



Linlithgow & Bo'ness Probus Club

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Minutes of Meeting held on: Wednesday 13 May 2026 at Linlithgow Rose Club.

WELCOME: President Jim Hannan welcomed all the members and guest Dot Jamieson.

APOLOGIES:

Chris Collen; Bill Duncan; Dora Kelly; Jim Kelly; Allan MacLeod; Stuart Smith; George Wilson; Gary Withnell

ALMONERS REPORT

In the absence of the Almoner, the President reported that Niven Grant was now home, as was Bill Duncan, who would welcome any phone calls or visits to his home at 7 Deacon's Court as he was very bored!

MATTERS ARISING

George Bird indicated that he would circulate a list for those attending the anniversary lunch on 30 September so that the 40 or so attending could enter their contact details. Members were urged to check their emails over the summer for details of the menu. The cost would be £21 for two courses, £24 for three and £1 for coffee or tea.

AOCB

The President mentioned that David Elliot, following a request from Bathgate Probus, had taken them on a tour of St Michael's kirk. Their membership was now about 12, which highlighted the success of our Club with over 60 members. He noted that Linlithgow 41 Club had received an award for being the largest in the country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SPEAKER

The President introduced the speaker for the day, John Keogh of Outsider. John was a local man born and bred and had been a senior member of staff at Hewlett Packard. On seeing a rough sleeper in a freezing cold, pouring wet afternoon in Buchanan Street in December 2021, he felt he had to do something to help. As a wild swimmer, he had a special changing robe and decided to make something similar to give away to people sleeping rough. He saw also that the rough sleeper's sleeping bag was soaked, so he designed the Outsider Sleeping Coat especially for people living on the streets: a quality waterproof, windproof, fleece-lined coat that turns into a sleeping bag.

There were about 2,500 rough sleepers in Scotland. Outsider was a social enterprise and could take donations but couldn't claim gift aid. It was also a community interest company and looked to become a full charity so it could do more. Every two coats sold produced enough profit to give one away free. Over 400 had now been donated. John described the look of delight on the face of a rough sleeper receiving a coat. Outsider was involved in a wide range of fund-raising events including John climbing Kilimanjaro. He had also given talks on the issue to schoolchildren, the citizens of the future. He was pleased that the coats were worn by Jules and Greg on their Wild Swim tv series. The coats were manufactured in West Lothian, creating local employment. John finished by reciting a powerful poem he had written about being a rough sleeper.

In the course of taking questions, including on the impact of being without a home address when applying for welfare, John demonstrated the various novel aspects of the coat and explained it wasn't patented as the process was too expensive.

VOTE OF THANKS

A vote of thanks was given by Sheena Litster for what was an interesting, and moving, talk. She was supported by the members in the usual manner.

NEXT MEETING

This was the last talk of the season. In two weeks' time, on Wednesday 27 May, the bus for Riverside would depart the Rose Club timeously at 10.00. There would be no coffee available but the Rose Club would be open from 09.40.

The President wished the members a good summer.

David Elliot
Minute Secretary (Substitute)
13 May 2026