

Minutes of Great Glen, Oadby & Wigston u3a Committee

6th January 2026 in the Ruth Warner Room, Great Glen Methodist Church at 2:15pm

Present : Peter Williams, June Juett, Roger Edwards, Elizabeth Cooke, Janet Fanko, Robert Mansfield, Cherry Thacker

Apologies received from : Noelene Sapiro and Lynda Williams

1. Peter Williams welcomed the Committee.
2. Minutes of Meeting 2nd December 2025 were approved.
3. **Matters Arising/Action Points**
 - EC has checked the GGOW u3a Groups print list we use for recruitment activities.
 - Potential New Groups is on the agenda
 - PW has collected the display boards and is currently storing them
 - CT researched other local u3a's to see what groups there are on offer for our consideration

4. **Membership Matters JF**
 - Membership = 532 as at 31/12/25
 - 4 new members in January 2026
 - 101 new members January to December 2025
 - 45 associates
 - Currently 357 do not take the u3a magazine
 - Renewals planned to go out in the 3rd week of February 2026

5. **New Members Meeting January 2026**
 - 8 members so far have accepted + 2 prospective members
 - 3 committee members + 2 others if required

AP PW to send an email reminder to members

AP JJ to create a piece for the Newsletter regarding the National Virtual Interest Groups. JJ would appreciate our input too.

AP EC to print out updated groups list so new members can see what is available

AP CT to mention opportunities to become more involved in GGOW u3a and wider u3a at New Members Meeting

AP RM to provide background about u3a at New Members Meeting

6. Finance Matters RE

- Just over £26,500 in the bank.
- Interest rates have recently dropped which impacts the finances
- No change in subscription
- If membership drops, monies from groups can drop in proportion.
- The Treasurer was expecting there to be a small surplus at the year end.
- The committee discussed Budget Forecast Summary 2026-2027 and GGOW u3a by Group Accounts as at 31.12.25

7. Charity Commission Return RE

- LW has been experiencing issues uploading the finances.
- We are currently over the turnover threshold of £25,000 which causes a further issue.
- The return has to be in by 31.01.26
- We have to go with the accounts that we have.
- We need to decide how we go forward with our finances. We are allowed to carry on with the independent financial examiner and certificates that we have.

The Committee noted that GGOW u3a had annual income and reserves both in excess of £25,000 and considered whether it was therefore appropriate to move from the current annual independent examination of the accounts by Mike Snow (a member who had been in public practice as a Chartered Accountant) to a formal external audit. The financial controls were subject to annual review and were deemed appropriate for GGOW u3a, given its size and resources and the financial risks to which it was exposed. The amounts by which the charity's finances exceeded the £25,000 turnover threshold established by the Charities Commission were modest, but were likely to persist unless there was a significant decline in membership. It was the charity's intention to reduce its reserves through sustainable action. Employing an external auditor would add a significant cost in return for marginal benefit, and would be likely to add to the workload of an already busy treasurer and perhaps make it more difficult to fill this position when it became vacant. It was therefore decided to retain the current arrangement whereby the accounts were subject to independent examination for the year 2025/2026 and for 2026/2027 (subject to ratification at the next Annual General Meeting).

- We may need to look at the cash accounting basis used at present and use accruals based accounting.
- Our assets value can be included – computers, projectors, speakers for example
- We need to formally ask our independent financial examiner regarding the finances and what he does and confirm this in writing.

AP PW to speak to the financial examiner regarding this matter and ask for written confirmation that he has done the job he has been asked to do and to confirm his qualifications.

AP PW, RE and RM to meet with LW and support her in the uploading of the Charity Commission Return.

8. Gift Aid RE

- The committee discussed this and noted that there is currently nothing more from the Third Age Trust on this matter. We await the outcome of National Decisions.

9. Monthly Speaker Meetings PW

- Speakers have been booked to the end of 2026

10. Group Co-Ordinator's Report EC

- There was a discussion regarding groups and days and timings so we ensure the information is correct. The website and newsletter need to match. EC has been through the Groups List to check information.

- After discussion it was decided to update the information.

AP RE to update and email EC where necessary – including Quiz Zoom, Music and Good Company, Walking Without Stiles, French, Latin, Handbells and Easy Strollers. The date of updating is to be included on the documents.

AP EC to make the updated list available for members at the upcoming New Members Meeting on 23.01.26

- Some groups have fewer members – Art and Book Groups for example. CT has emailed RS (Art Leader) with a positive blurb to be possibly included in the Newsletter to hopefully encourage more take up)
- RM suggested a GroupLeader could make a short presentation about their group at a committee meeting. Other u3a's do this.

AP EC to advertise History, Walking and Books at the next speaker meeting.

Ukulele Storage Space Requirements RM

- The Methodist Church has generously offered some storage space in a cupboard at the Church Hall premises.
- The committee unanimously approved the purchase of a BOSE SI amplifier.
- The BOSE SI will be stored in our locked cupboard and the rest of the equipment stored in the space provided. Both spaces are provided by the church.
- Potentially, a u3a lockable cabinet could be installed in the space for additional security.
- Potentially, a curtain/cover could be placed in the space provided.

AP RE to liaise with the ukulele group leader regarding the purchase of the amplifier.

AP RM to approach the Church about another small lockable cupboard

11. Potential New Groups (ALL)

- After discussion it was decided to offer 5 potential new groups as a starting point including Play Reading, Debating, Singing for Fun, BSL and Walking Further (5-8 miles)

AP PW to email members regarding the potential new groups and to canvass interest. New members to be included.

12. Business Secretary's Report LW

- As LW was not present it was decided to include the Business Cycle Policies Review at the next meeting.

- The committee discussed paper RR Risk Register 2026. It was decided to amend some wording including

3. Shortage of Committee/Officers – medium likelihood changed to low

5. Non Compliance with Legislation Gift Aid. Change Closure to Loss of Eligibility

*Copyright to be added with Medium Risk – Medium Severity

6. Loss of Reputation – Trustees make poor decisions to include what is recorded in minutes and decisions made

7. Health and Safety. PAT Testing to have a report at the end of the year. Our equipment to be tested and items failed to be recycled where possible and items replaced.

Carpet Bowls mats are heavy to lift and place.

AP PW to liaise with the group leader regarding this matter of safe lifting – what to do/what not to do. PW to visit Carpet Bowls.

AP RE to update document and bring to next committee meeting.

PAPER FC Review of Financial Controls RE

- The committee discussed the paper. The Asset Register needs to be kept up to date.
- Maximum spends of over £100 needs to be approved by the committee.
- Small amounts up to £100 to be approved by EC
- Group Leaders can choose to pay or not for their group fees.
- After discussion of Paper FC the committee discussed the review and approved it

13. Newsletter JJ

- The next newsletter will cover February and March 2026

AP CT to email regarding the Art Group Leader regarding a possible insert of text. If they are happy CT to email JJ

14. Any Other Business

- Future Network Meeting on Monday 16th February 2026 courtesy of Syston u3a. PW has received an email from them regarding this meeting.
- The Pantomime was very enjoyable.
- Copyright RM to be added to the agenda for February

15. Next Meeting : Tuesday 3rd February 2026 at 2:15pm. Ruth Warner Room