

## Yate and Sodbury District Executive Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2026 at The Ridgewood Community Centre room 8/9, 244 Station Road, Yate, BS37 4AF.

**Present:** John Wilkinson (Chair), Ian Merriman (Vice-chair), Cat Riley (Secretary), Rod Dewey (Treasurer & IT Administrator), Craig Hodges (Meetings and Event Planner), Lesley Holman (Membership Secretary), Paula Young (Publicity & Newsletter Editor), Janet Smith (Co-Group Coordinator), Julie Spooner (Co-Group Coordinator).

### 1 Apologies:

Lutie Van der Park (Assistant Secretary), Vasu Patel (Facebook Coordinator), Robert Cole (Webmaster).

### 2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026 were approved.

This approval occurred ex-committee, via email, on 18<sup>th</sup> May, to facilitate the changing of the Bank Mandate for the new Treasurer. The above statement is to hold a record of that approval.

### 3 Review of Previous Actions.

Month	serial	Who	Action	Status	Progress
2602	04	All	Prepare a list of main responsibilities of your role, and forward it to John.	Ongoing Closed	02/02/26: Details received from Julie. Brian & Lesley. 01/04/26: most received - 4 outstanding. 04/05/26: most received - 3 outstanding
2603	01	John & Cat	Review executive duties lists to establish whether we have the optimum structure or whether there is scope for improvement	Ongoing Closed	03/06/26: Action subsumed into 2605-01.
2603	05	All	Provide a couple of sentences as a statement about yourself, and send to Cat to collate for website.	Ongoing	04/05/26: A few received.
2603	06	Ian	Explore options with Robert for making forms available on website.	Ongoing Closed	03/06/26: Draft options in progress, but will be continued under wider Website Improvement Programme
2604	02	Cat	Notify Lutie once AGM minutes are cleared by the Executive, for general comment via the Noticeboard.	Ongoing Closed	04/05/26: Final amendment required before submission. 15/05/26: Final Draft cleared, and submitted for notification & upload.

2604	03	Janet Lesley	Investigate reasons for people not renewing membership.	Ongoing	30/04/26: I have a list of the non-rejoiners and will contact them by e-mail to ask a couple of simple questions. I will report at the next meeting. 03/06/26: Lesley will revisit this action using the list of this year's non-renewers.
2604	05	Ian	Arrange with Robert to add something to website to celebrate the 20th Anniversary.	Ongoing Closed	08/05/26: Item added to Homepage on website.
2605	01	John	Simplify and rationalize the Executive Committee roles, and synchronise website and constitution statements.	Ongoing	
2605	02	John	Update the Roles table to reflect committee discussion and re-issue	New Closed	03/06/26: Updated Table included in Chair's report. NB: Data will likely change again on completion of 2605-01.
2605	03	Lutie	Agree a description with Paula to advertise the Media Manager Role.	New Ongoing	
2605	04	Janet & Julie	Analyse group limits, eg venues, managing, other capability, and approach Full groups about expansion opportunities.	New Closed	01/06/26: Work has begun – working on developing three new groups with the help of existing experts, with more underway.
2605	05	Cat	Add apology to AGM minutes, and re-issue with a nil return date for endorsement.	New Closed	18/05/26: Complete. Revised draft issued 14/05, endorsed 18/05.
2605	06	Lesley	Write to remaining 600+ who have not renewed, providing Rod's screenshots to help with on-line renewal.	New Closed	03/06/26: Members contacted, and 350 subsequently renewed. Unknown if screenshots helped.
2605	07	Rod, Ian, and Lesley	Write to TAT requesting Beacon amendments to make the joining and renewal processes more user-friendly.	New Ongoing	
2605	08	All	Inform Paula if you are able to assist with Yate Aging Better festival on Wed 15th July.	New Ongoing	03/06/26: 4 volunteers to date.
2605	09	Rod	Update Committee contacts on website and Beacon following completion of action 260502.	New Closed	03/06/26: Contacts have been updated iaw current state. Action closed as will be BAU as further changes occur.
2605	10	Rod	Ask TAT to address the Beacon issue with GLs being unable to delete transactions.	New Closed	03/06/26: Rests with Treasurer to handle deletions by best method in each circumstance.

## 4 Matters Arising

### 4.1 Feedback from Group Leaders' Forum

Risk Assessments: There had been a lot of concern amongst GLs regarding the need for risk assessments. It was agreed that assessments are necessary to meet insurance requirements, but that there is some acceptable flexibility. Groups should have assessments related to their venue, but groups that use multiple venues/locations for visits should have a

generic formal assessment, whilst providing clear statements of conditions for each visit. Risk assessments should be filed on dropbox, through Lutie, but few have been.

**Action 260601 – Janet & Julie: Identify gaps in risk assessments, and decide on plan of action.**

Taster Sessions – It was confirmed that the TAT allows a prospective member 2-3 taster sessions in total – not 2-3 per group of interest! Someone who is already a member, can ‘taste’ as many groups as desired. A mechanism is needed to monitor this, and on the assumption that GLs have a register of attendees, a central register should facilitate such monitoring.

**Action 260602 – Janet & Julie: Create appropriate central register, and update GL Guidelines.**

Timing and venue: Some GLs were unable to attend due to the day of the week, and some because of the time of year. It was therefore agreed that both should vary for future forums. The venue was also discussed because it wasn’t easy to see the slides and/or hear the speakers. This could possibly be addressed by siting the screen closer to the seating and using a microphone.

Fee-earners: Some GLs are concerned about the data required to hire someone for a fee, which can potentially make it difficult to book people. There is a need to comply with the law regarding tax and insurance, however it is possible we have erred on the side of over-caution. Ian had reviewed some other u3as, and it seems none go to the level of detail which we have.

**Action 260603 – John: Check the source of the requirement, and whether it is a necessity.**

## 5 Chair’s report (John Wilkinson).

### 5.1 General

1. All trustees added to Charity Commission.
2. Application for additional bank signatories (Rod & Lesley) submitted 27/05/26 (request Reference: UM-26052799146).

Patrick to be removed once new signatories can access our bank account.

3. Group Leaders forum held 20<sup>th</sup> May. Thanks for a great job done by all Ian, Julie and Janet and the caterers.
4. Patrick is “slowly gearing up to represent Y&SD u3a in the SW u3a Region”
5. The Charity Commission has updated its guidance on conflicts of interest, which it says that all trustees should read – for those interested the guidance may be found at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identifying-and-managing-conflicts-of-interest-in-a-charity-cc29/conflicts-of-interest-a-guide-for-charity-trustees?utm\\_source=ccnews&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=may26](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identifying-and-managing-conflicts-of-interest-in-a-charity-cc29/conflicts-of-interest-a-guide-for-charity-trustees?utm_source=ccnews&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=may26)
6. Meeting held with Ian & Cat (19/05/26) to clarify / rationalise committee roles, review website improvement progress and, review our constitution.
7. Committee Roles: Draft note completed – see also §5.2.
8. Website improvement: “see” Ian’s update.
9. Review of constitution: WIP.

## 5.2 Committee Roles

At last month's meeting several people kindly volunteered to fill various deputy roles – the current “situation” is as follows:

Role	Name	No. of Yrs in Post	Yrs Remaining	Deputy
Chair	John Wilkinson	0	3	(Ian)
Vice Chair	Ian Merriman	0	3	(John)
Business Secretary	Cat Riley	1	2	(Lutie)
Assistant Business Secretary	Lutie van der Park*	N/A	N/A	(Cat)
Treasurer	Rod Dewey	0	3	John
Membership Secretary	Lesley Holman	1	2	Rod
Events Organiser	Craig Hodges	0	3	Cat
Groups A->O Coordinator	Janet Smith	0	3	Julie
Groups P->Z Coordinator	Julie Spooner	1	2	Janet
Website Manager	Robert Cole*	N/A	N/A	(Ian)
Assistant Website Manager	Ian	0	3	(Robert)
Beacon Administrator	Rod Dewey	1	2	Lutie
IT Systems Administrator	Rod Dewey	1	2	TBD
Facebook Coordinator	Vasu Patel	2	1	TBD
Publicity Officer	Paula Young	2	1	TBD
Newsletter Editor	Paula Young	2	1	TBD

*Lutie and Robert hold “non-executive” roles.*

- Paula has put in an appeal for the next newsletter editor in this month's newsletter.
- “Conceptual” thinking from the meeting with Ian & Cat [(item 6) a) above] is to:

- Combine the roles of Publicity Officer, Newsletter Editor & Facebook Coordinator into a single role which we will call Media Manager (TBC) – we intend to avoid the use of ‘Officer’ in our role titles because, as per clause 16. (2) of our constitution, all trustees are officers).
- Combine the roles of Beacon Administrator IT Support into a single role.

### **5.3 Main Upcoming Events this Year**

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration (6<sup>th</sup> June: John)

Ageing Better Festival (15<sup>th</sup> July: Paula),

Open Day (9<sup>th</sup> October: Julie, Rod).

Guest Speakers & New members Forum – Monthly

All events are posted on our Website.

## **6 Meetings and Event Planning (Craig Hodges)**

- The next Speaker event is scheduled for Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June.
- The Speaker schedule for the rest of 2026 is booked...thanks to Brian.
- The Speaker schedule for 2027 is full, with an average cost of £90.

## **7 Group Coordinators’ reports**

### **7.1 A to O (Janet Smith)**

- Mike Hayward from Art Group contacted re setting up another group. He asked for advice on how to find another leader. I said to start by seeing if anyone in his current group would like to do this. Someone on the Waiting List has now said they might be interested in helping. Does the committee have any other advice?
- Ballroom Dancing – due to ill health, Brian Petty is stepping down from this role. He asked his group if anyone would like to be the permanent leader as people had been covering for him while he was away. He has found a new leader and Beacon has been updated.
- Indoor Kurling – change of leadership as Andy Worrall has passed away
- Global Diners Reserve – I have contacted the Global Diners leader for help with this question. Lesley has sorted this out for me.
- Classical Concerts and Theatre groups accounts – Julie and I still need to speak about this.
- Lesley forwarded me an e-mail from someone who hadn’t renewed this year and they had not had good communication with one of the groups. I have forwarded this to the Group Leaders involved and await their reply.
- I notice from the Newsletter that there is enough support for another Book Group.

### **7.2 P to Z (Julie Spooner)**

#### **7.2.1 Group Leader Guidelines Issue 9**

These are now available on the website and Group Leaders have been notified. Lute has also placed the Guidelines on Dropbox. I am already compiling a list of changes for the next issue.

Robert Cole has recommended a better way of showing links which needs to be considered for all future documents. He believes it is best if they are hidden behind plain text describing the

purpose or destination of the link eg. “Assistant Business Secretary (contact details on the [Executive page of the website](#))”.

### 7.2.2 Group Leaders’ Forum

The event was held and thirty group leaders were in attendance. Ian organised the presentation which is now available on the website. Group leaders have been informed about where to find it. There was a healthy discussion mainly regarding risk assessments, the Provision for Service agreement and taster sessions. Questions were raised that we will look into further to see if any changes need to be made to the existing guidelines in the light of them. Finally, Group leaders were asked if any of them would be able to support the formation of new groups. Janet and I have a couple of possibilities to follow up.

The refreshment team did a fantastic job and the venue provided a comfortable setting. Thoughts on next year’s event will be discussed in the coming months.

### 7.2.3 Rock Music Appreciation, Old and New Relaunch and Web Site Change

This group now have three additional leaders who are attempting to relaunch it as Pop N Rock Appreciation. With Lute’s help and lots of work by the group leaders, the relaunch event on 8<sup>th</sup> June has been publicised and the new leaders are hopefully this group can move forward.

## 8 Secretary/Admin Report (Cat Riley/Lute Van Der Park)

Nothing to report this month

## 9 Treasurer’s Report (John Wilkinson).

### 9.1 Funds

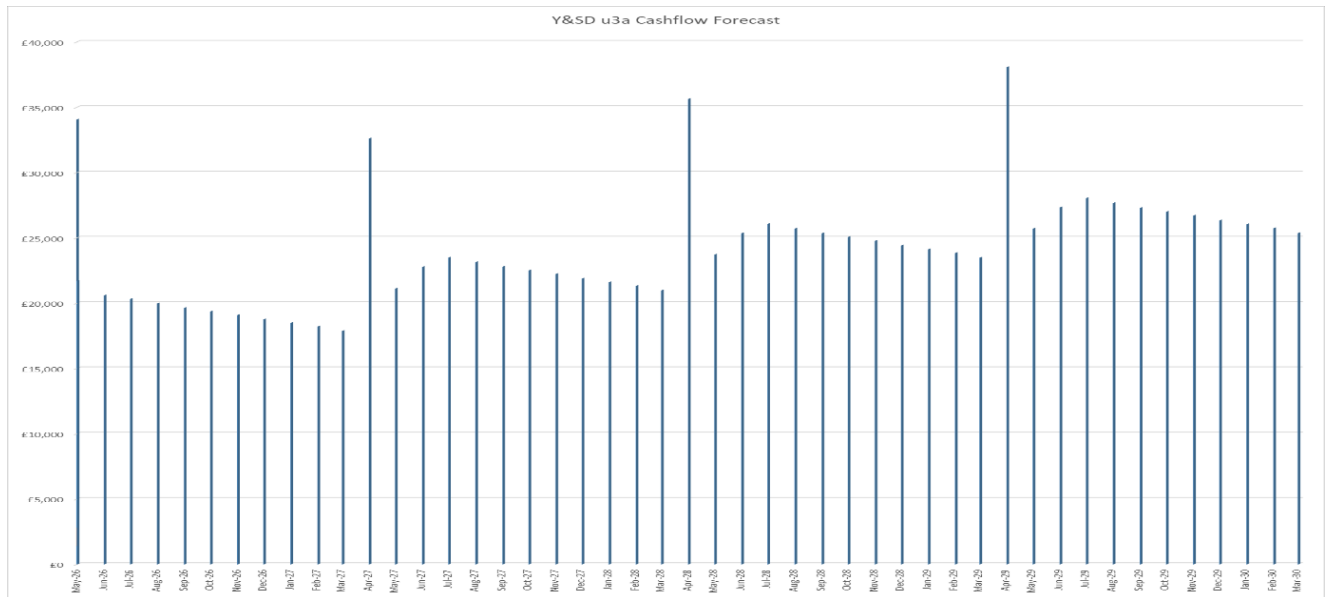
	Bank Acct	Beacon	Delta	Reason(s) for Difference
<b>PayPal:</b>	£15,363.24	£15,334.06	£29.18	TBD
<b>Nat West:</b>	£6,347.25	£6,252.81	£94.44	Membership fees to be paid into bank (TBC)

<b>Total:</b>	£21,710.49
---------------	------------

**NOTE:** HMRC have made two payments for Gift Aid, one on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April (£3,183.17) and one on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May (£3,185.22). Total = £6,368.39. We made two claims, one for the “first 1000” claimants (Total donations = £12,715) and one for the “remaining” 95 claimants (Total donations = £1,215). We expected to receive 25% of the total claim, i.e.  $0.25 \times (12,715 + 1,215) = £3,482.50$ . HMRC have evidently overpaid us by £2,885.85.

**Discrepancy to be Investigated with HMRC.**

## 9.2 Cash Flow Forecast – Apr 26 to Apr 30



**Assumptions:** 3% inflation; No. of members ~ 2,000.

Healthy balance with a slight upward trend.

£5k allocated to 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

## 9.3 Other items

### 9.3.1 Group Accounts End-of-Year Audit

Check of group accounts – 87% completed. Main issue is with French, who have no accounts.

### 9.3.2 Inactive Groups – Non-Zero Balances

There are a number of obsolete/closed groups who finished with a balance still in their accounts, with no rationale behind why this money is there.

**Action 260604 – John & Rod: Investigate, and decide the correct course of action for the GLs.**

### 9.3.3 Handover to Rod Dewey

NatWest: Rod & Lesley being added as signatories.

PayPal: Rod added as “Account User”.

## 10 Membership Secretary’s Report (Lesley Holman)

We have a total of 2050 members showing as current, but 250 have not renewed their membership and during June they will be “lapsed”. We will therefore have a membership of 1800.

During May Group Leaders were asked to check their lists to see if anyone in their groups had not renewed. I was informed by one group that they do not use Beacon, so don’t understand how they would check this. They currently rely on honesty from group members.

We have 33 new members who have joined since 1<sup>st</sup> May.

## 11 Publicity and Newsletter Editor’s Report (Paula Young).

### 11.1 Newsletter

- it went out to all members with an email address on 1st June.
- I will collect copies from Sprint Print later this week and have them available at Friday’s speaker meeting

- It was 1 page shorter as not many group articles sent in and only so much padding I can put in!
- I used Publisher so will play with the Affinity software and use that for the Sept issue.
- I put in an appeal for someone to start shadowing my role so will await any responses.

## 11.2 Publicity

- there was an article in the last issue of The Boundary magazine.
- I sent the same article to the Sodbury Voice but they responded to say they are now going to focus on more individual groups rather than larger organisations so I could send in something about a specific group but which one? It could become a series!
- Yate Ageing Better - not heard anything more from them yet but thanks to Julie & Cat who have volunteered so far.

## 12 Webmaster's Report. (Ian Merriman, assistant webmaster)

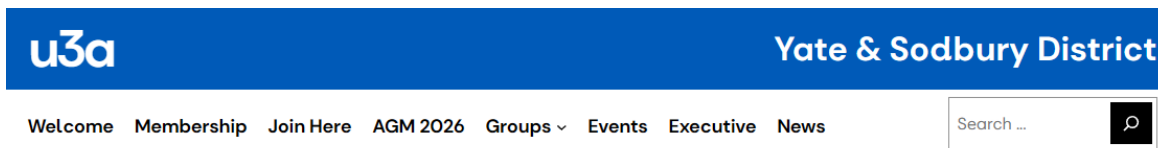
I completed a survey of the whole website identifying all policies, documents, forms and links that are visible on the website pages.

There are some duplications on pages, and I propose that these are removed.

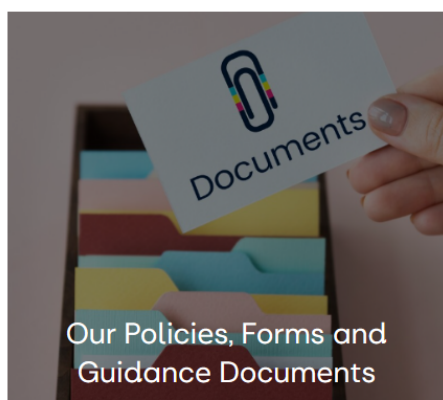
### 12.1 Documents page

A new page for the website has been drafted and is titled 'Members Information'.

As you can see its status is Private which means that only website editors can see it.



### Private: Members information



Our Policies	Our Forms	Guidance documents
<a href="#">Yate &amp; Sodbury U3A District Constitution</a>	<a href="#">Paper Membership Form</a>	<a href="#">How to join online</a>
<a href="#">Vision, Mission, Principles and Conduct document</a>	<a href="#">Expenses Claim form</a>	<a href="#">Beacon Guidelines for Group Leaders</a>
<a href="#">u3a Insurance Cover Letter</a>	Accident Reporting Form	<a href="#">Members Portal User Guide</a>
<a href="#">Website publishing policy</a>	Provision of Services Agreement	<a href="#">Guidelines for Group Leaders</a>
<a href="#">Grievance Procedure</a>	Venue Based Risk Assessment Checklist	
<a href="#">Accessibility Policy</a>	<a href="#">u3a Travel Group - Booking Form</a>	
<a href="#">Finance Policy</a>		
<a href="#">u3a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure</a>		
<a href="#">Data Protection Policy</a>		
<a href="#">Policy on Equality Diversity and Inclusion</a>		
<a href="#">Privacy policy</a>		

## 12.2 Points to note:

- I need to get the Word files that have the following forms, so that I can upload them to the media file and then link them on the page:
  - Accident Reporting Form,
  - Provision of Services Agreement,
  - Venue Based Risk Assessment Checklist
  - I need to decide where on the website banner line, this new page will sit, possibly temporarily until we rationalise the website overall.
- Other documents/presentations, such as those produced for the AGM and Group Leaders Forum are not listed on this page as they do not fit the categories of Policies, Forms or Guidelines.
- Suggestion: The Guidelines for Group Leaders be renamed as Group Leaders Handbook to avoid any confusion with the Beacon Guidelines for Group Leaders.

## 12.3 Observations/Possible areas for change:

- **Executive:** There has been some discussion about whether the term Executive is the right one for our committee as it may feel pretentious, and members may not feel engaged by the term.
- What do other u3a's do:
  - Committee
  - Management Committee
- Overall, I think our website is too 'wordy' and potentially confusing for readers/members. As an example, there is a lot of overlap between the Welcome, Membership and Join Here pages.

## 13 IT & Beacon Administrator's Report (Rod Dewey)

Some members who recently joined, eg February or March, either didn't realise they had to renew their membership in May, or complained that they did!

Should we consider either extending the grace period to March, or alternatively have a reduced fee for joiners late in the year? Both options create financial anomalies.

*PMN: this was not discussed due to shortness of time.*

Various issues with renewals, including 'joining' instead of 're-joining' and changes to the website, are being worked through with Lesley and Janet.

Some Group Leaders have queried the change which hides members' addresses, which was implemented to support GDPR. Do we believe GLs need to see addresses? If so, the option can be enabled.

*PMN: this was not discussed due to shortness of time.*

Training – Group Leaders Beacon guide updated following feedback from GLs having problems with lost functionality. Should this be sent to group leaders or add link to website. We also need to discuss inability to deleted transactions.

**Action 260605 – Ian & Rod: Add the Guide to the website, but Ian to review titles of the guides relevant to GLs, and rename if necessary to avoid confusion.**

## 14 Ongoing Items for Discussion

### 14.1 Update on 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning (John Wilkinson)

- ~130 tickets sold.
- Detailed scheduling for weekend of celebration in progress.
- All bills paid save food & minor expenses (est. < £2,200).
- Costs are expected to exceed revenue by ~£4,800, planned subsidy = £5k => Spend is as planned.
- Will be looking for help on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> (PM) and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> (AM) to set-up / “set-down”, etc.

### 14.2 Website Working Group (Ian Merriman)

See webmaster's report. This item will cease to be a special, as Ian is now Assistant Webmaster.

## 15 Any Other Business.

We need to begin planning for this year's Open Day.

**Action 260606 – Craig:** Confirm that Chipping Sodbury Town Hall is booked for 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**The meeting finished at 16.09 pm.**

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026 between 2pm and 4pm at The Ridgewood Community Centre room 8/9, 244 Station Road, Yate, BS37 4AF.