



Buckingham & District U3A

AGM Minutes

For the Annual General Meeting held at 2:30 pm Wednesday, 24th November at the Community Centre, Buckingham.

1. **Welcome:** The Chairperson welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. She declared the meeting quorate. Attendees were 64 in total, including the Committee members.

2. Apologies

The Secretary reported that apologies had been received from the following people: Tracey Reimer, Ray and Tina Mitchell, Arlette Romaine, David and Marjorie Elvins, Sheila Mawby, John and Margaret Wentworth, Anne Champion (10 in total).

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting, copies of which had been posted on the Society's website, were approved.

4. Chairperson's Report

The Chairperson reported that it had been a very strange 2 years with the ongoing Pandemic but we had survived as an organisation. We all have all had our ups and downs but she felt there was some quite positive learning resulting from this period, and she hoped that this knowledge would enable us to revisit our own lives and the needs of our community.

She added that we have been able to continue our Open Meetings via zoom and thanked Roland (Speaker Secretary) for facilitating these.

The Committee had worked hard with our meetings to keep the organisation running and viable, and she asked for applause which was given.

She said that the Group Co-ordinators had been amazing where so many kept their groups alive and running.

Condolences were offered to all the families whose loved ones had passed away or had been seriously ill, as it had been a very difficult time for many.

She then gave a short report on what was discussed when attending the U3A South East Regional gathering, held online, on the topic of “working together”, as follows:

Liz Thackray the new TAT Chair reflected on the development of the organisation from 1970 to the present day as follows:

- *In the 1970s and 1980s community development was with mutual self help*
- *1978 the Wolfenden Report - the future of voluntary organisations*
- *1979 Margaret Thatcher highlighted the need for voluntary sector organisations*
- *1981 Equality for disabled people within that arena.*
- **The Birth of the U3A was in 1982 The organisation then had 3 principles:*

1. A period of life in which full-time employment had ceased.

2. Self-help learning was being promoted

3. An emphasis on community and voluntary effort and a movement from service to mutual aid.

Who are we today:

Over 1000 U3As and 400,000+ members

Networking

Online and in person

Able to adapt.

The Chairperson then continued by outlining the challenges she considered we faced as an organisation today:

Raising our profile using opportunities such as U3A week and anniversaries (U3A day will be 21st September 2022)

Need to demonstrate our relevance and involvement with the local community.

Becoming a source of information for policy makers and journalism, e.g. University Community projects.

External competitors

We have a unique selling point but how does our online image compare - many don't know who the U3A is.

Recruitment and retention for Committee and for members should be flexible and adaptable. For example, some U3As have closed because of difficulties in recruiting members to join the Committee, and groups were limited or stopped due to lack of Group Coordinators to run them. We currently have that same recruitment problem here.

We need to remain agile, able to adapt and change.

The Chairperson's vision for the Future of our U3A:

We have a very strong vibrant organization but need to be more supported by our members who need to share ownership in all aspects of the organization. This will result in commitment to our future success and survival.

We also need to work not only locally but network with our Regional and National bodies working together as one voice. This area is where the U3A will excel in its principles.

Our unique selling point can influence our Community, both locally and nationally, but we need to build on our experiences of the Pandemic, try new initiatives relevant to our needs in our community.

Thanks were given to Steve Heywood, the retiring Group Liaison Officer, for his 3 years of service, and he was presented with a bottle of wine.

She concluded by saying

“We all know we are aging but we need to talk about living”.

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer Patrick Collins reported that the Society ended the year with a shortfall of £5,000 due to taking no subscriptions last year and rolling membership over to 2021. There has not been very much activity with no trips or outings. The balance is approximately £15K so there are no problems with that.

The accounts for the year have been posted on the Society's website, and copies were available at the meeting. The Treasurer asked that they be approved. The Members approved the accounts as posted.

The Treasurer said that he has now served for five years and would like a shadow in the near future to enable a handover to take place. He uses the SAGE bookkeeping software and anyone with Book-keeping experience would not find the position difficult.

6. Membership Secretary's Report

The Membership Secretary, Ann Abraham, reported that there had been a few ups and downs recently, and membership cards were delayed due to the U3A laptop being in need of repair.

The Society has 625 current members, and 43 new since the 1st June 2021. 19 had joined between October 2020 and June 2021, through the Covid period. There are another 10+ waiting to

join. There are 253 lapsed members. There are 32 deceased members, we have lost 11 since January 2021.

Members had not been able to find out whether their Bank was paying their subscriptions or not. A list will be circulated to GCs asking them encourage their group members to renew. Cheques can be accepted but not cash. Cheques need information on the back as to who they are from so they can be tied up with the records.

The Membership Secretary said she had a steep learning curve in her first year, and thanked Lorna Joy for her help. She also thanked Janti Mistry for his help since September with resolving the database anomalies.

7. Group Liaison Officer's Report

The Group Liaison Officer said he felt that if the U3A could be compared to stones in a building then the Group Co-ordinators were the mortar that held it together. He felt that groups needed to be kept going in order to avoid having to close them, and he asked everyone to volunteer if possible. There was a suggestion that a group member might agree to be a "group contact" rather than a Co-ordinator which may encourage people to come forward, as it suggests less work might be involved. The Group Liaison Officer thanked the Group Co-ordinators for their work.

8. Speaker Secretary's Report

The Speaker Secretary thanked the members who had made his task much easier by commending speakers that he could ask. Open Meetings had been held on Zoom until the restart in September. The next Open Meeting will be in January.

9. Webmaster's Report

The Webmaster thanked those GCs who had kept their pages on the web site up to date, and said that he could only post whatever information they submitted to him.

He had been wondering about trying hybrid meetings, and one of the GCs present said that her group had 3 members who would be interested in those.

There are 2 Facebook groups set up, one is for GCs and one is a general group, and he encouraged people to sign up for those. There are quite a few people there already.

10. Election of Officers and Committee Members.

The Chairperson announced that the Group Liaison Officer was retiring but that the other Committee members would be standing.

Upon nomination by Howard Mordue, and seconded by Dorothy Morgan, Lilia Bogle was elected Chairperson of the Society.

Upon nomination by Lilia Bogle and seconded by Derek Morgan, Howard Mordue was elected Vice-Chairman. He stated that he had been a member of the U3A for several years, having applied to join Beginners French which became French Improvers. He stated that the organisation belonged to the members if they wanted it to succeed, no need to go out and market it

or recruit on the street, all were capable of organising a group. Just a contact would be enough, it was running for the members not the Committee. He hadn't realised you could join at any age, so long as not in full-time employment. He mentioned that on Saturday 11th December we had a table in the Community Centre. We had 2 volunteers already but would like more to attend.

Upon nomination by Lilia Bogle and seconded by Pam Tonge, Dorothy Morgan was elected Secretary.

Upon nomination by Lilia Bogle, and seconded by Robert Winks, Derek Morgan was elected Webmaster.

Upon nomination by Lilia Bogle, and seconded by Derek Morgan, Patrick Collins was elected Treasurer.

Upon nomination by Lilia Bogle, and seconded by Barbara Willis, Ann Abraham was elected Membership Secretary.

Upon nomination by Lilia Bogle, and seconded by Pam Tonge, Roland Simpkins was elected Speaker Secretary.

Upon nomination by Lilia Bogle, and seconded by Sheila Harkness, Howard Mordue was elected Publicity Officer.

There were no nominations for the post of Newsletter Editor which remains vacant.

11. Open Forum

The Chairperson opened the meeting for questions.

Margaret Hopwood said that there were older people in the U3A who did not have access to computers and would like a printed Newsletter. Membership Secretary said that a number of these had been mailed to those people not on email, but the last one available was April 2021. Those people were also missing out on monthly email reminders.

Another member Una said she felt the microphones/acoustics could be improved. She would also like to see names on all the Committee members (although most of the Committee were wearing a name badge it was not visible to those further away in the hall).

Replying to a question on the Christmas Social, the Chairperson said that it was on Thursday 16th December, not Wednesday 15th. Milady Clare's Musicke had been booked to play music on entry and give a performance later.

Adrian Scandrett said that there was a Classics group being started, Greek and Latin, and anyone interested should contact him.

Adrian expressed an interest in the role of Group Liaison Officer, and Arthur Newman was also interested. It was agreed that the Chairperson would meet with them both to discuss the requirements of the role.

The Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 3.20 p.m.