

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting on Monday 19th August 2026 held in Chichester

Present: Barbara MacWhirter, Richard Sanderson, Tony Clark, Scilla Jutton-Holland, Sue Wilkins, Jan Copsey, Margaret Edwards and Chris Smith. Alan Copsey was invited to attend by Barbara.

Apologies

There were apologies from Jason Burt.

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last committee meeting were accepted but there was an omission: Barbara had said that she wished to look at roles on the committee and she had looked at alternative venues for FP activities including at Minerva Heights.

Matters Arising

Barbara visited a fete at Minerva Heights and the new venue planned there. It seems that it will be similar to the Westgate Sports Centre but without a pool. Possibly FPs could put on a performance as part of AWD or a Cafe type production but not anything more demanding. She was more hopeful of the Pavilion in Priory Park as a venue and suggested that perhaps we could do something there on Gala Day.

Deathtrap, which we read recently, needs to be discussed regarding its suitability or otherwise as a major production.

Media Report

Bookings for AWD will open shortly, about 3 weeks before the performance. Those in the cast can sit to watch other performances without buying a ticket. Barbara and committee members have been looking at the websites of other groups to see if we can do more to attract new members to ours. It is clear that some have advantages that we don't have such as a bespoke venue of their own. Some groups are also offering a lot more major productions that attract people to audition for. There is also the issue of location. To access our hall one needs transport so any young person who is cast is likely to need collecting and returning home each rehearsal. This is a big commitment and a major stumbling block for us.

It was suggested that we work in partnership with other groups, advertising their activities in our publicity and vice versa. We do go in the Portsmouth Diary but have not explored going further in the past.

The question was raised about who we are targeting. Is it new members or audience? It was pointed out that some new members began as audience and had checked us out that way before asking to join as members.

Some groups give a lot more information about auditions and what exactly is required on their websites. Our auditions could be announced earlier too and we could offer more than one date. Other groups plan a lot further ahead than we do and this seems to help them attract new members.

Social media is also an important method of communication now. It tends to reach a younger demographic. We would do well to exploit this much more fully than we do now. When the upgrade of the hall is finished, we could try a relaunch to attract more members. We could also promote FPs at the Minerva Heights new Community Hall as it is an estate that is still growing.

Treasurer's Report

Membership renewals are coming in slowly. There have been only 42 so far. It was stressed that those cast in the next play need to ensure that their membership is up to date.

Committee Roles

Barbara discussed the roles of committee members. We did not have a Vice Chair and Chris Smith agreed to take this on. Committee were grateful for the offer and accepted it. Some other people have been approached to come on the committee to try to make it less elderly. There was also some discussion about who will come off committee to make space for new people.

The role of booking venues will be passed from Tony to Scilla. Margaret will be more involved in current members and chasing them for subs as well as managing new ones to try to take pressure off the Treasurer role. Calling on another person to be Treasurer and offering an honorarium was discussed but not resolved. The payment is likely to be small and might not make a difference to interested parties anyway.

Another role that Tony took on is Resident Stage Manager that Trevor did in the past. He was local which helped but it is now a big task that needs to be reallocated. Tony is also our representative on the Village Hall Committee and a trustee. When the hall opens again this role needs to be filled by someone else.

Communications are managed by Pat, Jan and Alan and Ticketsource. It was noted that our mission statement needs to be dynamic and that our website is excellent, thanks to Pat's skills.

Village Hall Renovation

This seems to be going well. Trustees will meet next week so there will be an update then.

Major Productions: Autumn 2026

Entertaining Angels

Barbara said that she has most of the backstage roles allocated now with some sharing of Stage Manager duties between Helga and Chris. Kim has been asked to just oversee costume; Andy Horner is available to help with operating sound or lighting and props are likely to be part of the SM work. Lisa will do FoH, Margaret will do the specialist painting and Jonathan will manage the stream. We are likely to need a papier mache workshop for this.

The stage stage extension will be used. She asked if a model of the set could be produced as rehearsals will start elsewhere while WAVH is not available.

Playreads and Future Production Proposals

Donkey's Years is on hold for the moment and will be considered again at a later date.

Enlightenment is also on hold until we can find a young person who could conceivably be on his gap year.

Death Trap needs a living room/study main acting area, 5 in the cast and quite complex sound and lighting effects, Chris said. Props are also exotic: knives, handcuffs and historical memorabilia. Chris would be happy to consider directing it possibly some time next year, preferably November 2027.

The *Lion in Winter* by James Goldman will be read on 2nd October managed by Scilla. There will be no playread in September as we have AWD7.

AWD 7

Margaret said that the first midway rehearsal has been held at St Nicholas' Hall and the second is due on 19th August. All is going smoothly so far. Directors have been allocated 40 minutes each on one of those nights. She said that there is the potential for groups to use the hall again prior to Get In and runs, if necessary.

Pat has created some very stylish publicity on the website and her designs for stage signs are ready to go to the printers, soon.

Members Update

There are no new members this month and those who previously expressed an interest did not go further and join us. Margaret outlined all the information and the communications that they had been sent.

Social Events

Sue said that there is another Skittles Alley in the White Horse in Westbourne but it doubles as a bar and is only available for skittles on certain nights so she felt that our best option for skittles is still the Barley Mow.

We will have a Cafe Evening in January with the other three AWD plays and a quiz social evening before Christmas on 8th December.

Newsletter Items

Playread of *The Lion in Winter* on Friday 2nd October

AWD7 midway rehearsals 19th August and ticket booking is open from 28th August

Update on WAVH renovation

Reminder about subscriptions

An appeal from Barbara for the loan of a towelling dressing gown for a lady

Quiz Night Christmas celebration on 8th December

Possible papier mache workshop TBC

Bolton Twill date TBC

AOB

None

Next Meeting Dates

21st September in Bosham and 19th October