Minutes of Perth u3a Committee Meeting

Held on Monday 15th June 2026 at 10am in Unit 7

Present

Jon Babb	JB (Chair)	Wilma Coleman	WC
Irene Twinn	IT	Yvonne Connell	YC
Ray Hodgson	RH	John Seavers	JS
Anne Rutherford	AR		

1. Apologies and Introduction
Apologies received from Trevor Abell and Sue Hendry.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting on Tuesday 28th April 2026 were approved - proposed by RH, seconded by IT.

3. Matters arising

a) IT: apply to Small Business Bonus Scheme – DONE, and confirmation received that we are except from paying rates. IT not sure if this is for 3 years or just 1 year.

b) YC: rename Nature Strolls etc - DONE

c) YC: alert walking group GLs re. potential liability insurance gap during the membership renewal period and JS to do similar in membership renewal notice. There was considerable discussion on this, mostly on getting to grips with the detail of the issue and how it might affect members. Specifically, there was uncertainty as to whether GLs/the Committee would have liability insurance cover if there were members taking part in u3a activities who hadn't yet renewed their membership.

Action: JS to consult TAT

d) WC: discuss retaining cleaners over summer with building management – WC has advised the cleaners that they won't be needed again until September.

e) JB/AR: make speaker bookings for 26/27 – DONE, plus a couple for next session. JB, in particular, to be commended for getting this done so quickly and at short notice.

f) YC: publish the new Financial Policy - DONE

4. Admin Matters

a) **Treasurer's report**

IT reported a healthy financial position, with over £1k more in the bank than this time last year. She expects us to go forward into the new session with a healthy float of around £5k.

b) Group Co-ordinator's Report

RH reported that we now have 73 groups, due to the loss of the Photography (Technical) Group and Archaeology and Local History Group.

He also noted some concerns from GLs regarding the revised embargo on joining groups (the embargo still starts on 4 July and ends on Registration Day, but only covers existing members and not new members). One GL thought that the embargo commenced much earlier than 4 July – they had forgotten the discussion about it at the GL meeting. JS noted that new members won't be aware of this new opportunity to join groups ahead of renewing members.

Action: RH to email GLs to remind them of the embargo. JS to add a suitable comment to his letter to new members – ie, to take advantage of the period from 4 July to Registration to join groups.

c) Membership Report

JS had previously distributed a new style membership report. He noted that the cut-off point for the report is the month end, meaning that there are likely to be changes to the figures by the date of Committee meetings. Otherwise, JS set out his proposals for the report format going forward, which were accepted.

AR noted that Beacon shows that only 5 of our 15 recent new members have joined groups. However, on phoning some of the new members, JS discovered that they had joined groups and were attending meetings. This indicates that the GLs had neglected to update Beacon – a well known recurring issue which seems impossible to solve. Nevertheless, this experience underlined the importance of keeping in touch with new members, not necessarily always by email.

JS has had one GL raise objections to the summer membership, on the basis that it gives more work to GLs over the summer.

JS thanked WC for notifying him of a recently deceased member. In future, JS will note member deaths on his membership report, thus prompting the Committee to check that the appropriate people have been informed and actions taken if necessary.

d) Accommodation Co-ordinator's Report

Nothing additional to report. IT is negotiating with building management for a reduced annual price increase (normally 5%). JB asked if it would be possible to sign a longer term agreement at more favourable terms, but IT didn't think this would be accepted.

e) Events

JB reported that Events are continuing through the summer, and has a few items lined up for the autumn. Many events are now over-subscribed. For example, the upcoming trip to the Scottish Parliament has over 60 people interested, whereas only 40 places are available.

6. Community Transport Association etc

This item was taken out of order as it relates to the previous item (Events). JB has joined Perth u3a to the Community Transport Association (at no cost), in order to obtain a permit for using PKC minibuses to take those with mobility issues to events not easily accessible to them. We can take up to 15 people, and must only charge in order to cover costs such as petrol and parking. The minibuses are only available when not in use by PKC schools.

Perth u3a member Peter Cookson has the appropriate licence to drive the minibus, and is happy to drive it for the Scottish Parliament outing. The Committee agreed that JB should also take the necessary course to become a qualified driver; Perth u3a will cover the £100 cost.

5. Registration Day, New Members website page

On Registration Day and the day before, Dave Smith will be covering for JS, who'll be on holiday. Dave Smith has provided JS with a checklist for the run-up to Registration. JS confirmed with YC that she will be preparing the Programme and the Ready Reckoner for meeting dates. YC will shortly provide JS with page counts and sizes so that he can obtain a printing cost estimate from the printers, Danscot.

Volunteer helpers for the two days are:

Day before, 1pm – 3pm: JB, RH, WC, AR and YC

Registration day, 10am to 12 noon: JB. YC is waiting for SH to confirm she can also assist

Action: YC to provide JS with Programme page counts etc

7. A Public 40th Anniversary event

JB tendered thanks to WC for organising a successful anniversary celebration. WC proposed sending flowers as a thank you for their assistance to St Matthew's church secretary, and the caterers. This was agreed. WC said that she was happy with the event, which was well attended and ran smoothly, but was a little disappointed that only a few GLs put information about their groups on the notice boards.

Discussion then turned to the possibility of running a public event in the autumn, with the main intended audience being the local community and the media. Overall, there was little appetite for mounting another major event so soon after the May one, and there was some doubt as to whether we really needed to attract more members than we have so far.

JB proposed that we establish a presence on social media as means to publicise the organisation, and this was met with broad agreement. Both JB and YC stressed that social media needs to be updated with new content on a regular basis, and that this would be a significant commitment for whoever took it on. As the Committee is somewhat smaller in number than recently, this would be a good opportunity to recruit an additional member who could take charge of social media and any other internal/external marketing deemed necessary.

Action: YC to approach 2 members who've recently expressed some interest in joining the Committee (both within certain parameters), and to advertise the role more generally to all members.

8. Perth u3a Strategy

It was agreed to set this aside until after Registration and the settling period immediately afterwards.

9. AOB

YC noted that PKC has put plans out for public comment which could affect Perth u3a members. These are proposals to build houses and other facilities to replace the sports centre adjacent to the Unit7 building, together with the nearby outside parking. This will result in much-reduced public parking spaces in an area which Perth u3a members use regularly. The Committee asked YC to lodge an objection to the plans on this basis.

Action: YC to register our objection to the PKC plans

JB sought advice, having been contacted recently by someone who is opening a sports centre in Bridge of Earn which might be able to host activities such as Tai Chi and Indoor Bowls. WC felt that this wouldn't be a sufficiently central location for Perth u3a members.

JB has been in contact with Carol Goodey, who runs a mentoring scheme for schoolchildren and thought our members might be interested in becoming mentors. Should we publicise this to the members? A number of the Committee noted that external organisations regularly ask to use us as a 'postbox' to further their cause, and that members might not welcome the multiple emails that would ensue if we agreed to all these requests. Furthermore, we have enough difficultly recruiting volunteers for our own activities without suggesting that they volunteer elsewhere.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 11 August 2026, both at 10am in Unit 7