

Minutes of Group Co-ordinators' Meeting

3 May 2018

1. Welcome by Steve Heywood, Group Liaison Officer

2. Welcome by the Chairman and his report

The Chairman introduced the members of the Committee who were in attendance. He appealed for volunteers to serve as shadows for the Committee members. There has been a big increase in membership of the Association.

This year is the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Association and there will be a celebration at the summer social and a tree planting in Buckingham.

The Chairman announced that there will be a new members' coffee morning on 16 May at 10 am in the Buckingham Community Centre and pointed out that it offered an opportunity to recruit members to the activity and study groups.

3. Treasurer's Report

Paddy Collins reported on the Association's conversion to a charitable incorporated organisation and pointed out that this means a change in the bank accounts.

The annual subscription will increase to £15 from the current £10 in September. Sixpounds of the subscription goes to the U3A Trust and pays for a subscription to the national magazine.

In order to comply with the U3A Trust rules the Association will change from issuing credit cards and reimbursing group leaders to issuing debit cards for paying for theatre tickets, buses, etc.

Buckingham Library has imposed a large increase in its charge for the use of meeting rooms. Perhaps groups using the Library could look at alternative venues. Groups could combine meetings to spread the cost among their members.

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2017 were approved with the correction of the spelling of the name of an attendee.

5. New Groups

Steve Heywood reported that enough members have signed up for a calligraphy group but none of the people who have signed up knows calligraphy and that is holding up starting the group.

The Antiques and Collectibles Group needs a co-ordinator.

There was a discussion of the use of tutors who are not members of the Association. The U3A ethos is of self instruction and tutors should not be used on a regular basis.

Steve pointed out that it is important to check the Association's web page and for group co-ordinators to keep it up to date with what their groups are doing. He thanked the Webmaster, Derek Morgan, for his work on the web page.

6. Co-operation with Buckingham University

Clive Cowdry reported on his discussions with the University of Buckingham about joint meetings. He has discussed three areas: creativity and problem solving, game playing and mental and physical health, including chronic pain control. Other areas are on-line risks and cyber security.

There will be a talk in October on these possibilities.

A questionnaire on cyber security is being prepared. Clive has commented on it and the draft is going back to the University of Buckingham ethics committee. When the questionnaire is completed it will be distributed to the Group Co-ordinators and the association's Committee. Group Co-ordinators are encouraged to complete it and have the members in their groups do so.

7. Webmaster's Report

Derek Morgan urged everyone to use the Roundcube webmail system. This will protect members' privacy and provide a central record available to successor group co-ordinators.

When sending e-mails Group Co-ordinators should use bcc so that the addressees' e-mail addresses are not shown.

Derek pointed out that the General Data Protection Regulation will come into effect on 25th May 2018.

8. Presentation on Round Cube

Dorothy Morgan gave a presentation on the use of Roundcube, an electronic messaging system. There will probably be a small group training session for members who have difficulty using the system.

There was a lengthy discussion of and many questions about the use of system and the utility of going from normal e-mails to the Roundcube system.

9. Membership Issues

Janti Mistry's shadow Lorna Joy reported on membership. Membership will be renewed on 1st October 2018. It is recommended that members pay by standing order because payments by cheque or in cash entail too much administrative work. Details will be in the September newsletter. Payments will have to be made into the new bank account.

At the end of October, the Group Co-ordinators will receive an e-mail with a list of lapsed members. There will be a further check in January with a revised membership list and after that month lapsed members must stop attending groups.

The Association's database has a place for membership in each group but the database is very little used.

There was a discussion as to whether Group Co-ordinators should submit lists of group members. No decision was taken.

There was a discussion about discontinuing the issuing of membership cards in order to save money and administrative work. It was pointed out that members find it useful to have a membership card when they join another U3A association.

A welcome letter, with the new member's membership number, is sent out when he or she joins the Association.

10. Summer Social

Suggestions are requested for the summer social and volunteers to help organize it are needed.

11. New Members Coffee Morning

Ideas for improving the new members coffee morning were discussed. It could be held in the Chantry Chapel or at a garden centre. It should not be called a coffee morning because that name leads to new members drifting in and out of the meeting. It was agreed that it should be called a "meeting".

Group Co-ordinators should attend and use it as an opportunity to promote their groups.

12. Ideas and Issues

The Outings Group goes to places that some groups also go to. If the trips were combined, it would save money.

A member suggested that the Association should cut back on the use of plastics and the suggestion was strongly supported. Members could bring their own mugs for tea.

Martin Paul asked if the meeting should be held more often. There was a consensus that a second meeting every year, without the Treasurer's report, is desirable.

A member suggested that the meeting be made a lunch meeting as it had been in the past. There was strong support for the suggestion.

Attendees:

Marilyn Crawford (Scrabble)
Anne Mack (Canasta)
Lorna Joy (Russian, German (Deutsch Aktuell))
Helen Preston (Recorder)
Gina Crouch (Line Dancing)
Sheila Dalzell (Strollers)
Beryl Carr (Outings)
Peter Franklin (Music for Pleasure)
Margaret Clarke (French Beginners 2 and Gardening Wednesday)
Ginny Booth (Bus Pass Explorers)
Brian W. Thomas (Bridge Club)
Roger Edwards (Croquet)
Judy Austin (Spanish Revision)
Stan Surzyn (Walkers)
Vee Sampson (Tuesday Gardening)
Geoff Sampson (Railways)
Rod Bennett (Hand Bells)
Jo Veglio (French News and Views)
Judith Dipple (Beginners Italian)
Sue Norman (Recorders)
Susie Kelly (Creative Writing, Square Dancing)
Anne Liddle (Crafts and Card Making, Singing A Round)
Barbara Willis (Flower Arranging, iPad Tuition)
Daphne Forsyth (Board Games)
Anne Mercer (Folk Dancing)
Yve Kerr (Poetry Writing)
Anne Champion (Book Club)
Diane Procter (Theatre)
Marion Meakin (German)
Pam Gower (Painting)
Sheila Harkness (Bridge for Beginners)
Martin Paul (Chairman)
Julia Morten (Book Group 2)
Margaret Moore (Handbells 1)
Clive Cowdry (Film Study, Bridge Improvers)
Dorothy Morgan (Science and Technology)
Derek Morgan (Science and Technology)
Pam Tonge (Art Appreciation)
Peter Cammas (Digital Photography)
Paddy Collins (Treasurer)
Ruth Holiday (Table Tennis)
Arthur Newman (Singing for Fun)
Cliff Dammers (Secretary)