

MINUTES
MAGHULL & LYDIATE U3A
Held at Lydiate Village Centre on Tuesday 8th October 2024 at 1:30pm

Present: Jane Jones – Chair	Chris Dalziel – Treasurer	Ev Craig – Minute Sec.
Carol Westall – Vice Chair	Ken Moulton	Joan Martin
Chris Chua-Short – Admin Sec.	Nigel Burrows	Lynne Chappell
Lil Boyle	Neil Hawkes	Irene Edwards

1 Apologies:

No apologies.

2 Minutes of last meeting

Minutes agreed and approved by all. Proposed by Chris Chua-Short and Seconded by Ev Craig.
Agreed unanimously by a show of hands

3 Matters arising from previous minutes

1. NB clarified the statement from last month's minutes, under the heading 'Information for the Blind'. This should read 'Articles for the Blind'[the official name of the scheme]. NB would like to get a second person setup to understand and operate this process, so we spread the knowledge, so please let him know if anyone is interested.
2. H&S – JJ stated that she hadn't received a reply from the Town Hall regarding the free CPR training being offered. EC volunteered to contact Siobhan Larking again.
3. Minutes of the emergency committee meeting have now been posted on the website, but JJ has redacted them to ensure confidentiality. JJ has also clarified a query from Phil Davidson regarding concern over recent minutes.
4. PAT testing has been booked for 15th October
5. JJ had to register with TAT so we could tell them we weren't voting at the AGM.
6. JJ has purchased the two tables at a total cost of £194.97
7. NH queried the refreshments being free over the winter period. JJ explained that this was the simplest way to reduce the balance in the accounts.

4 Correspondence

1. Visual Rights Group letters – refer to point 7 in the agenda
2. Email from Sam Mauger – see under matters arising above about the requirement to register the fact that we aren't taking part in the AGM
3. TAM email with a request for payment for the magazines. There seems to be a problem processing this to pay for the magazines quarterly. JJ to query this.

5 Officers Reports

Membership – CW confirmed that we have 656 members in total. Over the last 4 weeks there have been 5 new members and 5 renewals. It is important that membership check that people aren't renewing when they have already paid for this year.

Finance – CD is going to look at the Gift Aid to make sure that it is totally correct, over the past few years.

Health and Safety – KM has been in touch again with Oakhill regarding the Bowling and the paperwork just needs to be finalised. As all the checks need to be done annually, this process will start again but should be straightforward. The aim is to spread this task to others.

Website update – NB confirmed that in September there were 23 new posts with 9 people posting. There were also 31 comments which are approved anyway before they are posted. NB stated that there is a big problem with Spam comments – he had removed 2000 last Friday and since then over 100 had appeared. These aren't visible on the website to users and are emptied automatically every 30 days. JJ had brought this up with NB recently and had enquired whether this time period could be reduced. The comments do have to be roughly checked as there can be genuine correspondence within them.

The website policy is 80% ready to be published. It is important that Group Leaders are more proactive putting updates and activities both on the website and the calendar.

Facebook – NB reported that there are 129 members of the site. It is useful to showcase activities to all members so they could sign up for other groups.

Beacon – NB stated that there is still a need to delete deceased members and there are still occasional mistakes with email addresses.

6. **Group Leaders Handbook**

Due to other priorities, there hasn't been time for a further meeting to progress the handbook.

7. **Copyright Infringement**

A letter has been received from Visual Rights Group stating that a copyrighted photograph had been published on our website without permission so U3A have been fined £405.75.

Initially JJ thought this could be a scam but has done a huge amount of investigation and is now convinced that this is genuine, following a check with Companies House. JJ approached TAT for guidance but although they stated that this had happened to other U3As, they were unable to give advice.

JJ wrote an appeal letter to VRG but this was rejected. U3A have been charged a 'pastoral' fine which acknowledges that there has been no financial gain and said the commercial fine would have been much more. There has also been an official letter from Alamy the copyright holder. They receive a portion of the fine.

It is going to be necessary to ban any Group Leaders from putting any photos on the website unless they are personal ones.

CD proposed that the bill for £407.75 is paid by cheque, and EC seconded this proposal.

This was approved by the majority with JM abstaining.

8 **PO Box to be installed as our mailing address**

Because the original correspondence re the copyright issue was sent to the ex-secretary, there was a discussion about whether there should be a generic PO Box address. However, JJ pointed out that this would cost £343 pa which was thought to be excessive considering how little post there would be. It was decided that JJ would ask Darren if the Baptist Church address could be used as the generic postal address.

9 **Vetting**

Considering the copyright situation, it was agreed that the vetting procedure would continue in line with other U3As. The committee has the right to appoint members to take part in the vetting process.

10. Financial issue - gifts

Following discussion, the policy of not buying gifts for members from group accounts was reinforced. It is only possible to give gifts by asking for voluntary donations.

11. Confidential issue

It was reported that KM is dealing with a confidential issue.

12. Report from NW Regional meeting on 5th October @Quaker House, Liverpool

The meeting was to allow the new Chair – David Blanchflower to make the acquaintance of members from the regions u3as. A discussion was held on the u3a's plans for – Fit for Future. The role of the current Trustees has been quite demanding so the purpose is to form regions to act as a buffer. There are currently 12 regions in total including NI and Scotland. The plan is to reduce these to six. DB will automatically have a set on the regional board with u3as having one or two (depending on size) on the boards.

Many large charities have taken up this approach. The regional committees will not be management committees more like councils. Their purpose is to ensure they know what we the members want.

Discussion was held concerning the fact that many u3as who are not registered with the CC are not aware that they still have to abide by the CC's rules.

Discussion went on to cover the lack of information transmitted to our members. Many Secretaries are failing to send on information.

Discussion as to what u3as want in services and support from the NW Region: Talking to other groups; Workshops; Peer to Peer meetings; how to form reciprocal agreements with other u3as to support interest groups and short courses. The NW team would like to organise Peer to Meetings e.g. Chairs, Secretaries, Groups Coordinators, Treasurers – probably on Zoom. Members agreed that they would be interested and would find such meetings useful. Members agreed that they find networking useful for the exchange of ideas and information. GR explained that she could no longer organise network meetings and suggested ideas for the networks to organise their own.

Discussion about the Regional NW newsletter currently produced by GR. A photo competition was mentioned where photos can be sent in and judged. Other items are invited for the newsletter.

A reminder was given that u3as who use Site Builder will have their sites discontinued from December. We are not affected.

13. AOB

1. IE raised the problem about using blank cheques. This practice is necessary especially on day trips etc, when it isn't known what the final price is until the actual day. A cheque will always have the payee's name on it and is signed and a receipt is always provided. There is also the problem about whether payments are refundable or not. It was agreed that this is an important subject so will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.
2. IE pointed out that the date of the next committee meeting on 12th November coincided with more than half the committee being away on a trip. **It was agreed that this would be moved to 19th November, following a show of hands.** EC changed the booking with Lydiate Village Centre.

14. Date of next meeting - Tuesday 19th November 2024 at 1.30pm – Lydiate Village Centre