

Summary – St Austell u3a Group Leaders Meeting (14 April 2026)

The meeting was held on **Tuesday 14 April 2026 at 10.00am** at **St Austell Arts Centre**, chaired by **Ellie Evans (EE)**, with a welcome video from **Chris Crane (Chair)**.

Beacon (u3a Administration System)

- **Keeping group membership lists up to date is mandatory**, primarily for insurance purposes.
- All **u3a business emails must be sent via Beacon**, not personal email accounts.
- Beacon features covered included:
 - Managing member lists (adding/removing members, setting group limits, waiting lists).
 - Downloading member lists as **PDFs (with emergency contacts)** or spreadsheets.
 - Using **Ledger** for small group finances (e.g. refreshments or materials).
 - Using **Schedule** to automatically generate meeting dates and printable lists.
- For **large financial events** (e.g. meals requiring deposits), Group Leaders should contact **Treasurer Heather Lovegrove** so a separate code can be set up.
- Members can pay u3a directly, with venues invoicing u3a, reducing leaders' handling of cash.
- EE confirmed support is available for anyone needing help with Beacon.

Emails and Communication

- Group emails can be sent to all or selected members, using **saved standard messages**.
- Emails can be **personalised automatically** (e.g. "Hi Ellie").
- Meeting notes and documents should be shared via Beacon attachments.
- Group Leaders may have a **u3a email account** that forwards to their personal mailbox.
- Special arrangements were noted for members without email (e.g. Theatre Group).

Actions

- EE to raise **paper supply and reimbursement for printing** with the Committee.
- Paper costs will be reimbursed; printing at the Arts Centre will not.

Arts Centre Procedures

- Only the **Group Leader or Deputy** needs to sign in/out of the Arts Centre book.
- If you are the last to leave, you must secure the building using the key safe.

Attendance Sheets & Payments

- Attendance sheets can be flexible in format and submitted monthly or quarterly.

- Sheets should be emailed to the designated attendance address without expecting confirmation.
- Leaders (or Deputies) must **cross off Pre-Payment Cards (PPCs)** themselves.
- PPCs can be paid by card or BACS; BACS payments must be followed by confirmation.
- Committee members can sell PPCs during groups; some use contactless payments.

Actions

- All Group Leaders to follow the agreed PPC procedures.
- Leaders to pass PPC payment information on to members.
- Committee to update **Welcome Letters** to clarify PPC requirements.

Other Key Information

- **Lapsed membership** appears in red on Beacon; Leaders should check with members and contact Committee contacts for reactivation.
- **Risk Assessments and Incident Forms** are available on the website under Group Admin.
- Heating should be left on in rooms if found on (except portable fan heaters).
- With over 40 groups, **meeting clashes** can occur; the 5th week of a month may be used to reduce conflicts.
- Changes or cancellations of meetings should be emailed to EE.
- First aid/CPR refresher training was suggested as a potential future topic.

Closing

- Thanks were recorded for **Richard Arnold** for his ongoing support.
- **Group Leaders' meetings will now be held quarterly.**
- The meeting concluded at **11.35am**.