apologies and Introduction

Apologies received from Trevor Abell (Health & Safety). RC welcomed VG to the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting on Tuesday 3rd February 2026 were approved – proposed by DS, seconded by AR.

3. Matters arising

- a) YC to create Perthu3aVolunteers@gmail.com and publish Volunteering document on website – DONE.
- b) JS has emailed the two remaining members of the Beacon Volunteers Group and is waiting for a reply.
- c) YC to advertise Bird Watching group in News Roundup – DONE
- d) New policy regarding embargo on existing members joining groups from 4 Jul until Registration – RH has included in Group Leaders' Handbook and will raise at the forthcoming Group Leader's Meeting.
- e) YC to buy tea/coffee stuff for Unit 6 – DONE
- f) YC confirmed that she has received JB's assertion regarding the OSCR disqualification criteria.
- g) YC to publish an updated and condensed version of the 2026-26 session dates document on the website – DONE.

h) Offer of a second-hand sewing machine – IT has spoken to the Craft group, who may take it for the 2026/7 session. It was noted that the machine will need to be PAT tested if retained for use. YC will table it as an agenda item early in 2026/7.

4. Admin Matters

a) Treasurer's report

IT reported that the main bank account currently stands at around £17k which, after planned expenditure, should leave a 'float' of £5k going into 2026/7 (in addition to the £4k contingency fund). Following a discussion regarding various potential future costs, such as increased use of Unit 6, the Committee deemed it reasonable to carry forward around £5k into the next session.

The application for a new social account with RBS has failed. IT will follow up with the bank to ascertain why and hopefully remedy the situation.

Action: IT as above

b) Group Co-ordinator's Report

Nothing to report.

c) Membership Report

DS reported 551 members, bringing in an income of £15,428. He estimates that 9 more members will join in this session.

DS reminded the Committee that our new summer membership rate will commence from 1 April, running until 30 June. We discussed whether or not to publicise this on the website, DS noting slight concern over anyone joining in late March who wouldn't know that, by delaying by a few days, they'd save some money. However, it was decided not to publicise the rate change, partly because this could lead to people deferring their subscription until the cheaper rate begins.

We agreed that it would be helpful to publish a list of groups which continue through the summer months, so that potential summer joiners can see what would be available to them.

DS is stepping down from the Membership Secretary role at the end of this session, and has been gradually handing over to JS, who has volunteered to take over the role. JS will take over from 1 Apr, with DS providing support as needed until the end of this session. JS is away for Registration Day, so DS will take his place. DS asked WC to book the St Matthew's Sanctuary for Registration Day on Monday 24 August for 9:00 to 12:30, and setup time (2hours) on the day before (Sunday 23rd).

Action: RH to compile a list of groups continuing throughout summer. YC to publish on the website. WC to book St Matthew's Sanctuary as above.

d) Accommodation Co-ordinator's Report

As previous minutes.

e) Events

The next open meeting talk will be from Gloagburn Farm Shop. The speaker after Gloagburn, Duncan McNab, has been in touch with concerns that, due to recent events in the Middle East, there's a possibility he may get stranded there at the time he's due to deliver his talk to Perth u3a. The Committee noted that a number of commercial flights are operating so this was unlikely to be an issue.

DD has 12 speakers lined up for the next session.

JB noted that the next social event is a quiz on Wed 4 Mar at the North Inch Bowling Club. After that event, the next one will be a visit to the Morris Leslie private car collection.

5. Financial Policy

IT had circulated the revised policy to Committee members prior to the meeting.

- YC noted that, regarding point 8.1.1, she had confirmed with Bob Kerr (Equipment Coordinator) that he holds the physical asset inventory, not the Groups Coordinator. IT will amend this point accordingly.
- YC also proposed that the policy set out the procedure for dealing with occasional requests to purchase physical assets for use by a single group. IT will include this in the policy, using similar wording to that in the Group Leaders' Handbook. Importantly, the policy should state that any assets purchased remain the property of Perth u3a.
- RC asked that IT amend the wording under Honoraria Annex 4 be amended to reflect current practice. RC will provide IT with suitable wording.

Action: IT and RC as above

6. Group Leader's Meeting

RH has received a few apologies for the meeting so around 62 may attend. YC enquired on Anne Trant's behalf as to whether there would be projection facilities. RH & IT weren't sure but, in fact, there's a portable screen in Unit 7 so we will take our own projector and screen to the event. Anne might provide her own laptop but we should probably take the Unit 7 laptop as a backup.

RH outlined the agenda, which will be sent out shortly:

Welcome & Introduction (RH), Perth u3a Strategy update (RC), Beacon and Website (Anne Trant), Finance (IT), Membership matters including waiting lists (DS), Group discussion on membership retention (RH), Open discussion (RH).

7. 40th Anniversary event

WC confirmed that it will take place on 4 May after the AGM. The church is booked from 9am to 6pm on the day, and on the previous afternoon for set-up. There is still uncertainty as to whether the hall will be used as well as the sanctuary, and where various groups will perform. The church is providing an optional light lunch at £8 per head, paid individually by members. WC said she would be contacting the press regarding the event.

The exact arrangements for the proposed display boards for groups is still under discussion, and we don't yet know who will coordinate/organise these. We agreed to postpone discussion on this point until the next Committee meeting.

Meanwhile, the broad outline of the day is:

10am Arrival for AGM, teas & coffees available as usual

10.30am AGM

40th Anniversary Talk by Robert Proctor

Performance by 2 local Scottish folk musicians

Light lunch

Afternoon Group Performances and further opportunity to view display boards

RC asked that WC provide a firm timetable by 12 March, and will email her a suggested layout.

YC will then send this to all members, together with 2 questions a) will you attend the event? and b) do you want the light lunch? The deadline for responses will be mid-April. Responses will be received by YC, collated and passed on to WC.

Action: WC to send a firm timetable for the event to RC and YC by 12 March. YC to email members as above.

8. Christmas lunch

IT has made a provisional booking at the Royal George for Sat 5 or Sat 12 Dec, and visited the Salutation Hotel as a potential alternative. The most suitable room at the Salutation is downstairs and feels a bit dingy, whilst the Royal George rooms are better though slightly cramped. Given that attendees enjoyed the Royal George last year, it was decided to go there again. We're choosing a Saturday rather than a weekday so that the event doesn't clash with group meetings. Following a brief discussion on dates, it was decided to book Sat 12 Dec with the Royal George.

Action: IT to confirm Saturday 12 Dec with the Royal George.

9. Query from Collaborative Mobility UK (CoMoUK)

AR has recently been contacted by PKC to ask if we might offer a couple of walks as part of their CoMoUK pop-up stand near the Concert Hall (AR is Group Leader for the Inch Walkers Group). AR has already replied explaining that, unlike CoMoUK, we are not a therapeutic organisation and that starting the Inch walk from the Concert Hall would not be practical for a variety of reasons. However, AR voiced concerns with the Committee that someone is mistakenly signposting therapeutic organisations to Perth u3a. The Committee agreed that this was of concern but, as there had only been a couple of incidents so far this year, no further action would be taken yet.

10. Strategy sub-group

RC presented the work to-date of the Strategy Sub-group, and in particular the statements defining Perth u3a and the proposed goals. The Committee agreed that these were suitable, particularly highlighting the 'What we are not' statement as particularly useful. DS proposed an additional goal: "To make it as easy as possible to become a group leader." After a brief discussion as to whether this was a standalone goal, or part of the means to achieve other goals, we agreed to add it to the goals list, on the basis that recruiting group leaders is such a crucial part of Perth u3a's viability as an organisation.

Action: YC to add DS's goal to the draft Strategy.

11. AOB

RC – he and YC have recently been asked to circulate a TAT survey to our members. The survey covers very similar territory to a survey we might run ourselves in the next year or so, and there was a concern that asking the membership to complete two similar surveys would yield poor results for the second survey (ie ours). Also, TAT isn't collecting data which would enable them to provide us with the results just from Perth u3a members. The Committee was somewhat divided on whether to circulate the TAT survey or not, but eventually decided that our own survey wouldn't run for several months and so was less likely to be compromised by TAT's survey. However, we will ask TAT to confirm that they will share the results of their survey with us.

DS – noted that, as he's standing down as Membership Secretary, JS will need to take over generating the register for Open Meetings. As JS uses a Mac, the tools which DS uses are unlikely to work. However, JS confirmed that he's able to use Beacon on his Mac, so he should be able to obtain an Excel spreadsheet listing all members, which could be pasted into Word (or similar) to create and print the register. [YC has now tested this method successfully at home and passed on JS]

DS – asked about progress in finding a new Chairperson. RC explained that there were a couple of potential candidates but no firm commitment yet. YC noted that, if we fail to appoint, there remains the possibility of sharing the role between two or more of the Officers of the Committee. Meanwhile, RC will raise the issue at the forthcoming group leaders' meeting, both to highlight the issue of recruiting volunteers, and to call for volunteers for the Chair's role.

Action: YC to circulate TAT survey to the membership. RC to raise Chair recruitment at the group leaders' meeting.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 31 March 2026 at 10am in Unit 7