

BRANSTON & DISTRICT u3a
COMMITTEE MEETING TUESDAY 18TH MARCH 2025
BRANSTON SPORTS PAVILION 2PM

Present: Jane Haresign (Chair JH), Janet Foster (JF), Rick Smok (RS), Katie Baldwin (KB), Anne Pickersgill (AP), Robert Waltz (RW), Marjorie Barr (MB), Nick Dawes (ND), Chris Skilbeck (CS), Bryn Jenkins (BJ), Eileen McKelvey (EM).

- 1. Apologies:** None.

- 2. Minutes for Approval and Matters Arising:** The February Minutes were approved, having previously been sent to all Committee members for comments and amendments. All agreed. A copy was signed by Jane, for inclusion on the website. No matters arising.

- 3. Chair's Report:** Jane had little to report this month, her main activities being sorting out the York trip in August and visiting a potential venue for the Christmas meal. She had also been in touch with RJ Events Catering and Branston Village Hall re menus and available dates for the alternative "Christmas" social in November. See Item 12 for further discussion.

- 4. Treasurer's Report:** Janet reported that there had not been much activity in the Main Account, other than membership renewals coming in. There was a healthy balance of £6368.54 at 28th February as most monies had come in and not much had gone out. There had been no activity in the Social Account, the balance of which stood at £338.82. The capitation fee of £4 per member will have to be paid, but Gift Aid will refund some of that.

Anne proposed a vote of thanks for Janet, for all the sterling work she had done, both as Treasurer during her years in the role, and for all the extra work she had taken on in organising events. All agreed.

5. Secretary's Report: Katie reported that due notice of the upcoming AGM had been given, and thanked Rick for printing various documents to post to those members with no email contact.

Twenty five apologies had been received to date and no member motions.

Janet had prepared the end of year accounts, which had been circulated, and certified copies would be available at the AGM, along with the Asset Register, should anyone wish to examine them.

Jane was finalising her script for the day. Unfortunately, the incoming Treasurer and one of the new Committee members would not be present at the AGM. Katie would assist Jane at the AGM.

Robert, having noted the number of paid up members, would liaise with Janet and Eileen to provide details of the number attending, to ascertain whether or not the meeting was quorate, as there needs to be 25% of the paid up membership in attendance. In the unlikely event that it was not quorate, those members present could continue to vote.

Rick will print a few copies of the final agenda, 2024 draft minutes and accounts and 2025 certified accounts for the AGM. **Action RS.**

6. Membership Secretary's Report: Robert reported that the current membership stood at 265, 6 new members having joined since the last Committee Meeting. Currently, there were no prospective new members, one possible having joined Heath u3a, as we could not offer the groups she was interested in.

Final renewal reminder notices had been sent out to the remaining non-renewed members. Currently there were 11 outstanding renewals, comprising 9 single and 2 joint memberships.

Since January, there had been 18 resignations, for various reasons. If there are no further renewals by 31st March the total membership figure will be 254. At this time last year we had 258 members with 11 still to renew.

7. Welfare Officer's Report: Marjorie reported that she had spoken to a member, who had recently had surgery. She had also sent a card to another member after surgery, who was now home but would probably need another operation in the future. She also reported on the ill health of 2 members' partners.

8. Group Coordinator's and Website Report: Rick reported that Alan Croxford, the long-standing convenor of the Photography group, had resigned and removed himself from the group. Bryn Jenkins had taken over, and Rick had added him to Beacon and carried out Beacon training. Rick wanted it recording in the Minutes that Alan had been one of our original members and he wanted to pass on his thanks for such an outstanding commitment to our u3a. It was agreed that Alan should be presented with a gift of thanks at the Monthly Meeting.

9. Programme Secretary's Report: Nick reported that there had been a particularly good turnout at the February Monthly Meeting, and he had sent a letter of thanks to Mike Newbold, the speaker. He had also since sent the usual teaser email for the upcoming AGM and Monthly Meeting.

He had been in contact with 3 more potential speakers, but had only, so far, received one reply. He would do the talk for free but had requested £130 expenses. If all 3 replied the fees would average out at about £77. He had also booked Sharon Hall, from Lincs Police, for September 2026 to talk about scams.

Robert suggested another speaker who would charge £50 plus £15 for travel expenses, for Nick to contact. **Action ND.**

10. AGM: See also Item 5. Katie reported that everything was in place. Everyone had been notified, and she would let Eileen have the list of apologies. Anne suggested photos of Coral Earney, the incoming Treasurer, and Chris Skilbeck, who would be taking over from Rick, should be available, as they would be unable to attend the AGM. After the AGM Rick would remove himself and Janet from Fasthost, and a resume from Coral and Chris would be needed. Rick will produce the slides for the AGM, but would need the agenda so that he could match the slides with the agenda. Jane will sign last year's Minutes, once approved, and Rick will put them on the website. **Action RS**

11. New Members' Meeting: Robert reported that invitations had been sent out to 11 new, and 12 recent, members for the meeting on Friday 11th April from 10-12 in the Sports Pavilion. To date he had received

positive replies from 13 members, and 3 apologies. He thanked Chris for sending out invitations to all Group Convenors.

Chris reported that she had sent out 27 invitations to Group Convenors. To date 11 convenors from 10 groups had sent positive replies. Two apologies had been received, one from Heather Westney, Convenor of French Conversation, who wanted members to be informed the group was full, with a waiting list of 2 people, and Diane Oxby, Convenor of Mah Jong 2, whose group is full and there is no room for anyone else. Anne said she would be prepared to help set up another French Conversation Group if necessary.

It was also suggested that the new members should be asked to provide any ideas they may have for new groups, and, ideally, which they would be prepared to lead.

Jane will also invite Audrey Taylor, and Judy Crowe, who will be new Committee Members.

- 12. Christmas Meal and November Social:** Jane had already sent to the Committee details and comparisons of the International Bomber Command Centre and Nettleham Rugby Club, the 2 venues under consideration for the Christmas meal. After some discussion about what each venue offered in the way accessibility, distance, car parking, room size, costs and menu choices, it was decided that Jane would confirm the booking with Nettleham Rugby Club. It was decided to limit the number to 70, although the Rugby Club could have seated more, and the menu to 2 courses, main and dessert. Jane will send out an email to all members, informing them of the decision, and including the menu choices from last year, which, she was assured, would be similar to the new menu, which should be available in May. It was also decided that Nick should contact Ken Moore, who had been the original choice of speaker in December 2024. **Action JH, ND.**

Jane reported that she had contacted the Village Hall for available dates in November for the Social, and the Committee decided on Tuesday 18th. She had received prices from RJ Events Catering for the buffets they offer, one at £10.50 and a smaller buffet at £7.50. Desserts could also be provided, at extra cost. It was decided that Jane should also enquire about hot options for the buffet. Jane will book the Village Hall for 18th

November, and Nick will approach possible speakers or singers to provide the entertainment. **Action JH, ND**

13. York Trip Update: Jane reported that, to date, 43 people had signed up for the trip. Jane is collecting the payments and will liaise with Coral over the paying in for it. Rick will make up a poll on Beacon, once he has the names, so that Jane can email everyone involved at once.

Action JH, RS

14. VE Day 80th Anniversary Celebrations: Bryn reported that Branston is holding a celebration on 12th May, and the Village Hall Committee had asked him to ascertain whether the u3a would be interested in taking part. After some discussion about the preparations required, and the potential gain to the u3a, it was decided that we would decline the offer. Bryn will advise the Village Hall of our decision. **Action BJ.**

15. New Signatories for Cheques: Janet reported that she had been in touch with Santander, and had been sent a blank mandate form, to be completed after the AGM. Barclays, who hold the Social Account, won't send anything until after the AGM. Three signatories are required, so that will be Coral and one more to provide the minimum number. Janet will do everything required until the end of March. Katie will leave the names of the current trustees on the website until the new signatories are confirmed.

16. AOB: Rick reported that he had been informed by Branston Parish Council that the metal cabinet in the Pavilion was badly damaged, so he and Bryn examined it on Friday 14th March. It was, indeed, badly damaged, and they effected a repair as best they could, but they felt it really did need to be replaced. It was agreed that a new, larger and stronger cabinet should be purchased, which would cost in the region of £250. This would hold all the equipment currently forced into the existing one. The Parish Council should be consulted first. The current one could then be repaired and reused in the Village Hall. Bryn also requested that he get rid of stereo equipment, which hadn't been used for 5 years, and which was of no value, which was in the cupboard. Agreed.

Bryn asked about the status of someone who wants to join the Photography Group, but is not a member of the u3a. They had already been to 1 Monthly Meeting. Bryn was advised to inform them that they could only come to 1 group meeting, and then they would have to become a member of the u3a if they wanted to continue. **Action BJ.**

Bryn enquired whether the Committee would authorise the purchase of a USB Interface Box for the Photography Group. It would cost £35 approx. It could be used by any group if it was kept in the cabinet, but, as the Photography Group met elsewhere, it was deemed too difficult to ensure it would always be available if required. It was decided that the group members should pay for the box themselves, which would then be for their sole use.


Janet reported that she had received an email from the Village Hall Secretary about a meeting booked in the name of the u3a for Wednesday 26th March from 1-4pm. Janet said she had no knowledge of this meeting and she had not been asked to authorise it, so she informed the Committee that she had requested the booking be cancelled.

She also reported that that Village Hall would be using a new booking system, which would cover dates up until 2028. Janet requested permission to cancel all 4th Tuesday bookings in August and December in that period. All agreed. Coral will be responsible in future for the bookings.

Date of the Next Committee Meeting: Tuesday 15th April 2025, Branston Sports Pavilion, 2pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.35pm.

Signed by the Chair as a true record.

 15/04/2025
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