



Minutes of the U3A Thames Valley Network Representatives' Meeting held at Benson Parish Hall, OX10 6LZ

on

Thursday 26th July 2018

Present:

Committee: Susie Berry, Chairman (Ridgeway); Avis Furness, Vice-Chairman (Reading); Derek Randall, Treasurer (Thame & District); Anne Marie Lord, Secretary (Chinnor & District); Len Smith, website support (Wokingham); Patsy Thornton, Events (Wokingham), Gill Le Du (Henley), Margaret Sherrington, co-opted (West Oxford)

Regional Trustee: not present

Third Age Trust: Pam Jones (Chairman)

Representatives: Fay Sinai (Abingdon), Greig Sneddon and Moira Bishop (Aylesbury Vale), Jay Oldknow (Bourne End & District), David Lenton and Bruce Collins (Bracknell Forest), Tony Darbyshire and Bob Borwick (Chalfonts), Eric Magson and James Cadle (Chess Valley), Peter Metcalf (Chiltern), Bryan Roebuck and Frances Wells (Chinnor & District), Diamond Versi (Chipping Norton), Shirley Rouse and Linda Stannard (Didcot & District), Peter Foot (Faringdon), Ann Walsh, Sue Hookway (Goring Gap), Christine Townsend (Greater Thame), Jerry Michell (Haddenham), Ann Partridge (Headington), Penny Gerrard and Barbel Cheesewright (High Wycombe), Jean Myhill and Ian Ross (Maidenhead), James Wright (Marlow & District), Fred Bass (Milton Keynes), Sandra McWilliam (Newbury), Ray Marshall (Princes Risborough), Jane Sellwood and Mary Butcher (Reading), Annette Thompson, June Waterson and Nina Stonham (Ridgeway), Phil Taylor (South Bucks), Paul Booker (Thameside, Wallingford), Lyn Toms and Linda Thompson (Wantage and Grove), Beverley Birmingham and Lis Froggart (West Oxford), Pam Rook (Woodstock).

Susie welcomed all Reps and Committee members to the meeting and especially welcomed Pam Jones, Chair of the Third Age Trust and Margaret Sherrington who has been co-opted to serve as a committee member until the AGM in 2019.

1. Apologies:

Apologies had been received from: Eileen Page (Abingdon), Peggy Penfold (Bicester), Derek Jackson (Bracknell Forest), Ernest Newhouse (Chiltern), Gillian Thomas and Liz Janes (Goring Gap), Mike Price (Greater Thame), Mary Blake (Newbury), Margaret Lipscomb (Oxford), Lesley Charnock (Thame & District), Yvonne Griffiths (Thameside, Wallingford), Mike Morfey and Margaret Edmondson (Wallingford), John Wiggins (Windsor & District), Jane Clarke (Witney), Denise Allen (Wokingham) .

2 Minutes of the last meeting (27th April 2018).

The Minutes were approved.

3.0 Matters arising.

The Chairman of Chipping Norton U3A advised the meeting that this U3A would be holding a meeting at which it was expected that its closure would be agreed.

There were no other matters arising.

4.0 Chairman's Report.

4.1i Communication Susie said that communication within TVN is vital at all levels, she requested all U3As let her know as soon as contacts change and, when responding to e-mails, it would be very helpful to include the name of your U3A.

4.1ii Following apparent difficulties with receipt of e-mails Susie will now send everything under separate cover e.g. Minutes will be sent as a separate mailing from Study days.

4.2 Network Link

4.2i Following the request under AOB ii re **compostable wrappers for postal mailings** Susie reported that the wrapping for TAM is recyclable but not biodegradable.

4.2ii Accounts clarification Susie asked the Third Age Trust Treasurer for further clarification and has forwarded his response to all TVN Reps as follows:

“U3A Committees are responsible for all financial transactions within their own U3A. They appoint a Treasurer to record all such transactions, to report regularly to the Committee and to produce an annual account to the membership. In an ideal world, the Treasurer should pay all bills him/herself, obtain receipts, and maintain a detailed bookkeeping system. However, it is recognised that in large U3As this is not always possible or practical. It is therefore up to the Committee to decide whether to allow certain Group Leaders to keep their own accounts on a day to day basis and also to decide how often they are required to submit these accounts to the Treasurer. They MUST be included in the annual account of that U3A.

John feels strongly that the more people who handle money the less control the Committee has over the finances and reiterates that the Committee has the ultimate responsibility for members' money and must therefore take great care when considering who to authorise to pay bills and receive money on its behalf.

As with all decisions, it is important that these are recorded in the Minutes. “

Susie re-inforced the point that it is strongly recommended that all U3A monies need to be accounted for at least annually by the Treasurer, the Committee must record the names of persons responsible for any funds and all decisions pertaining to the keeping of accounts must be written in the Minutes by the Committee.

4.3 Growing the Movement is part of the Strategic Plan. The proposed new Plan will be outlined at Conference and discussed in more detail at the Trust's September meeting and should be finalised at the December meeting. Susie has requested it be e-mailed to U3As in the new year to avoid the problems of overload at the busy end of year. Some of the proposals relate to why U3As cannot always see how they can take new members and the possibility of introducing cold start-ups . A “Health-check” questionnaire is planned for the National website to enable U3As to check how well they are doing. At present this is being piloted.

4.4 Learning not Lonely Every U3A has been sent a copy of this Report which was launched at a reception in the House of Commons. MPs, charities, National newspapers and local councils are all aware with access to copies. The information for this Report was gathered by National Office through local U3As. Copies are available from National Office and at Conference.

4.5 Conference Voting for Trustees is now on-line prior to Conference
Pam is retiring and Ian McCannah is standing unopposed for Chairman.

5.0 Treasurer's Report

Financial report to 30th June 2018. The Financial Statement to 30th June 2018 had been sent to all Reps before the meeting. Derek highlighted the following: the four study days this year have realised a surplus of £950.00 (taking into account the deposit paid last year for the visit to Kelmscott Manor the true surplus is £875.00). Currently the bank balance is £9210.60 of which £2000 is our contingency sum and £7210.60 cash available for future use.

It has been agreed that future study days will be subsidised starting with the Polar Exploration Study day in September in order to reduce our high bank balance.

Turnover is greater than £5,000.00 per annum and it is therefore thought necessary to apply for charitable status.

6.0 SE Region Trustee's Report

No report to this meeting had been received from Bob Duckmanton.

7 Events Team Report Patsy thanked members of TVN who have organised events and said they all fill up very quickly.

7.1 Report on Events since last meeting

The second Photography day took place at Benson on 17th May thanks to Mike Price.

Kelmscott on May 10th was another successful day with excellent speakers thanks to Gill Le Du. Reps were asked to let Gill know if another day would be supported in 2020.

Small Ships at Dunkirk at the River and Rowing Museum on June 19th was fully booked within 6 days. The speakers were excellent and Patsy is planning another possible day in mid-March 2019.

7.2 Further Events planned for 2018

September 4th Polar exploration at Benson- Margaret Sherrington.

November 1st Medicine and Art at Benson- Gill Le Du – 5 places are available at the time of this meeting.

October 17th Website building at Benson– Tony Darbyshire Websites for personal use, details are on the TVN website

TVN Workshop – Convenors' Day at Benson. How to be a happy and successful convenor arranged by Mike Hender (Chiltern U3A) – date to be confirmed but anticipated that this will be in November. Two places will be reserved per U3A for the first two weeks once advertised, thereafter places will be allocated as always by date of receipt of application.

7.3 Events planned for 2019

Cinema and pre-Raphaelites have been suggested. Patsy asked Reps to let her know of any other topics and/or speakers.

She thanked everyone who spreads the word about the Study days.

8 TVN Science Group

Jane Sellwood reported that there had been a moderate response with several U3As making contact. She will keep communication going re the programmes the different groups have planned. She suggested that she could arrange a study day in 2019 as it is very interesting to hear how other groups are doing.

9 Network Information

9.1 Speaker Database and list of interest groups. (Maintained by Vice-chairman)

Avis has sent an up-dated list but another will be sent in a couple of weeks. Please let Avis know if there are any amendments and please continue to share news of good speakers. She is also happy to contact recommended speakers to agree their inclusion on the list.

Avis produces a second list of Speaker Secretaries which is available at this meeting for Reps to up-date as necessary. An up-dated list of U3A interest groups is on the website as an Excel spreadsheet but is sent out as a pdf.

9.2 TVN Contacts list (maintained by Chairman) Details are held by Susie with consent. **Please ensure Susie is sent up-dated contact details if these change.**

9.3 Events Contact List (maintained by Mike Price) All Events application forms include an option for the applicant to receive information re future events by joining this list. 220 people are already signed up. Information re Events is sent to TVN Reps before it is sent to people on this list. Names are held on the list until members opt out.

9.4 Website (maintained by Len Smith) Information regarding Study days/events is available on the website as soon as possible on release to Reps.

Recent hits have been disappointing with just 418 in June.

Len reported that he has been thanked for maintaining an easily navigable website.

10 A.O.B. i/ The projectors used by Reading and Ridgeway U3As were compared following the last meeting but evaluation was difficult, further comments were requested.

Princes Risborough use 2 screens and 2 projectors although cables can be an issue.

In order to ensure best management of an Event the projector purchased should recognise which computer is being used.

Epsom and Optima projectors were recommended.

The lumens count and ports were also considered important factors in making a choice.

ii/ Thameside have received a letter from the Third Age Trust following a concern that contact phone numbers were included for U3As on the website map indicating locations of U3As. U3As can request to have their contact telephone number taken off. Contact Fran at national office.

Up-dating the website is a huge undertaking and Reps are encouraged to make their comments as positively as possible.

iii/ Chiltern Jazzfest still has some tickets available. It is advertised at this meeting on the new TVN noticeboard.

iv/ The Noticeboard is available for Reps. to use at TVN meetings. There is a poster requesting volunteers aged 60-70 years to join a trial for a whooping cough vaccine.

Date of next meeting Reps' meeting Friday 26th October at Benson Parish Hall 10am for 10.30am followed by lunch if pre- booked (£6) * Suggestions for topics or speakers would be welcome.

*Please respond when the agenda is sent out, apologies are appreciated just as much as responses indicating your U3A and who will be attending. Lunches should be booked **before** the meeting. Thank you.

Date

Chairman

07/08/2018

Useful details:

TVN www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk

SE Region <https://u3asites.org.uk/south-east>

SE Region Trustee bob.duckmanton@u3a.org.uk