



## Minutes

### Group Coordinators' Lunch and Meeting held in the Buckingham Community Centre on Thursday 9 May 2019

#### 1. Introduction

The Chairman Martin Paul welcomed all present and opened the meeting. He thanked Karen and Jo for their hard work preparing and serving the lunch which everybody had just enjoyed.

2. **Apologies** had been received from the Secretary Cliff Dammers, Lorna Joy, Judy Austin . and Pam Tonge.

#### 3. Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting on 3 May 2018 were formally accepted, the only amendment being the addition of Ann Abraham who had been omitted from the list of attendees.

4. **Matters Arising** There were no other matters arising.

#### 5. Treasurer's Report

Paddy Collins issued a succinct report on the positive financial health of the Association. He emphasised that he should not receive any payments in cash, the preferred method being cheque payable to the Buckingham U3A or Buckingham and District U3A or even better via bank transfer to the account. He answered questions on the cost of rooms in Buckingham Library and confirmed that full accounting statements were to be found on the Charity Commission website.

#### 6. Chairman's Report

Martin highlighted the size of the association with over 800 membership, over 80 groups and the start-up of 3 new groups this year. He advised on changes to the committee since the last meeting with Lorna Joy taking over as Membership Secretary from Janti Mistry, Roland Simpkins replacing Linda Beazley as Speaker Secretary. He also thanked Roger Edwards for his work as Publicity Secretary especially with the tree planting ceremony with the University of Buckingham to mark the 20th anniversary of the association . His role on the committee was still vacant and he called for volunteers .He thanked the President Clive Cowdy for his efforts

to forge links with Buckingham University and expressed the wish that the talk to be given by Clare Stocker of the Medical School at the monthly meeting on May 22 would rekindle interest. He announced that Lilia Bogle had been co-opted onto the committee as vice-chair for the foreseeable future owing to the ill health of Dusty Roades.

#### **7. Group Liaison Officer's Report**

Steve Heywood commended all group co-ordinators present for their hard work and reported how the Antiques and Collectables group had really taken off once this important role had been filled. Their cohesion and enthusiasm was striking and the opening of a new Antiques shop in Buckingham might spark more interest. The new Calligraphy group was progressing well and the Table Tennis currently had a waiting list of 17 people. The Badminton group, also at the Buckingham Youth Centre attracted 6 members and more were welcome. A Spanish for Beginners Group with 17 interested members was about to be launched with the interim guidance of a current group co-ordinator. A prospective Greek for Beginners group was up to 6 members. A new ukulele group with 5 enthusiastic members was to meet imminently. A new French for Beginners group was now under the care of a member who had resided in France for a long time and could start to meet in the near future. The Flower Arranging for Fun group currently met at Gawcott Parish Church with 11 members. The Group Co-ordinator for Architecture advised that Ed Conroy of Local History 1 group was about to close and it was reported that Local History 3 had already stopped meeting. Steve urged all present to try and ensure that it continued. The Relax with Recorders was at present in abeyance as several members had progressed to the main group. The webmaster Derek Morgan undertook to put posts on the front page of the website to highlight these issues. A question pertaining to the venue for the Painting group received useful input from the committee.

#### **8. Webmaster's report**

Derek Morgan referred to the previous discussion of Local History groups and impressed the need for timely communication on such issues so that he could take appropriate action. He exhorted everyone to provide information in order to keep web pages up to date, lively and relevant. Some groups' descriptions had not changed since 2014!

#### **9. RoundCube issues**

Roland Simpkins - Speaker Secretary and previous Webmaster joined Derek and gave a brief outline of RoundCube emphasising that it was a web based email service able to filter out 20000 spam emails each week. The U3A did not act as an open source host for accepting a free flow of emails. The aim of the RoundCube system was to protect members. This led on to advice about computer security and the recent offensive email to group co-ordinators. Human curiosity will lead one to open an unknown email -an "I love you email" was quoted as an example. If at all suspicious it should not be opened but moved to the junk box in RoundCube, and not deleted. The junk folder in RoundCube should not be emptied as this is used as check for Junk, you should however check that no valid emails have incorrectly been junked!

The best possible virus protection system should be installed on your own PCs. The problem of sending emails to all members, currently managed by relying on GCs to forward them to group members, which involves a lot of duplication was raised. It would not be at all practicable for the committee to hold email addresses and communicate with 800 members. Derek Morgan announced that he was investigating an alternative email system "Beacon", used by 60% of U3A associations in view of ongoing concerns. It would cost £1 per head. This

action was endorsed by Clive Cowdy and Martin Paul and his report would be examined closely. Some discussion continued on the risk of using private email addresses and (blind copying) when co-ordinators send out messages to their group members. Derek reiterated the risk of having addresses exposed to hackers if openly accessible on the Internet.

#### **10. Emergency contact cards**

GC Rod Moulding initiated a discussion of circumstances where a member might be taken ill on an activity group such as walking or even in a member's home hosting a session and produced an example. It was agreed to issue standard cards to all members which included emergency contact details, nature of any medical condition etc., this would avoid any potential data protection issues.

#### **11. Advice to GCs from U3A**

Resources are available on the main U3A website for a range of subjects and activities.

#### **12. Membership issues**

This item included advice to group co-ordinators on action to take if groups were full such as opening a waiting list and notifying the Liaison officer Steve Heywood with a view to starting a new group. This followed on to ways of encouraging a member to volunteer as a new coordinator and emphasising that the role was not as onerous as might appear and help from the committee was at hand. The matter of hosting sessions in one's own home and health and safety concerns were raised. The Treasurer confirmed that U3A insurance protected members but advised that risk assessments be carried out. Damage to property was included and apparently red wine on carpets was the most frequent claim item. It was acceptable for a non-member guest to attend a session as a trial but was not covered for external trips.

#### **14. Any other business**

GC Tina Mitchell promoted the use of fair trade products by GCs in their groups and hoped the branch would move to becoming a Fairtrade organisation. The Chairman elicited the agreement of GCs that they were happy with the format of the summer social and also encouraged them to inform members that they could be invited to attend committee meetings as observers. He added that a shadow for membership secretary Lorna Joy was still required before closing the meeting at 2.40pm.

#### **ATTENDEES:**

Ann Abraham (Amblers -Monday)  
Anne Champion (Book group 1)  
Anne Mark (Canasta)  
Anne Mercer (Folk dancing)  
Anne Mills - standing in for Roger Gardner (Leisurely walkers)  
Arthur Newman (Singing for Fun)  
Barbara Willis (Ipad tuition)  
Bob Jerreat (Ukulele)  
Carolina Kenealy (New to Drawing)  
Clive Cowdy (Film Study & Bridge Improvers 1)

Daphne Forsyth (Board games)  
Derek Morgan (Webmaster, Science & Technology; Jazz Appreciation, Music for Pleasure)  
Diana Procter (Theatre)  
Dorothy Morgan (Science & Technology)  
Geoff Sampson (Railway group)  
Gina Crouch (Line dancing)  
Ginny Booth (Bus explorers)  
Helen Preston (Recorders)  
Jean Churchill-Coleman (Local History 2)  
Jenny Stacey (Calligraphy)  
Jim Whatmore (Table tennis Mondays; Badminton-Fridays)  
Judith Dipple (Italian Post-beginners)  
Julia Morten (Book Club 2)  
Julian Handley (French Beginners plus & Italian Improvers)  
Marilyn Crawford (Scrabble)  
Marion Meakin (German)  
Martin Paul (Chairman)  
Paddy Collins (Treasurer)  
Paul Radcliffe (Philosophy)  
Peter Bowtell (Architecture)  
Peter Cammas (Digital Photography)  
Robert Winks (shadow for Intermediate Spanish -Judy Austin & Secretary Cliff Dammers)  
Rod Moulding (Bridge Tuition)  
Roger Edwards (Croquet)  
Roland Simpkins (Speaker Secretary)  
Roy S. Walker (German Discussion)  
Sally Chittenden (Flower Arranging for Fun)  
Sheila Dalzell (Strollers)  
Sheila Harkness (Beginners Bridge)  
Susie Kelly (Creative writing)  
Stan Surzyn (Walking)  
Steve Heywood (Group co-ordinator Officer)  
Sue Norman (Recorders)  
Simon Susie Kelly (Square Dancing)  
Tina Mitchell (Music ensemble)