

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of

Malmesbury & District U3A

Thursday 25th April 2019

Assembly Room, Malmesbury Town Hall

1. Welcome

The Chairman Susan Mockler welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting that the hall was tightly packed and the quorum readily met.¹

2. Apologies

32 apologies were received: 19 in writing to the Business Secretary and 13 informally.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting (The AGM of 26/04/2018)

These had been circulated electronically to all members and hardcopies posted to those without e-mail. They had also been displayed on the website and a hardcopy included in the Policy Folder available on the Information Table at every Monthly Meeting.

These minutes were taken as a true record . Proposed by Bob Roberts-Phare; seconded by John Hammond and carried overwhelmingly by a show of hands.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's Report

Susan Mockler reported. The M&D U3A is a success story! From one person's vision, followed through by an enthusiastic and energetic steering committee, then four years of being led by a dedicated and hard-working committee this U3A, OUR U3A, now has approaching 40 interest groups with industrious leaders ensuring that 470 members can participate locally in peer-led learning and social activities. The U3A movement brings people together at a time in their lives when they need interests and friendships commensurate with their age and experience.

¹ 104 members had signed in (the quorum is 74); also a visitor from the USA

M&D is one of the 1,039 local U3As with over 30,000 interest groups between them. Our 470 members make up some of the 425,000 U3A members countrywide. We are therefore part of a large movement that is based on principles of self-funded, self-guided peer-to-peer learning, valuing every member's contribution while promoting inclusion and equality. The charitable purpose of the U3A movement was changed this year and was written into our constitution before we became a charity in our own right. It says:

“ The advancement of education in particular, the education of older people and those retired from full-time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development. “

This was written to reflect the wider aspects of the group having a positive social aspect that benefitted members. A report entitled, '*Learning not Lonely, Living Life, Expanding horizons, Challenging conventions*', was commissioned to assess the impact of this lifelong learning movement founded in the UK by Peter Laslett, Eric Midwinter and Michael Young. The findings found that belonging to the U3A contributed positively to physical and mental well-being; so much so that membership of a U3A has been promoted to GPs to be prescribed for those of our generation who are in need of friendships, mutual support and shared learning and challenges.

Over this past year the committee has certainly had some challenges! They have dealt with changes to laws regarding the keeping of personal details and safeguarding adults and successfully applied for charitable status in our own right. It is thanks to them that we are able to belong to groups of like-minded people, participate socially and improve our own welfare as well as having fun! I thank them for their unending optimism and support and, in fact, we should all thank them (applause.)

I would like particularly to thank the retiring members of the committee, (who have served their time) Diana Bolton, Pam Lucas, Geraldine Gould and Pam Green, you have worked with humour and diligence; your contribution is greatly appreciated!

Thank you to those members who have agreed to stand again or join the committee this year – of course, we still need to fill two posts, Minutes Secretary and Groups Co-ordinator and I would encourage you to think about sparing a couple of hours a month by joining us to ensure that everything runs smoothly and efficiently this year. We have a volunteer to stand as Social Secretary, which will be voted on later in this meeting. Many hands make light work and we would welcome you with open arms!

Friendships are an important part of our movement and I would like to take a few moments to remember those who are no longer here. Sadly, their deaths cast shadows; they will always be missed by their families and remembered by their friends in the U3A. The support we can offer each other at sad times is another bonus of belonging to such an amazing group of people.

We all contribute to the success of M&D U3A but a special thanks goes to the group leaders and those who organise trips and visits. A number of interest groups are reaching out from Malmesbury and widening their horizons – trips to various locations such as gardens,

museums, exhibitions, attending study days, summer schools and the National AGM. There have been two Shared Learning projects this year with the Local History Group and Athelstan Museum – the Roman Coin Hoard Project is on-going and the exhibition about the pubs and inns of Malmesbury is now on show in the museum. There are links to other U3As in the UK as well as in Guernsey through the Petanque group and we hope to have a close association with the proposed new U3A in Tetbury.

Keeping members informed is a priority and relies on you sending articles into the editors for inclusion in our newsletter and bulletins. Thanks to Jeremy and Geraldine for editing these this year and chasing people up for articles and photographs, don't be shy about letting us all know about your group's activities! We also publicise M&D U3a locally through posters, village newsletters and attending local events such as Petticoat Lane and village events and are planning an open morning show-casing groups and recruiting new members in the Town Hall in October.

We continue to expand our horizons with a wide-ranging programme of talks, thank you Geraldine for an interesting and often thought –provoking selection of speakers for our monthly meetings this past year. Through the generosity of our members and the bucket system over £ 500 was donated to Medical Detection Dogs, The Doorway Project in Chippenham for the homeless and the Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Thank you all.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our U3A is a busy and thriving group and I hope that with the returning committee and new committee members we will continue to enjoy all there is on offer, learn and have fun this coming year.

6. Treasurer's Report and Statement of Accounts

Julia Batty presented the Accounts for 2018/2019 (see Appendix 1). Our year end is 31st March, so there has been only a short period to compile and check (independently) the figures. Consequently, they could not be included in the bundle of AGM papers but they have been available on the Website from 18th April, hardcopies were available now and the figures projected on the screen in front of us. (The accounts are attached to these Minutes as Appendix 1.)

She began by reassuring the meeting that the Association's finances were very healthy.

We have a good balance in our account. This is a consequence of the growth in subscription income (to 471 when the accounting year closed) which in itself had put us above the £5000 threshold when the law requires us to register with the Charity Commission. The change in Charitable purpose agreed last year (at the behest of the Third Age Trust) has meant that our social activities are part of that purpose and so are no longer accounted separately, further increasing the income to £6174 (including other donations). As we are moving the account to Lloyd's shortly, we shall therefore open just one account rather than the two we now have (with HSBC).

The committee has also worked hard at keeping expenses down so in the year we enjoyed a surplus of £675 which, when added to funds previously accumulated, we have now reserves of over £7500. However, we have to remember that our Capitation and TAM magazine expenses are due shortly to be paid to The Third Age Trust, and our main income from membership does not start again until September.

In answer to two questions from the floor, Julia added that

- 1) The cost of Beacon has more than doubled – partly because of the increase in membership but essentially because TAT have double the subscription (from 50p to £1 per member). The Committee feel this is still a valid purchase, not least because Beacon is central both to our established procedures and to our compliance with GDPR. Further TAT are in the process of developing a significant up-grade, which they hope to release next year, which we feel we should support.
- 2) We have made a conscious decision not to apply for Gift Aid (though we are eligible) as we are financially very well-placed and have no project in-hand that would justify it.

Ann Holland proposed that **The Accounts be accepted as presented**; this was seconded by Pam Lucas and the motion was carried overwhelmingly by a show of hands.

7. Election of the Committee for 2019 – 2020

Valid Nominations had been received from 10 persons, on or before the deadline (28th March). The nominees are therefore declared elected unopposed. Susan then identified individually the newly elected Committee members (including herself).

At this point there were three vacant positions. However, a volunteer for the post of *Social Secretary* had come forward and could be elected by this meeting. Accordingly, **Margaret Gore**, proposed by Terry Mockler and seconded by Diana Boulton, was elected unanimously to the post.

Susan explained that the Committee could co-opt to the two remaining vacancies. She stressed that the jobs and procedures were now well established; she would happily talk through the responsibilities with anyone considering joining us and who wanted to know more.

2019/20 Committee members are listed in Appendix 2

8. Proposal from the Executive Committee: Constitutional Change

The Business Secretary, **John Fairhurst**, spoke for the Executive Committee.

We achieved Charity Commission Registration in our own right in January and as a consequence the Committee felt the need to look afresh at our Constitution.

We quickly decided we needed to 'spring clean' the whole thing. There are no critical substantive changes, just a series of overdue tidying. Of course, only a General Meeting has the power to make such changes, hence the motion brought to this meeting today.

In summary, the proposed changes are:

1. Changes to title and footers, so that our name and newly acquired Charity Registration number are all prominent; changing "*If* The U3A is registered." to "*As* The U3A is registered.." wherever it occurs (in several places);
2. Deleting redundant sections referring to the rules for our very first Committee appointments and initial establishment (long since behind us) and renumbering as required Also deleting references to notes (in the "set-up pack") that never featured in the document anyhow, including one acknowledging that the U3A embraces the two genders (so in the document itself "*He*" is now "*(S)he*" and "*his*" is now "*his or hers*").
3. Reducing the proportion of members who might trigger a Special General Meeting from 20% to 10% i.e. from a wholly unrealistic 94 members of our 470 current total (so almost everyone in this room today!) to 47 ~ which is still a large number. This is the nearest to a substantial change but, should something go badly wrong and a significant number of people be upset, this shifts power *from* the Committee *to* the Membership. So, hopefully, this change should not be contentious either.

We have been very careful to be transparent and have bombarded you, the members, with Attachments to the AGM Agenda that gave you (i) the rational, (ii) precise details of the amendments, and then (iii) a copy of the final suggested 'stream-lined' Constitution. It has been reviewed very carefully by the whole Committee and proof-read several times by Susan and Dick in particular. Further, the Third Age Trust have happily waived the proposed changes through. So, on behalf of the Committee I move that:

The meeting hereby endorses these changes and resolves that the new Constitution takes immediate effect.

Proposed: John Fairhurst (for the Executive Committee)

Seconded: Dick Gray

Carried overwhelmingly by a show of hands.

10. Closure of Meeting

Susan thanked everyone for coming and formally declared the meeting closed at 10.34 a.m.

APPENDIX 1 : MALMESBURY & DISTRICT U3A ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2018-19

INCOME

Members subscriptions	£ 5778.00
Meetings	£ 178.20
Other (commission from Riviera Travel)	£ 217.80
Total income 2018-2019	£ 6174.00

EXPENDITURE

Refreshments (meetings and events)	£ 232.55
Equipment (Banners and plastic cups)	£ 41.57
Shop	£ 0
Room Hire	£ 654.29
Stationery & printing	£ 606.13
Postage	£ 459.14
Speakers	£ 266.42
Web/Beacon	£ 240.39
National U3A Capitation	£ 1575
Training/seminars/conference	£ 322.10
Third Age Matters	£ 919.02
Publicity	£ 81.14
Other	£ 26
Bank charges/Paypal	£ 74.98
Total Expenditure	£5498.73

SURPLUS of Income over Expenditure	£ 675.27
	<u>£ 6174.00</u>

BALANCE SHEET as at 1ST APRIL 2019

Consolidated fund balance brought forward	£6830.87
Add surplus of income over expenditure	£ 675.27

£7506.14

Represented by:

Cash in HSBC bank	£ 7706.44
Cheques issued in this financial year but not cleared	- £ 228.78
Total	£7477.66
Petty Cash	£ 26.24
PAYPAL Account	£ 2.24

Net Assets carried forward £7506.14

Earmarked Reserves : U3A Capitation due April 2019 approx £1,645
: Third Age Matters £600
: Beacon £500

SOCIAL ACCOUNT Balance at 1/4/18 £619.93
GROUPS ACCOUNTS Total held £429.50

Assets Register, Interest Group Returns and all account sheets available for inspection at the AGM

APPENDIX 2: M & D U3A NEWLY ELECTED COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2019 – 20

OFFICERS

Chairman Susan Mockler
Vice-Chairman Dick Gray
Business Secretary John Fairhurst
Treasurer Julia Batty

EXECUTIVES

Membership Secretary Elaine Sharpe
New Members' Secretary Sara Gray
Publicity Officer Janette Barstow
Webmaster Jonathan Barstow
Speakers' Secretary Sue Hammond
Social Secretary Margaret Gore
Newsletter Editor John Hammond (*supported by Jeremy North and
Geraldine McKibbin*)

THERE REMAIN TWO VACANCIES (as at 25/04/2019) –

GROUPS' CO-ORDINATOR

MINUTES SECRETARY