

u3a Dacorum

Minutes of the 36th Annual General Meeting held at 10:30 am on Monday 3 August 2026 at the Boxmoor Playhouse, St John's Road, Hemel Hempstead.

Attendance

There were 77 members present, and a further 7 on Zoom. Proxy votes were submitted by 182 members (180 online and 2 postal) for the motions and election of Trustees and Officers.

Those present included the following Trustees:

Jane Campbell	Vice Chair
Ellen Duffy	Halls Booking Secretary
John Dodkins	Beacon Admin and Digest editor
Lee Pace	Groups Secretary and Speaker Secretary
Henry Wallis	Treasurer
Carolyn Wallis	Chair

Also present were the following Committee Associate members:

Terry Thirlwell	Equipment Officer and Web Admin
Lesley Drake	Minutes secretary (shared role)
Mike Sapsard	Web Admin
Liz Penney	Publicity Officer
Deborah Porter	Minutes secretary (shared role)
Anne Menzies	Web Admin
Richard Cartwright	Web Admin

1 Welcome

Carolyn Wallis welcomed all those members attending the 36th AGM.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from the following:

Mary Wyon	Mark Gifford
Harvey Collyer	Chris Watson
Sue Arundel	Tony Lenton

3 Approval of the Minutes of the 35th AGM held on 4 August 2025

3.1 There were no comments on the minutes of the previous AGM.

3.2 The motion to approve the minutes had the following votes:

Votes:161 in favour and 21 abstentions.

3.3 The minutes were therefore approved by a majority vote.

4 Chair's Report (Carolyn Wallis)

4.1 The chair welcomed everyone to the 36th AGM, recalling that we had celebrated our 35th Anniversary last September. Carolyn reported that the membership numbers were steady at 1285 with enough new members having been recruited during the year to replace those not renewing. A new Publicity officer has joined the Committee during the year to help publicise our organisation and has been developing our Facebook page.

4.2 Carolyn thanked the members who had helped to run the various publicity events held during the year including the display in the Marlowes shopping centre and stalls at the Box Moor Trust fair and the Leverstock Green fete. We have renewed our membership of Community Action Dacorum and they will help us to run a publicity event in Hemel this week. Our u3a was also involved in a local community OPALS event (Older Persons Active Learning & Safety) in March and will attend another one later in August.

The latest publicity leaflets were shown to members who were asked to take some at the end of the meeting if they knew anywhere they could be displayed.

4.3 During the year the Committee have presented a number of new policies which are necessary for an organisation such as ours – the policies covered Health & Safety, Data Protection, Organisational Risk Assessment and an update of the Privacy Policy.

4.4 Carolyn explained that there are currently seven trustees on the Committee and no new volunteers have come forward this year. We will be running the Committee without a Vice Chair this coming year, having had a vacancy for a Secretary during the current year. The Secretary role has now been filled but this leaves the need for a new Halls Booking Secretary. Carolyn then named and thanked all the trustees and Committee associates, detailing their different roles, before explaining that new volunteers are urgently needed for the coming year as both the Treasurer and the Chair will have completed their terms of office and will have to step down next August.

5 Treasurer's Report (Henry Wallis)

5.1 Henry stated that he was pleased to present his second set of accounts, which have been put onto our website and were sent to those people who receive the AGM papers by post. Henry was happy to say that the independent examiner's review went very smoothly this year, aided by learnings from last year.

5.2 The accounts show a surplus of just over £1,000 for the year and reserves of £19,500. We had budgeted for a small deficit for the year as part of our plans to reduce our reserves to about £10,000. There are 3 main factors in the results being better than anticipated:

5.2.1 Riviera Travel – we received nearly £1,000 from Riviera Travel as donations for trips booked by our members under a scheme organised by the Third Age Trust (TAT); this is much more than last year. We are very grateful to anyone who does this but we cannot accurately forecast this income.

5.2.2 Group income and attendance – In January 2025 we reviewed the amounts charged by hall-based groups, to ensure as many as possible were covering their costs. As a result, some groups increased their charges from £2 to £3 and some moved to cheaper halls. We also appear to have had more people coming to meetings this year, which is good to see.

5.2.3 Hall charges – we expected halls to increase their charges significantly as many had not done so for 2 or 3 years. We had some small increases in charges (50p or £1 per hour) but not of the size we had anticipated. So far in 2026 we have again escaped large hall cost increases, though one of our largest venues, Adeyfield Community Centre, has indicated that they will increase their charges over the coming years, as they are not covering their costs at present and we are paying favourable rates; St John's, our most used hall, has now kept charges the same for 3 years, so we must expect an increase next year (but fingers crossed!)

5.2.4 We are continuing with our efforts to reduce our reserves down to the target level. This means that we can continue to keep the annual membership fee unchanged (which it has been since 23/24) and to keep these monthly meetings free (now for the 4th year). Our budget for the current year is for a larger deficit, in the order of £5,000, which will take us much nearer to the target reserves figure. We are also looking at ways that we can benefit as many members as possible. We have just bought first aid kits for a number of Outdoor groups and are trying to ensure that the equipment in halls is kept up to date.

5.2.5 Henry repeated that this is the end of his second year as Treasurer and that under the terms of our constitution, he can only stand for another year; so we need to find a replacement during the next year. Treasurer is one of the key roles that a charity needs and without one we would have to close the u3a down, a situation we faced when the previous Treasurer had to stand down. Henry stressed that it is not essential to be a qualified accountant and that he is very happy to talk to anyone who may be thinking of it, to explain what is involved. So if you are interested or know someone who might be, please approach Henry.

6 Group Secretary's Report (Lee Pace)

6.1 Lee reported that we currently have 80 Groups.

6.2 Lee stated that during the year the Local History group had closed, a new Shorter Walks (up to 5 miles) group had started and that, unfortunately, the proposed Scalextric group had proved not to be feasible.

6.3 An incident during an Outside group meeting led to a consultation with appropriate coordinators and agreement that Group location details, GPS location, What3words, should be recorded to aid Emergency service attendance should that be required. First Aid kits have now been purchased for Outside groups.

6.4 Risk Assessment forms have been revamped post Covid and the coordinator's handbook is being reviewed with the aim of making it simpler.

6.5 Lee thanked the members for supporting groups and the Monthly Meetings.

7 Explanation of proxy voting

7.1 Carolyn explained that members with access to the internet were able to vote on AGM matters online, which had proved to be popular. Postal votes were still available for those who had no internet access.

u3a Dacorum

8 Appointment of Independent Examiner

8.1 Appointment of Jane Seymour as Independent Examiner for the 2026 – 27 financial year was proposed by Henry Wallis and seconded by Ellen Duffy. There were 177 votes in favour and 5 abstentions.

9 Election of new Committee Members 2026 - 27

9.1 The following were elected as Officers or Trustees

Post	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Chair	Carolyn Wallis (3818)	176	1	3
Secretary	Ellen Duffy (4064)	178	1	1
Treasurer	Henry Wallis (3819)	178	1	1
Trustee	Jane Campbell (1873)	177	0	3
Trustee	John Dodkins (3276)	173	1	6
Trustee	Lee Pace (4083)	174	1	5
Trustee	Mary Wyon (3522)	171	1	8

10 Any Other Business

10.1 A member congratulated Lee Pace (Speaker secretary) on the quality of speakers selected for the Monthly Meetings.

The AGM was formally ended at 10:54 am.