
Wednesday 15th January 2025

Present:- Mike Kirkham (MK) Chair, Peter Corbett (PC), Lillas Haye (LHe), Lloyd Hughes (LHu), Nigel Bond (NB), Paul Foreman (PF), Linda Harper (LH) Secretary

1. Welcome and apologies

MK welcomed all to first meeting of 2025. Apologies noted from Nigel Osborne.

2. Previous Minutes

Agreed as accurate account, can be posted to website.

3. Actions

LH has checked list of attendees against paid up members, with one exception all correct. Complete.

NB has sent updated programme to Mark P for posting on website. Will check again due to recent changes. Complete.

MK has sought help from members for evening at Stanton Primary School. Complete.

MK has contacted SCC regarding grant to explain reason for changes and if alternate suggestions acceptable. (Further update later in notes). Complete.

4. Finance

PC updated meeting – currently 43 paid up members for 2024/5. (6 under 18s included)

£2928 in current account plus £800 ringfenced grant from SCC

Main outgoing is Hire of Hall for period Jan-July 2025

Financial Update – 12/1/ 2025

General Account: £3,690.70

- Balance Last Update (7/11/2024): £3,764.60
- Outgoings
 - Whepstead Hall Hire (January-June 2025): £342.00-
- Income
 - Membership (8 x £25 / 1 x £19): £219.00
 - Coffee Pot: £49.10

Cash: £38.00

- Coffee Pot: £14.00 (see below)
- Membership (1 x £24 Couple): £24.00

Liabilities: £800.00-

- Suffolk County Council (Storage Container): £800.00-

Total: £2,928.70

Coffee Pot

- Balance Last Update (7/11/2024): £36.28
- Takings: £43.00
- Re-stock: £16.18-
- Bank: £49.10-

5. Members Programme

a) General Update – all in place up until the end of June 2025, exception being 19/3/25, hopefully be will filled with presentation pushed back from Observing evening.
2 Guest speakers during this period.

b) Visit to Mullard RAO 27 confirmed plus 3 provisional, plus 2 new members wish to attend. NB will finalise with contact at MRAO, may need to split into 2 visits.

MK raised topic of Zoom presentations, Zoom Basic (Free) is limited to 40 min presentations, whereas Zoom Pro with unlimited time costs £10pm which would need to be paid by AAA or rely on presenter to have Zoom Pro so no additional cost to us. General opinion not worth AAA already having Zoom Pro. Further investigation into alternative platforms such as 'WhatsApp /Facebook/Teams. (NB). Also, committee emphasised that Zoom presentations was primarily a fall back / occasional option as we would not wish to discourage members from physically attending meetings where possible.

6. Promotional Support

PF happy to continue posting to Facebook, he asked the committee members to interact with messaging and liking posts to help generate interest in site.

NB suggested posting to Whepstead Village Community Newsletter each week.

Mastodon – on website in place of Twitter, not used very much, MK will discuss pros and cons of continuing with this platform with Mark P. (MK)

7. Member Support

LHe happy to continue to run refreshments. Will need someone to cover 19/2/25, will be sorted next members meeting.

PC confirmed that Coffee Fund makes considerable contribution to club funds.

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8. Events

a) Thursday 16th Jan – Stanton Community Primary School, 5 members have offered to help on the night, will take 3 scopes. Hopefully clear night but weather not looking good, if so, can offer presentation/talk/Q&A inside if wanted.

b) Spring Fayre – Sunday 25th and Monday (BH) 26th May 10-4pm, attendance confirmed, will have 3 gazebos this year. Will receive £800 for club. To be planned nearer time.

9. Storage Project

MK had contacted SCC (Karen Soons) to explain why proposed storage project option no longer a viable option for us. He put forward an alternate suggestion for the money granted to see if this would be considered. Received reply today to confirm money can be used on alternate plan as long as done by 31/3/25.

MK has put together list of proposed purchases such as trolleys/eye-piece storage boxes/storage bags. Proposed purchases total just over £800, the extra to be met from existing funds.

MK will send list to PF who will look at purchase options and advise. NO will also need to be consulted as responsible for resources. PC can purchase once agreement reached. (PF)

Question was raised as to if there were any options left open for storage at the centre, i.e. small container in large storage room. MK has had no contact with WCC committee but general feeling is that they do not want any sort of storage beyond what we already have.

10. Resources

Several scopes have now been lent out to members and committee for use/storage.

Discussion around how we can tighten up the borrowing of equipment. Members must have the competency to use the scopes especially with regard to the 'Go To's'.

Simple rules as to who can borrow what and for how long.

Suggestion to list equipment that can be borrowed on website.

MK will discuss with NO to come up with plan. (MK)

Question was asked by MK that as club funds are good at present should consideration be given to identifying potential needs, for instance is there any new equipment that would be useful (in addition to that from grant) or could a trip be organised to somewhere of

Astronomical interest. Committee members to give further thought for possible options / needs.

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11. AOB

a) AAA rebranding – further discussion around this. Agreed current logo not ideal. Also raised the name in view of us not having any connection with the Athenaeum. Should a rename be considered, such as West Suffolk AA, Bury St Edmunds AA.

MK will contact Mark P to see if he can provide mock-up of new branding possibly using alternate name. (MK)

b) LHu raised the question 'Should the AAA consider applying for charity status' Not much known about the implications of this so further information needs to be sought. LHu agreed to look into the implications for the AAA (LHu)

Committee meetings 2025

Wednesday 12th March (MK out of the country so will identify replacement date).

Wednesday 21st May

Wednesday 16th July

Wednesday 10th September

Wednesday 19th November

| Action Plan | | | | |
|---------------|--|--------|-----------|----------|
| Page/Item | | Action | | Status |
| | | | Action by | |
| 7/11/24 P1 | LH to check list of attendees against paid up members and pass details to PC | | LH | Complete |
| 7/11/24 P2 | NB to send updated members programme to Mark P for website. | | NB | Complete |
| 7/11/24 P3 | MK to invite offers of help from members for event at Stanton PS on 17/1/25 | | MK | Complete |
| 7/11/24 P3 | MK to advise SCC regarding grant to see if alternate proposal possible | | MK | Complete |
| 15/1/25 P2 | NB to look at alternative platforms to offer presentations such as Teams, 'Whats app' | | NB | New |
| 15/1/25 P2 | MK to talk to Mark P re Mastodon messaging on website. | | MK | New |
| 15/1/25 P3 | PF to review list of proposed purchases and advise of options | | PF | New |
| 15/1/25 P3 | MK to discuss ideas with NO to tighten up the conditions for borrowing club equipment. | | MK | New |
| 15/1/25 P3 | MK to talk with Mark P re possible rebranding of AAA, new logo etc | | MK | New |
| 15/1/25 P4 | LHu to look into implications for AAA of seeking charity status. | | LHu | New |

