

Yate and Sodbury District Executive Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 1st July 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), Lutie Van der Park (Assistant Secretary), Vasu Patel (Facebook Coordinator), Janet Smith (Co-Group Coordinator), Julie Spooner (Co-Group Coordinator).

1 Apologies:

Paula Young (Publicity & Newsletter Editor), Robert Cole (Webmaster).

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd June 2026 were approved.

3 Review of Previous Actions.

Month	serial	Who	Action	Status	Progress
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. 01/07/26: Ian, Lesley Paula outstanding.
2604	03	Lesley	Investigate reasons for people not renewing membership.	Ongoing Complete	30/04/26: Janet has 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. 01/07/26: Investigation complete. 250 people emailed - a number renewed. Some responded to Lesley, the majority positively, but 3 negative responses were discussed at July committee meeting.
2605	01	John	Simplify and rationalize the Executive Committee roles, and synchronise website and constitution statements.	Ongoing	30/06/26: No progress this month.
2605	03	Lutie & Paula	Agree a new job description to define the Media Manager Role.	Ongoing	30/06/26: Initial thoughts developing, but not yet concluded.
2605	07	Rod, Ian & Lesley	Define requirements to make the joining and renewal processes more user-friendly. Write to TAT	Ongoing	

			requesting appropriate Beacon amendments.		
2605	08	All	Inform Paula if you are able to assist with Yate Ageing Better festival on Wed 15th July.	Ongoing Complete	03/06/26: 4 volunteers to date. 29/06/26: 6 volunteers available, and rota for the day issued.
2606	01	Janet & Julie	Identify groups who have not produced risk assessments, and decide on plan of action.	New Complete	01/07/26: Groups identified, and GLS will be contacted to obtain assessments.
2606	02	Janet & Julie	Create appropriate central register of non-members who take taster sessions, and update GL Guidelines accordingly.	New Complete	28/06/26: Propose a simple excel file recording the details of any non-members that have had Taster Sessions. We will update the guidelines and write to each Group Leader explaining what information we need and why (insurance primarily).
2606	03	John	Check the source of the tax & insurance requirement for fee earners, and whether it is a necessity.	New Ongoing	30/06/26: Investigations have revealed contradictions in insurance advice. Endeavouring to get a ruling from TAT. For Tax, a comprehensive professional invoice is sufficient.
2606	04	Rod	Investigate non-zero final balances, and decide the correct course of action for the GLs.	New Ongoing	30/06/26: Investigations have resolved some items, including write-offs, but are ongoing.
2606	05	Ian & Rod	Add the Beacon Guide to the website, but Ian to review titles of the guides relevant to GLs, and rename if necessary to avoid confusion.	New Ongoing	
2606	06	Craig	Confirm that Chipping Sodbury Town Hall is booked for 9th October.	New Complete	09/06/26: Confirmed 9th Oct booking.

4 Matters Arising

4.1 Date for Next AGM – Town Hall Bookings

It was agreed that it is sensible to combine the AGM with a Speaker Event to save double booking of the Town Hall. Speaker Events have already been scheduled, so discussion was around which is most suitable to host the AGM. It is also considered best to hold the AGM on a Friday, for consistency with other Speaker Events.

Rod prefers to deliver the financial summary for the complete Financial Year, and the consensus was in agreement. April's event is therefore too soon after the end of Financial Year to close and audit the books, as it is on 2nd April 2027.

A decision was made to hold the next AGM at the Speaker Event on 7th May 2027.

5 Chair's report (John Wilkinson).

5.1 Source of Tax & Insurance Requirement for Fee Earners

Currently on our 'Provision of Services Agreement between the Y&SD u3a and a Paid Tutor / Instructor / Guest Speaker (Service Provider)' form we state:

“To complete this form the Service Provider will need a copy of their public liability insurance, a copy of Portable Appliance Test (PAT) certificates as applicable, and their Unique Tax Reference (UTR) number”.

There has been some debate regarding whether or not the items are strictly required.

Public Liability Insurance (PLI)

The insurance arrangements (cover) note from Gallagher (22/12/2026) states that the insured comprises:

*“The Third Age Trust and its directors, officers and trustees
and*

The officers and trustees and members (and personal carers) for the time being of U3As and all U3As which are affiliated to The Third Age Trust

and

The officers and trustees for the time being of networks and regional associations who are themselves members of affiliated U3As and U3A networks and associations.”

The list does not include paid tutors, etc. However, research on Google states that PLI is generally optional rather than a statutory requirement and that the Third Age Trust provides a national public liability policy that explicitly covers both paid and unpaid outside speakers. It also states that paid tutors (who run regular courses) are not covered by the central u3a policy – The cover note is not consistent with the Google information.

Action 260701- John: Seek an unequivocal statement from the TAT regarding Tax and Insurance for Fee earners, and/or a copy of their insurance policy.

Portable Appliance Test (PAT) Certificates

UK law does not explicitly make PAT a legal requirement but nevertheless requires that all electrical equipment be maintained in a safe condition. Whether a u3a speaker's equipment requires a PAT test depends on the policies of the specific venue being used and our own guidelines. In the interests of being pragmatic, it is proposed that copies of PAT certificates are required if it is a condition of the venue being used and, if not, that the person engaging the speaker, etc., assesses the associated risks on a case-by-case basis - Guidance will be needed on what needs to be considered – I will discuss this with Rod (our in-house PAT certifier).

Action 260702- John & Rod: Produce some practical guidance on PAT certificates.

Likelihood is that all Council owned venues will require it, and possibly everywhere except domestic settings.

Unique Tax Reference (UTR) Number

A charity does not legally require an instructor or speaker's Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR) to pay them for a one-off session or freelance. What we do need is the following:

- A professional invoice containing:
 - The speaker's full name or business name.
 - Their contact address.
 - A clear breakdown of the services provided and the date.
 - Bank details for payment.
- A signed declaration stating that they are responsible for their own tax and National Insurance (optional but good practice for your records).

Our 'Provision of Services Agreement between the Y&SD u3a and Service Provider will need to be updated following completion & agreement of the above.

Action 260703- John: Update Provision of Services agreement re UTR Number.

5.2 Main Upcoming Events this Year

Ageing Better Festival (15th July: Paula),

Open Day (9th October: Julie, Rod).

Guest Speakers & New members Forum – Monthly

All events are posted on our Website.

6 Meetings and Event Planning (Craig Hodges)

- Nothing to report

7 Group Coordinators' reports

7.1 A to O (Janet Smith)

- We are in the early stages of setting up an additional Art Group. The hope is to run this on a trial basis from September through to Christmas on similar lines to the current group, at the same venue but on a different morning. Mike Hayward has been very helpful. Sue Sellers has volunteered to lead this. She is going to attend one of Mike's sessions late this month and then we will get together and make a decision. Will it be appropriate for a start-up loan to pay towards the room hire? How do I arrange this?
- Meeting agreed a grant would be relevant rather than a loan, up to a max of £50. It would be arranged by writing to Rod.
- Mike has raised a further issue about a particular past member which I would like to get some guidance on during the meeting please.

Action 260710- Janet: Discuss issue with new GL with a view to maybe joining once the trail period is over.

- Jacki Hebblethwaite contacted me about setting up a beginners Patchwork group. We will have further discussions. I've renamed it Patchwork – beginners so it belongs to Julie!
- Calligraphy – someone has asked about setting up a group again. I have contacted some past members and been in contact with the previous tutor, Fiona Mitchell. She is willing to have a trial workshop but would need a minimum of 12 people. I have asked her for details of costs and venue. It seems that the group stopped during covid then returned on-line. Some kept going on-line so it may be that if we don't have enough support for our own group then those that are interested could go direct to Fiona.
- Global Diners reserve group – Doug Lodge is the new leader and I have asked him about this group on Beacon. Waiting for a reply.
- Ballroom and Latin – now renamed as Ballroom Intermediate.

7.2 P to Z (Julie Spooner)

7.2.1 Rock Music Appreciation, Old and New Relaunch and Web Site Change

Following a very successful relaunch meeting, this group is already planning another exciting get together in August. After that, I will meet with them to formalise the group name, leadership, group register and web site description.

7.2.2 u3a Creative Writing Group 1 Thanked

Bronwen Williams, a self-published author who lives in Chipping Sodbury, writes in the acknowledgements of her debut novel:

“I appreciated the constructive criticism given to me by members of the u3a Creative Writing Group at Yate and Chipping Sodbury, who were always happy to read some excerpts of my work.”

Sidney’s Patch by Bronwen Williams is on sale at Chipping Sodbury Tourist Information Centre.

Discussion is ongoing regarding the potential Technology Group.

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

Lutie has secured a £500 grant from South Gloucestershire Council – primarily for use on publishing costs for attracting new members, and for new laptops to replace ageing/obsolete ones.

9 Treasurer’s Report (Rod Dewey).

9.1 Funds

	Bank Accnt	Beacon	Delta	Reason(s) for Difference
PayPal:	£144.90	£115.72	£29.18	TBD (same as last month)
Nat West:	£23,158.82	£22,474.38	£684.44	Membership fees to be paid into bank + South Glos grant and refund from Caterer (TBC)

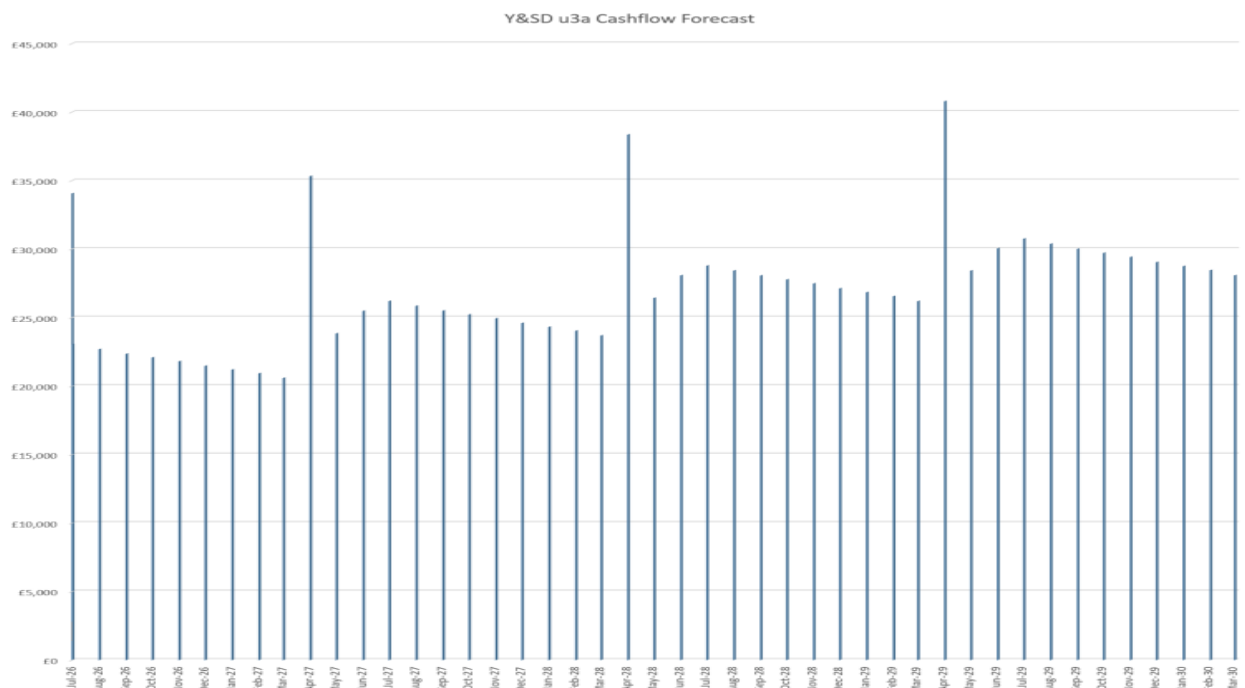
Total:	£23,303.72
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NOTE: HMRC have made two payments for Gift Aid, one on the 13th of April (£3,183.17) and one on the 3rd of May (£3,185.22). Total = £6,368.39. We made two claims, one for the “first 1000” claimants (Total donations = £12,715) and 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 (still pending).

It was agreed that as this discrepancy is uncertain, it will be left until such time as HMRC raise an issue. There are sufficient funds to cover any possible recovery action.

9.2 Cash Flow Forecast – Jul 26 to Apr 30



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

Healthy balance with a slight upward trend.

9.3 Other items

9.3.1 Group Accounts End-of-Year Audit

113 groups on audit list. As at 25/06/26, 93% complete.

Still in progress with outstanding actions on 10 groups.

- **Book Club 1** - Emailed Jean Powell about CS Library hire charges, claimed Type 1
- **French groups** all three are not under u3a control as the tutor is paid by the members and tutor hires the hall
- **Quiz Group** Low balance often in the red – Did Julie talk to leader?
- **Short Mat Bowling** Historical ledger balance of £682.40 requested spoke to them do not know about this balance, will send me last year's accounts
- **Spanish Beginners** No ledger entries – Leader PC crashed data lost, summary to be provided
- **Spanish Intermediate** Historical £36.13 balance as above – write off the £36.13?
- **Ukulele 5** – Conflicting replies from group leaders I need help to resolve. Two groups should there be only one. – Summary of problems shared with Julie and John. Need to plan a meeting
- **Walking** – group holiday should we have account details waiting for reply?

9.3.2 Inactive Groups – Non-Zero Balances

In addition to the Inactive groups, there are several others with historic non-zero balances.

9.3.3 Account access

Rod now has access to both the PayPal and NW accounts.

Lesley's "permissions" are currently limited to signing cheques - Application for additional bank signatories (Rod & Lesley) submitted 27/05/26.

Action 260704- Rod: Review and amend Finance Policy as necessary, regarding signatories.

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

10 Membership Secretary's Report (Lesley Holman)

10.1 stats

- Membership renewals are now complete.
- 225 members from last year have not renewed. We have had 64 new members so far although some of these may be people who have rejoined rather than renewed.
- Our current membership is 1859.

10.2 Members' reasons for leaving

Most of the people contacted have resigned for understandable reasons such as moving home, or ill health. However three resigning members have suggested less than complimentary reasons for their leaving the Y&S u3a. Their concerns should be discussed with a view to addressing any issues where we could improve. The concerns included:

- A perception that the branch is formal and authoritative.
- An impression that the branch is aimed at an older demographic than age 60s.
- Inability to participate in daytime activity groups, due to work.
- A failure to offer lifts for members unable to drive.
- Being photographed without seeking consent.
- No places available in desired Activity Groups.

In the resulting discussion it was pointed out that u3a is intended for people no longer in full-time work, rather than a particular age-group, therefore many activities will be during the day.

Regarding photography at events, there are measures in place to cater for people wishing to avoid being photographed. Signs are placed to notify attendees of the intention to take publicity photos, and offering stickers to avoid being photographed. The photographer is aware of the stickers, and will not include those people.

Action 260705 - Julie: Arrange to get 'No Photos' signs increased to A3 size.

Regarding Activity Groups that are full, the correspondent suggested that instead of admitting a fixed number of members to the group, and then denying others, it could be organised in a fairer way. Allow more people to join the group, but attend on a rotating basis so that everyone has a chance to attend sometimes instead of just a few getting to attend every session.

No decision was reached on this idea, but it is food for thought. It was considered that even if implemented for future joiners (after someone in a group has left and created a vacancy), it would not be reasonable to 'back-date' the policy to existing members who were already part of the group under the current arrangements.

Lesley had pointed out to the correspondent that the most satisfactory solution to full, popular groups is to create a second instance of that group, and that help is available for someone to set up and become a Group Leader. The correspondent had declined that option!

11 Publicity and Newsletter Editor's Report (Paula Young by email).

11.1 Newsletter

Nothing to report

11.2 Publicity

- I have mooted a possible idea to Ian (hope he got that email!) about focusing on one group so suggested the WW2 group. I looked for one without a waiting list as no point advertising one where a potential member has to wait straightaway. The deadline for the next Sodbury Voice is 15th July. If I can't get anything in there then will wait until after the summer.
- Ageing Better Festival – Wed 15th July, 10am – 2pm. A rota has been sent to those who kindly offered to help out on the day (Julie, Leslie, Cat & Patrick) . Times allocated bear in mind parking restrictions.
- Anyone else who feels able to turn up on the day will be very welcome.
- I have the sail, bunting, photo board and leaflets. Patrick is bringing some leaflets too.
- I have not had any further emails from the organisers despite requests for such and will pass on anything further asap.

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

Nothing to report this month.

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

13.1 Contacts

- Committee contacts updated in Beacon and Website, need to review Patrick's new role.
 - Title agreed as 'u3a Regional Liaison'.
- Members do not use the webpage links to contact us, they use the general address which is not monitored closely, and I try to check it regularly and reply.
 - The meeting agreed we should point contacts to the addresses on the Website, but Google picks up one which is shown on the website Terms of Use page. Further investigation will be needed to resolve this issue.

13.2 Membership

- Lapsed members, I have found how to renew a lapsed member if logged on as Beacon Site Administrator.
- It is possible to recover a member's old number if they join again instead of renewing.
- I am looking at using BACS transfers for renewing, to avoid having so many cheques.

Action 260706 - Rod: Establish if BACS transfers are feasible, and define a process as necessary.

13.3 Variable membership fees for Feb/March

- Joining in March, did not know that action required. We have had complaints from members who join (or some re-join) in March and some in February.
- Had message from Janet that Website changed to remove the links to online joining and form and renewal.
- We could extend by another month and let members who join in March have the next year included.
- This is not good as members fees would be shown on the wrong annual accounts.

- We could make renewals in March a lower fee say £5, then they would still have to renew in May.
- TAT and Beacon charges of £4 + £1 = £5 are due for the current membership on March 31st.
- Reduced fees in February or March (or before) should reflect this cost.

Implementing variable rates has the potential to cause an issue with the Capitation Rate to the Trust.

Action 260707 - Rod: Develop a proposal on variable membership rates.

13.4 General

- Trying to remove unused waiting list groups.

14 Ongoing Items for Discussion

14.1 Update on 20th Anniversary Planning (John Wilkinson)

The celebration went very well, many people at the end of the evening said they thought it was very good and that they'd really enjoyed it. Further, similar feedback, has been received since the event.

Despite the number of attendees being significantly less than originally hoped (~140 cf. 300) the event may also be deemed to be a financial success – a subsidy of £5k was agreed at the outset; in the event there was an overspend of £79.68 – a breakdown of the accounts is given in Appendix A below.

Finally, thank you very much to all those involved in making the event a great success; we'll have to think about when to have another one!

Photos taken on the evening of the event are on Dropbox.

Action 260708 - John: Agree with Paula which photos she wishes to use for publicity.

Feedback Comments from Paula

Feedback I have heard from the 20th Anniversary event has been positive. Everyone has said they really enjoyed the evening, the food was excellent, the ambience and decorations were good and the band brilliant. Several said they were surprised when they walked in that it looked so nice! When I asked why they said they didn't think we would do anything like that!!! I sent a thank you to Mimmy (Little Balloon Company) and also did a Google review for her.

A few said it was too loud but I did say it is a cavernous hall and not built with acoustics in mind. Others, who didn't go, now wish they had.

We thoroughly enjoyed the evening and thought the numbers were just right in the end.

Action 260709 - John: Create a record of organising the Anniversary event, to assist with any future similar events.

14.2 Open Day Planning

Requirements to get started:

Appoint a subcommittee, with lead organiser. Ascertain availability of committee members to help on the day. If necessary, co-opt non-committee members. Discuss any changes or additions to previous format, eg slide show, talk(s), live group presentation/video of events etc. Photo board or slide show of group activities? Will there be refreshments?

Publicity - any costs to be authorised by exec committee/treasurer. Examples:

- Item in September newsletter
- Printed posters to be distributed locally, eg Tourist Information Office, Chipping Sodbury, libraries, Town Hall etc
- Facebook
- Local Boundary Magazine
- Contact photography group to ask for photos to be taken on the day
- Apply for Grant from Trust (Chair)

Julie is putting together an organising team, and has collected some volunteers.

15 Any Other Business.

A question was raised as to whether we are compliant regarding Safeguarding. There is a Safeguarding procedure, but we are perhaps not as familiar with it as we should be.

The meeting finished at 16.01 pm.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 5th August 2026 between 2pm and 4pm at The Ridgewood Community Centre room 8/9, 244 Station Road, Yate, BS37 4AF.

Appendix A

Date	Payer / Payee	Description	Reference	In	Out	Balance	Owing	Comments	Beacon #
11/08/2025	Sphere Leisure Centre	Deposit - hire of YLC main hall	Invoice 10541, 15/07/2025.		£430.00	-£430.00	£0.00		12760
07/10/2025	Bluestone Audio	Deposit for hire of staging	Invoice 20250509, 07/10/2025		£159.72	-£589.72	£0.00		12827
20/02/2026	Mr Benjamin K Byrne	Deposit for 'You, Me and the Dancefloor' band	E-mail, from Francis McParland, 19/02/2026		£80.00	-£669.72	£0.00		12972
25/02/2026	Mimmy trading as the The Little Balloon Company	Payment for balloons for event entrance and tables	Invoice INV2627-0148		£862.00	-£1,531.72	£0.00		12975
27/02/2026	Deborah Payvey	Payment for stamps, envelopes & printing	Expense claim, 27-02-26		£158.44	-£1,690.16	£0.00	Postal invitations	12976
03/05/2026	Sphere Leisure Centre	Balance for hire of YLC main hall	Invoice 10819		£1,735.00	-£3,425.16	£0.00		14141
23/05/2026	Wendy Morrison-Jones	Payment for raffle prizes	Expense claim, 23-05-26		£149.00	-£3,574.16	£0.00		14439
26/05/2026	Bluestone Audio	Balance payment for stage hire	Invoice 20260705		£479.16	-£4,053.32	£0.00		14443
26/02/2026	Mr Benjamin K Byrne	Balance for 'You, Me and the Dancefloor' band	None		£720.00	-£4,773.32	£0.00		14444
26/05/2026	Prestige Hire	Payment for chairs, tables & tablecloths	Quote 040675		£1,481.98	-£6,255.30	£0.00		14445
04/06/2026	Paula Young	Decorations - fairy lights for tables			£25.98	-£6,281.28	£0.00		14475
08/06/2026	Brookers	Payment for catering	Invoice		£2,726.40	-£9,007.68	£0.00		14494
07/06/2026	Attendees	Money from raffle ticket sales - cash		£357.00		-£8,650.68	-		14484
09/06/2026	Attendees	Money from entry ticket & raffle ticket sales - Sumup		£140.00		-£8,510.68	-	As advised by Rod (£50 was for entry tickets [2 off])	14503

Date	Payer / Payee	Description	Reference	In	Out	Balance	Owing	Comments	Beacon #
08/06/2026	Attendees	Money from ticket sales - BACS		£3,300.00		- £5,210.68	-		14495
06/06/2026	Attendees	Money from ticket sales - Cash (on the night)		£50.00		£5,160.68	-		14508
23/06/2026	Prestige Hire	Breakages refund		£120.00		£5,040.68	-		
	Print Sprint	Business card event reminders			£39.00	£5,079.68	£39.00	To be billed	

£3,967.00 £9,046.68

Total costs:	£9,046.68	
Total income:	£3,967.00	
Excess of costs over income:	£5,079.68	
Planned subsidy:	£5,000.00	
Overspend:	£79.68	= 1.6 % of subsidy