

NAWRA

Committee meeting – 21 April 2026

Present: Alan (Chair), Dan, Daphne, Corin, Michael, Diane, Jennifer, Kelly (minutes)

Apologies: Andrew, Zoey, Rachael, Atif, Tom, Maureen, Riley

Correction: Michael did attend the Committee meeting on 26 Jan 2026.

Communications and publicity

- **Dan** to reconvene the social media working group. **Dan** to draft an email for the mailing list.
- **All** to check [committee page](#) and send Kelly any updates.
- **Riley** and **Diane** to write content for [NAWRA in Scotland](#) area of the website.

Equality and diversity

- Notes from working group meetings can be found on the [NAWRA website](#).
- The working group met on 30 March 2026 and the next meeting will take place on 8 June 2026. **Kelly** to email membership with details.
- **All** to email Kelly if they would like to join the working group.

Governance

- None

Policy and campaigns

- Alan, Corin and Gareth attended the Resolve Poverty conference in March 2026. Graham Whitham (Resolve Poverty) is keen on setting up two roundtable events to progress work on our campaign to make advice a statutory duty. This is a good opportunity for joint work. Should we use some of our reserves on funding a dedicated post in conjunction with Resolve Poverty to focus on this? **Corin** to circulate their briefing paper. **Gareth** to circulate list of statutory duty sign-ups.
 - **Daphne** and **Corin** to meet with Resolve Poverty on Teams at 2pm on 30 April. **All** to contact Daphne and Corin if they would also like to attend.
 - Monthly working group meetings needed. **All** to email Kelly to join the working group. **Kelly** to schedule.
- The process for very vulnerable claimants migrating from legacy benefits to UC is not working. Minimal safeguarding referrals are being made to local authorities. We sent

a letter to the work and pensions committee and copied it to Stephen Timms. As a result, Daphne has been invited to give oral evidence at a work and pensions committee meeting in June 2026.

- We have asked members to complete a survey to inform our response to the Timms review. Thanks to Daphne for drafting it. **Kelly** to send reminder on 22 April.
- Concern about some branches of Citizens Advice not offering welfare benefit advice. This may be diverting local authority funding from local organisations that do offer benefits advice. **Alan** to try to find out what is expected from each branch.
- The new Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) in England can be used by local authorities to fund advice provision, both in-house and in the community. The guidance is out now. There are concerns about school meal funding during holidays which is specifically excluded. Corin is concerned that a lot of local authorities are looking at the crisis bit first, not necessarily looking at the advice aspect. The delivery plan not due till end of June 2026 so local authorities should take their time and not rush it. LGA are doing a lot of work to talk to local authorities. **Kelly** to do a Survey Monkey survey of members in a few months to find out what is happening in different areas. **Corin** to draft email to send to members to highlight action that they could be taking now.

Finance

- Kelly updated the finance report with all income and expenditure in 2025-2026 and circulated it to the committee by email on 20 April 2026.
- We have accumulated fairly large reserves so we need a plan to spend some of it. Ideas:
 - Promote NAWRA to widen our reach, including attending other events.
 - Strengthen links and support regional groups
 - Offer NAWRA members to speak at other events as experts for free
 - Commission university research that supports advisers, possibly an update of the [literature review](#) we commissioned in 2006.
- Kelly circulated a draft budget for 2026-2027 to the committee by email on 20 April 2026. Draft budget approved by the committee.
- John Griffiths MS has agreed to sponsor NAWRA event at the Senedd. **Gareth** to find out estimated costs for approval by committee. This will need to wait until after the Welsh elections.

AOB

- Need to raise awareness of changing state pension. **Gareth** to draft email for members.
- AI benefit calculators and advice sites are proliferating, and flawed.

Future conferences

- Friday 5 June 2026 at the Dorford Centre, 2 Bridport Rd, Dorchester DT1 1RR hosted by Citizens Advice Central Dorset.
- September 2026 – on Zoom (host needed)
- December 2026 – on Zoom (host needed)
- March 2026 – Salford Civic Centre (date TBC)

Potential hosts

- Woolwich? (**Corin**)
- Disability Law Service? (**Corin**). Possibly in a venue sponsored by a law firm via Nezahat Ciham at London Legal Support Trust? (**Corin**)
- Central Bedfordshire Council (online)? – **Kelly** to follow up
- Stirling (**Diane**)
- Colchester?

Potential speakers and workshops

- **All** to add their ideas of potential speakers and workshops to the '[Future NAWRA conferences – ideas and offers](#)' working document on GoogleDocs.

Future committee meetings

- The next NAWRA committee meeting will take place on Teams. **Kelly** to circulate a calendar invitation and Teams link to committee members.