

## **Minutes of the 173rd Committee Meeting of the Buckingham and District U3A held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014 in the Buckingham Town Council Chambers**

**Present:** Pam Tonge (Chairman), Joan Hatherley (Treasurer), Roland Simpkins (Webmaster), Lesley Suggate (Membership Secretary), Dusty Roades (Speaker Seeker), Gina Crouch (Publicity/New Members Support), Val Bradley (Business Secretary/Group Liaison Officer), Carolina Kenealy (Newsletter Editor) and Jennie Smith (Minutes)

1 **Welcome:** Pam welcomed everyone.

2 **Apologies :** Di Procter, Clive Cowdy and David Angrave

3 **Minutes of the Last Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> March**

The minutes were approved and signed.

4 **Matters Arising:**

Shadows for committee: Janti Mistry had met with Lesley and hopefully will be willing to take over in two years' time. He had some good ideas. Job descriptions for other positions had gone into the April Newsletter. Pam reminded everyone about the meeting with Shadows at the golf club on 14<sup>th</sup> July.

Charity Stall: £60 taken at the March meeting, totalling £200.50. The stall would be selling CDs and DVDs at the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

Beds-Plus Forum and Quiz: Bryan Weston Thomas was attending the next Forum meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Two teams were booked for the quiz on 29<sup>th</sup> April but we still required one person to complete teams.

GCs lunch 5<sup>th</sup> June: £225 cost 2013 (57 attended), of which £180 was for food. Carolina to cater for 70. **Action: Pam to ask GCs for attendance numbers**

5 **Chairman's Report:**

Theatre Trips: In response to Beryl's decision to give up booking theatre trips on behalf of the U3A, a request for a volunteer to replace her in this capacity was announced at the March Open Meeting and the role was also being publicised in the Newsletter, the Advertiser write-up and on our website. It was understood that we needed 8 people for plays and 10 for musicals in order to qualify for discounted prices. The Committee had sent a letter to Beryl expressing their appreciation for organising theatre trips for many years. We had already received some ideas from one member as to how we could organise future theatre trips. The Treasurer had a list of participants. **Action: Pam to advertise role in April report.**

Travel and Outings: In the December newsletter, Beryl had also indicated that she was thinking of giving up organising the outings and holidays at the end of the current financial year. Committee Members had been invited to put forward proposals and comments as to how we should define the organiser's role in the future bearing in mind The Third Age Trust's guidelines issued in January 2014. There was a lengthy discussion on finding a sensible and manageable way forward for whoever was responsible for these roles. One suggestion for the future was to appoint a social committee and use a booking form.

Outings: The coach fare is currently based on a minimum of 30 members. It was recognised that some events offered a free place to the organiser and it was agreed that it would be left to the organiser whether they take this free place themselves or offer a discount to those taking part. It was also agreed that the organiser would be expected to pay his/her share of the coach fare. This practice would apply to all Group Co-ordinators who organise trips. **To be announced in April GC email and on website.**

Holidays: It was recognised that some tour operators offered one free place to the group organiser for say 20 places booked (SAGA offered one free place for 10 people.) Other travel companies offered a discount, depending on how many travellers were on the holiday. These discounts were shown on the invoice which currently goes to the organiser. It was agreed that all discounts should in future be shown to the Treasurer. The point of a group booking was to get preferential rates for all travellers. The ethos of the U3A was that no payments should be made to members for services rendered as all members are expected to offer voluntary service. The Third Age Trust guidelines recommend that we adopt a policy of applying a discount to all travellers although we are allowed some discretion to reflect the

service from the organiser which was above and beyond what we would normally expect. It was appreciated that the holiday organiser would spend time planning beforehand and sorting out problems during a holiday. After a lengthy discussion, the Chairman summarised the debate. It was agreed that instead of a free place to the organiser, a discount of a certain percentage, to be set by the Committee each year, would be given to the organiser and the rest of the discount would be shared by participating members. A vote was taken and it was agreed with 4 votes in favour and three against that for all U3A holidays booked after 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, the organiser will receive a discount of 25% of the value of the holiday. It was further agreed to obtain feedback from members as to why numbers had been dropping. A meeting had been set up with Beryl to advise her of the Committee's decision.

#### 6 **Treasurer's Report** - Joan Hatherley

The accounts to March 2014 had been distributed prior to the meeting and the Treasurer went through these and clarified the figure regarding tips. The Italian for Beginners GC had requested £10.99 for the purchase of a wipe board which was declined as it was agreed such a small amount should be funded by the group. Any items paid for by the U3A would belong to the whole U3A and be eligible for hire by other groups. A £50 donation had been received from a member who had requested assistance with translation for a Spanish medical report. This had been acknowledged and the committee agreed to pass the donation to the current charity, MIND.

#### 7 **Group News** - Val Bradley

There had been no business correspondence. The Keep Fit class numbers had gone down but it was early days. The Chantry Chapel was £5 per hour. Information was still awaited from the University of Buckingham regarding the proposed Computing for Beginners group. It was anticipated that there would be a 6/8 weeks session on computing and a similar amount of weeks on iPad training.

#### 8 **Membership** - Lesley Suggate

Lesley reported membership numbers: current 731, lapsed 42, GADs 435, payment by s/o 416, members with email 459, receiving electronic newsletters 221. The gift aid work was ready to be undertaken with Joan and Geoff (Suggate). Lesley had received favourable comments about the e-newsletter for April. **Discussion on a Newsletter in June was deferred to the May meeting.**

#### 9 **Website** – Roland Simpkins

The website now included the minutes and newsletter. Pam thanked Roland. Gina's report in the Advertiser would be added to the 'What's New' part of the website.

**Action: Pam to chase GCs for updates.**

#### 10 **Any Other Business**

NICE scam – Pam reported that Thames Valley Police had warned of a scam appearing to be from NICE regarding blood analysis indicating cancer, but that NICE would never report this kind of information by email and the malware could cause damage to software.

23<sup>rd</sup> April open meeting – A table had been requested by Stowe NT to recruit volunteers. Wildlife and Yoga groups had been contacted for tea rota.

U3A Logo – Carolina circulated suggested logos and one was chosen, depending on confirmation of use of the 'swan' from Town Council. Carolina was looking at re-designing the newsletter and would ask members at the open meeting for ideas and comment.

Android Tablet: The discussion to be deferred to the May meeting.

Holidays: Joan advised that she would be away from 30<sup>th</sup> April to 7<sup>th</sup> May. Cheque books would be handed over to Clive. Carolina advised she would be away for the last two weeks of June.

11 **Next Committee Meeting**: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 10 a.m. in the Council Chambers. (NB early, due Spring Bank Holiday 26th).