

**Minutes for Verwood u3a Committee**  
**1400 - 1600 at The Hub**  
**7<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

Present: JCM (Chair); JBM; DN; SA; JD (Sec). (LN (Lesley Newman); MW (Melainie Webb) as observers joined the meeting after Preliminary Discussion)

**Preliminary Discussion:** JCM explained that following the last meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2025, an email to members canvassing for candidates for the position of chair had been sent to all members as agreed. On May 29<sup>th</sup>, an email was received from LN expressing interest in the role of Chair. Later that same day, HW sent an email stating his interest in standing for Chair. JCM had interpreted HW's email as a restatement of his intention made on 19<sup>th</sup> May that he would stand for the Chair if no one came forward. (HW had previously stated that, even though he was vice Chair, he was not going to stand as Chair when JCM stood down). DN and JCM met with LN to explain in more detail what the role of Chair entailed and for LN to ask questions. As a result of this meeting, LN was invited as an observer to the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025 committee meeting to meet other committee members. Appointing the Verwood u3a Chair for 2025/26 will take place at the next AGM as per the constitution. HW had misinterpreted the purpose of the meeting between LN, JCM and DN, and had resigned from Committee. Committee members present agreed that the situation should be clarified ASAP (*NB: JCM has now emailed HW to in order to rectify the misunderstanding*). MW had already been invited to join the meeting previously as she was taking over as Venues Booking Co-Ordinator from DN. After this discussion LN and MW were invited into the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** JT; TW
2. **Minutes of Meeting** held on 19/5/25 were accepted as a true record
3. **Matters Arising:** Item 10 para c needed slight amendment for clarity. There were no other matters arising. **JD**
4. **Chair Report (Including Beacon, Website and Woodlands):** JCM welcomed LN and MW to the meeting as observers and thanked them for expressing interest in volunteering to help with the u3a organisation.
  - a. GM has handed over responsibility for Beacon Membership Secretary to JCM in anticipation of her new role next year. In Case of Emergency (ICE) has been added to the enrolment form and this is being more widely used. Group Leaders have been emailed to assess interest in a Beacon instruction session at the Hub. There have been two responses. GM is intending to make instructional videos for Group Leaders which would be available to access from the Leaders section on the website.
  - b. The website had slowed down recently and subsequently crashed. GM has spent much time exploring and resolving the problems. The discussions with Ionos had thrown up issues with future costs; suitability and the trustworthiness of some of the advice given. Therefore, GM is recommending a move to Siteworks (part of

the Word Press platform but set up for u3a use) This would give a similar but simpler website to Verwood u3a's present one and have the advantage of the National u3a Sitework support team for advice. It is important for the future to ensure that the website is not reliant on the expertise of one person and GM needed to step back from the workload. Emails would remain with Ionos. Overall costs would be less (basic usage for Siteworks is currently £50 per year) but the continuing use of the verwoodu3a domain has yet to be fully explored. It was agreed that a move to Siteworks is best and this will be actioned. As a consequence of the anticipated workload, GM had stood down from the Woodlands Village Hall Committee as the Verwood u3a rep and volunteers would be sort to fulfil this role on due course. The Committee agreed a Vote of Thanks be sent to GM for all his work.

**JCM**

5. **Lesley Newman and Melainie Webb Introductions:** LN outlined her background. She is an accountant by trade, and before moving to Verwood was Treasurer and Chair with Highcliffe Community Association. There were 1,400 members and the Charity had a very similar purpose to u3a, with activities and events for its members. She had set up Cribbage and Rummikub groups within the u3a and attends History and Current Affairs. MW highlighted that she was learning the Venues role but would not be standing for Committee at the AGM. She will remain an active volunteer to call on and will fulfil the Venues role in this capacity.
  6. **Treasurer Report:** JBM had submitted the Financial Accounts as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 Month 11 of the 2024/25 financial year to Committee before the meeting. Of note during June: A very generous donation of £2000, had been received (this would be subject of Gift Aid (resulting in a further £500 when claimed in February 2026). The donor wished to remain anonymous and the money could be used as is deemed fit by the u3a. An email thanking the donor had been sent; Sundry Creditors of £1228 is our Hub charge for June; Subs paid in advance as at 30 June totalled £1268. It is anticipated that there would be a surplus of around £7,000 at End of Year. JBM had discovered that David Allen, a previous Chair and membership secretary, could still see the Verwood u3a accounts on his Barclay's Bank Profile and this will be rectified.
- JCM**
7. **Groups Report:** SA had met various groups as feedback follows:
    - a. **Pickleball.** They are ready to play an initial match against other u3a pickleball teams. A list of other u3a groups in the area had been provided. HW had suggested that the tennis courts at Potterne be marked with Pickleball courts. A meeting with Dan (duty Hub Manager) was held but he has been told that Dorset Council are not willing to remark the courts.
    - b. **Chinese Brush Strokes** (Moirá Forbes is still unwell – Pauline Stemp, Sue Coveyduck and Penny Marlow are covering). They requested help with updating Beacon; asked for another CPR session; and queried the Verwood u3a policy for thanking group leaders (an email had been sent explaining that the various groups handled thanks on an ad hoc basis.) During the National u3a Volunteers' Week (2-8<sup>th</sup> June), GM included a Formal Thanks on the website.

- c. **Garden Matters** under Colin English (CE) is continuing. The group is particularly interested in garden visits and plant exchange.
- d. Paula Pearson wants to continue with exploring Health issues but doesn't feel monthly meetings are feasible. She is willing to assist with Health and Safety Assessments.
- e. **Travel Group** reported a successful visit to Hampton Court. However, on the outward journey, a member became lost at Fleet Services briefly, and subsequently needed supervision by the leaders during the day. The member's vulnerability had not drawn to the attention of the Leaders prior to the visit. This highlights the need for RA (risk assessments). Contact had been made with Probus with reference to the Marwell Zoo trip and two people had expressed interest. However, numbers were still insufficient and the trip has been cancelled. SA had raised the need for more advertising with them and has prepared a leaflet to be available for the Open Day listing the planned visits for 25/26.
- f. **Cribbage:** Ray Williamson was taking over Cribbage as Group Leader.
- g. **Group Leaders Meeting Items:**
  - i. Further training needed for Beacon
  - ii. Computer surgeries to guide with PC and tablets (accessing website and navigation; sending photos)
  - iii. Website calendar not user friendly. (JCM will talk to GM but calendar was a feature of Beacon)
  - iv. No carrying chair at Emmanuel School
  - v. 1<sup>st</sup> Aid box locked away at the Hive
  - vi. Some table tennis tables in need of repair
  - vii. Group leaders need to be aware of emergency exit protocols at venues
  - viii. HW will try to set up CPR/defib training
  - ix. Group Leaders told where and how to access their forms
  - x. Group Leaders told of u3a Eye online magazine and about the essay and photographic competitions, plus the availability of Zoom programmes
  - xi. Christmas meal at Remedy was advertised. More social time at the end of the meal was requested.
  - xii. Cancellation of the travel trips puts members off signing up
  - xiii. Membership fees were discussed. CE thought people on benefit should pay a reduced fee – (this was discussed by Committee and a hardship fund feasibility will be investigated further)
  - xiv. Group of the Month and a 2025/2026 Verwood u3a calendar were discussed but neither was popular
  - xv. Lack of storage for some groups at the Hub.
  - xvi. Items raised when dealing with Training and H & S would be dealt with by DN

- 8. **Committee membership and roles:** TW and SA have decided not to stand for Committee at next AGM. HW had resigned from Committee although was likely to stand for Chair at the AGM. LN had also expressed an interest in the role of Chair. Therefore, as matters stood, there would be 4 vacancies on the Committee next year. JBM wanted to step down once a new Treasurer was found, JD has a potential health issue that may require her to step away. The need for Committee volunteers

remained urgent and it was agreed that the personal approach is best but emails, highlighting on the website and promulgating the role responsibilities were very important too. *(NB: after the meeting, LN decided that she would not stand for Chair but stand as a committee member shadowing JBM, hopefully to take over as Treasurer in due course).* Committee members standing down were thanked for their contribution and SA was highlighted for her work with the groups. **All**

9. **Constitution:** JD had identified that the constitution needed updating. Any changes must be ratified at an AGM. JT had worked through the document and made change proposals to be presented to the membership. In particular, the management of a non-quorate AGM is not practical and it was agreed that this element should be reworked and put to membership via an online vote ASAP, so that AGM decisions could be validated. JCM would draft an email for Committee approval. Remaining adjustments were not urgent and would be promulgated with the AGM notice **JCM**
10. **Job Descriptions and Policy Docs update:** work in progress. **JD/JT/JCM**
11. **AGM:** item postponed to next meeting
12. **Christmas Lunch:** It was felt unlikely that sufficient numbers would book to secure total usage of Remedy Oak – further discussion postponed to next meeting
- .
13. **Remembrance Sunday:** item postponed to next meeting
14. **Rustic Fayre and Open Day Update:**
  - a. New tent is needed for Rustic Fayre (£200 approx.) - this will be sourced. The whole membership will be approached for volunteers to man the tent on the day.
  - b. Open Day 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025:
    - i. Flyers have been produced and need distributing
    - ii. Outside agencies attending so far are Rotary; Verwood Horticultural Soc; and the Hub.
    - iii. 40 tables and 60 chairs are booked
    - iv. Printed application forms will be available and must be completed even by renewals
    - v. A list of current members will be available.
    - vi. JCM will give the banner to DN
    - vii. Stalls will be grouped in categories i.e. arts and crafts in same area etc. Forest FM will be informed (HW was doing this on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July)
15. **Potential speakers – Jane Frampton:** postponed to next meeting
16. **Any Other Business:** There was no other business.

Meeting closed at 4pm.

**NB: Date of the next meeting is September 15<sup>th</sup> 2025 2-4 pm at the Hub**