

EXETER u3a

Minutes of the committee meeting of Monday 1 September 2025

Present: Terry Ancell (chair), Annabel Nater (Groups Co-ordinator), M.J. Morgan (minutes), Ian Murray (Membership Secretary), Ann Harper (Secretary), Elaine Thornton, Mark Hall, Harriet Smith

1. Welcome

Terry welcomed all and confirmed that the meeting was quorate

2. Apologies for absence

Sue Spence, Virginia Rosenfeld, Rosie Hydar, Anne Barwell

3. Declarations of interest

None

4. Minutes of the meeting of 7 July 2025

The minutes were approved, subject to a minor correction in 6.1: the carried forward balance figure from 2024-2025 should read £20,508.34

Action: M.J. to send Ann H. the corrected copy for the record. Ann H. to forward to Bob Cottis for the website

5. Matters arising from the minutes of 7 July 2025

5.1 Use of Zoom by the Science Group: Elaine has raised this with the convenor of the Science Group who is in principle agreeable to trying Google Meet for meetings where the speaker is at a distance from Exeter, but this would also have to work for other group members and would probably require a trial using the option of 60 free minutes. A subscription would cost £70.00. Alternatively the group could try using Teams; Exeter u3a already has a licence for five users.

Action: Elaine to continue to discuss options with the convenor

6.1 Ann H. has completed the financial return to the Charity Commission

6.2 Terry has not yet written to the convenors concerned as he did not have full information

Action: Ian to send information to Terry; Terry to then email convenors

9. SumUp machine now bought but not used yet

All other actions in the minutes of 7 July had been completed or were on the agenda

6. Regular reports

- 6.1 Finance: Rosie had circulated, via email, the current account statement. Terry requested that the statement include the carried forward figure of the bank balance so that the full financial picture can be seen

Rosie also reported that there is a 10% rise in the cost of the Mint licence (charges for rooms) from September 2025 onwards. Terry requested that Rosie explore the implications of this rise for the budget for the rest of 2025-2026

Action: Rosie to add carried forward figure to the financial statement for the next committee meeting and also to report on the implications of the Mint licence increase

Action: Rosie & Ann H. to liaise to sign and return the Mint licence agreement

- 6.2 Membership: Ian had circulated a report via email. Total membership is now 760, with 82 new members since 1.4.25 but things are slowing down – a rise might be expected from 1.10.25, when half-year membership (£13) becomes available

Noted that a number of convenors do not use Beacon and therefore may not be aware which of their group members are in paid membership. There are other practical issues arising from this situation and it was agreed to encourage all convenors to use Beacon.

Action: M.J. to draft email to go to convenors and circulate to the committee for comment

- 6.3 Groups: Annabel had circulated a report via email. Following the survey of convenors about the future of the Convenors' Cafe, alternative means of offering support are being arranged (although the Cafe may still take place at intervals). It was agreed that the most important thing is that convenors are aware of the communication channels they can use to help when queries arise

- 6.4 Speaker Team: Terry continues to liaise with the team and reported good discussions between members to identify possible speakers and weigh up the pros and cons of particular speakers, topics etc

7. Recruitment of new convenors/co-convenors: Annabel had nothing new to report

8. Open Day

This had been postponed for two main reasons: difficulty in organising in September, after the summer break, and not being able to offer enquirers a full range of groups due to some being full. It was agreed that the latter (and the reasons for it) is a key issue which should be explored further at the November meeting

Action: Ann H to add to the agenda

Action: Mark to identify on Beacon which groups are full and bring this to the November meeting for discussion

It was agreed that an Open Day in early 2026 would be a good idea but that merging it with the Groups Fair would not work, as the latter is at the Mint which does not get the 'passing traffic' which St Stephen's does. Mid-February to mid-March was identified as a suitable time

Action: Anne B to contact St Stephen's to check which dates are available during this period

Action: M.J. to take the lead in establishing a working party to organise the Open Day

9. Supporter lunch, January 2026

It was agreed that this should take place in early/mid January, prior to the week of the Groups Fair and ideally not on the same day of the week as in the last two years

Action: M.J. to liaise with Exeter College to find a suitable date

10. Third Age Trust: voting for Vice-Chair

It was agreed that Exeter u3a's vote would be for Sheila Crawley

Action: Ann H to register the vote

11/12. Email problems/Sharepoint file sharing

Mark is taking the lead on Beacon email issues but reported there are now fewer of these. Committee members and convenors were requested to refer enquiries on this to Mark.

Elaine is taking the lead on Sharepoint, which seems to provide what is needed in terms of providing a central file sharing facility. Before access to this is rolled out to all committee members, some tidying-up/reorganisation is required

Action: Elaine and Ann H to meet to sort/plan the folder/file structure

13. Any other business

Carolsing: 18 December (replaces monthly meeting)

Action: Ann H to email Julie Crichton-Smith to request the choir lead the event

Terry reported he would not be at the November monthly meeting

Action: Terry to ask Virginia to chair this meeting

Date of next meeting: Monday 3 November 2025, 2pm in the Wesley Room at the Mint