

U3A THAMES VALLEY NETWORK

Representatives' meeting held at the Sports Hall, Watlington, courtesy of Ridgeway U3A,
on Friday 10th January 2014

Present:

Committee – Mike Price Chairman (Greater Thame), Susie Berry Vice-Chairman (Ridgeway), Agnes Budagowska Treasurer (Swindon), Anthony Burdall (Faringdon), Avis Furness (Reading), Anne Gould (Abingdon), Anne Marie Lord Secretary (Chinnor & District), Len Smith (Wokingham)
Pam Jones – Trustee South East Region, (Witney U3A)

Reps. Pauline Nuttall (Abingdon), Shirley Stokes and Geoff Young (Aylesbury Vale), Christine Cox and Ray Thomas (Bicester), Theresa Doherty (Bracknell Forest), Eric Magson (Chess Valley), Peter Metcalf (Chiltern), Molly Milner (Chinnor & District), Brenda Mainwaring and Shirley Rouse (Didcot & District), Anne Walsh (Goring Gap) Kevin Nash (Haddenham), Ruth Waddle (Headington), Barbel Cheesewright, (High Wycombe), Harry Burnham and Bill Teasdale (Maidenhead), Mike Davies (Marlow), Clive Dray (Newbury), Malcolm Barker (Princes Risborough), Angela Jacob, Shirley Jones, Nina Stonham, Jacky Wagstaff and Margaret Wiggall (Ridgeway), Peggy Miles and Derek Randall (Thame and District), Neil Kelly (Thameside), Margaret Edmondson and Jill Procter (Wallingford), Margaret Sherrington (West Oxford), Jane Clarke and Valerie Palmer (Witney), Patsy Thornton and Edward Miles (Wokingham).

1.0 Apologies:

Committee – Martin McBride (Carterton),

Reps: Roy Coates (Chipping Norton), Fred May (Faringdon), Pam Feltbower (Greater Thame), John Brandis (Haddenham), Val Ryan (Headington) Margaret Graham and Sylvia Chadwick (High Wycombe), Jane Sellwood (Reading), Gill Pittock (Thatcham).

An apology was also made for the lack of U3A name cards, they had not been brought to the meeting.

2.0 Minutes of 04/10/13 These were agreed and signed. Under **6 Report on the National conference** Professor Ronald Foster should read Professor **Russell** Foster. This was manually altered and initialled by the Chairman.

3.0 Matters arising None.

4.0 Chairman's Report.

Mike said there was little to report but he looked forward to a good year.

Two areas were highlighted for Reps to consider:

- i) anyone willing to help or join the Events Team would be very welcome,
- ii) Martin McBride will resign from the Network Committee at the AGM and therefore there will be a vacancy for someone to keep the Speakers List up-to-date. Please let Mike know of anyone willing to take this on.

5.0 Treasurer's report

Agnes circulated copies of the TVN Account Summary for Dec 2013 and for the period 1st Jan 2013 – 31st Dec 2013.

As of 01/01/13 the surplus stood at £3887.47

As of 01/01/14 the surplus stood at £2806.49 of which £518 is held in order to pay an invoice yet to be submitted.

The available surplus is therefore £2288.49

There has been a deficit this year due to additional AGM costs and one Event that did not break even.

A reserve of £2000 has previously been agreed and with this in mind it is highly likely that the affiliation fee will need to be reinstated in 2015. (Previously this was set at 10p per U3A member and reps were asked to consider this for comment under AOB). Notice of this will be given at the AGM in May this year.

Pam Jones congratulated and thanked Agnes for all that she does and Mike seconded this on behalf of everyone.

6.0 Report from Regional Trustee

Pam is the Chairman of the National Development Committee. This Committee has put together the centre pages for the next edition of Third Age Matters magazine giving guidance and also up-dated Guiding Principles which it is hoped will make them clearer.

The workload of the SE Region Trustee continues to be a concern but a Constitutional change would be needed to alter the role and it is unlikely that this would be supported except in the SE. Pam is therefore putting forward a presentation advocating the use of more volunteers in order to address the workload issue.

Pam will be retiring as Trustee in September and will need a successor. She is also considering putting her name forward as Vice-Chairman and will be looking for support in this.

A SE Region website has been set up.

There was some discussion regarding problems experienced by some TVN U3As using the National website.

Comments were that it is difficult and time-consuming to extrapolate documents that are attachments in order to send them to a U3A's website. It can also be confusing as some documents seem to come as hard copy and others via e-mail. The Third Age Trust office mailings have also presented a problem for the TVN website.

Pam suggested that contact should be made with the Third Age Trust website co-ordinator, Fran Walton.

7.0 Network Activities

7.1 Events Team Report and Programme for 2014

i Once again Anthony asked for more people to come forward to help and/or organise Events.

ii Event Guidelines have been sent out to all U3As and there is a link on the website. These offer clarification on Thames Valley Network Events/ Study days and their organisation.

iii The final Study days of 2013 were the Wine Study day which was oversubscribed and very successful; and Benjamin Britten for which there has been no feedback, one Rep present at this meeting said that it was very good.

iv Programme for 2014

23rd April Treasures of the Ashmolean

- The publicity for this was sent out in December and such was the overwhelming response all 100 places available were filled within a few days. Anthony requested that someone else might like to arrange a second day as the interest generated and the substantial waiting list could support it. Pam Jones offered to take this on.
- The timing of the publicity was questioned as December is a difficult month and there is always the problem of getting information out to members who are not on e-mail. It was agreed that the level of interest and immediate response had been unprecedented and could not have been predicted so that whenever the publicity was made the timing would not have been right for some U3As.
- **The response on application forms does not clarify membership of a U3A and it was agreed that successful delegates will be informed that on arrival at the Ashmolean they will need to present proof of membership of their U3A at a registration desk. Although some U3As do not issue membership cards there should be sufficient time for delegates to address the issue with their Membership Secretary.**
- Lunch is available at extra cost at the Ashmolean, please see the booking form. **Please note** - the Ashmolean will not allow any food to be taken in to the museum or eaten there .

This Event generated much discussion on several points and the following will be considered/adopted by the Events Team:

a) Application forms to include a statement that evidence of membership of a U3A will be required at a registration desk.

b) **As a general principle if a disabled member of a U3A applies to attend an Event then a carer is to be allowed to attend even if he/she is not a U3A member.** This was unanimously agreed by a show of hands.

c) Payment by/for a carer is usually no problem but needs to be addressed when there is a specific cost per person.

24th June Railways, Yesterday and Tomorrow

June/July Gardens of the Thames Valley – Mike Price asked for help especially regarding the development of gardens in the Thames valley.

30th Sept. Local History Study day at Witney

Oct/Nov The Photographer's Eye Study day

Oct ? Poetry Study day

Experience day/workshop – Committee membership, the legal obligations.

v **Historic Pathways:** Patsy Thornton explained that this is an on-going project and that there are opportunities to join walks that have been researched already (see website).

There is a steering group of six who would like give a 15 minute presentation to U3As describing how research takes place. It is hoped to involve as many U3As as possible and it is anticipated that local U3As will work together on the project.

A Study day is planned for 23rd May at Uffington Village hall. Date to be confirmed. There will be a lead speaker talking about the Ridgeway, workshops and walks.

A further Study day is planned for September and a residential presentation is also being planned for the Oct half-term in 2015 at Wellington College. Approximate cost £130.

vi Planning for 2015 :

March Book study day in Abingdon

April/May The work of the NT – to take place at Waddesdon Manor.

May/June Forensic Science study day at Culham

July Plants and Botanic gardens at Oxford Botanic gardens

November History of Opera Study day at Rewley House

Workshop suggested for group leaders. There is a possibility that Pam could organise this at a National level.

October Historic Pathways Residential gathering at Wellington College

8.0 Network Information

8.1 Contacts List An up-dated list (Rev 49 of 12/13) was circulated before this meeting Please keep Mike up-to-date with any changes.

8.2 Speaker's Database Martin has sent his apologies to this meeting. Due to other commitments he will be retiring as Data base secretary and another will be needed.

8.3 Website Len reported that there had been more hits in December 2013 than in December 2012.

www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk

9.0 AOB

9.1 There was a short discussion on communication including the benefits or otherwise of Facebook. It was felt that as younger members join U3A then the use of Facebook and other options are more likely to be addressed.

9.2 The introduction of an affiliation fee was discussed with Reps. agreeing that there are many positive opportunities in being part of TVN. It was felt that the simplest fee to administer would be 10p per head as in the past and could realise around £1700. This will be raised at the AGM.

9.3 Maidenhead Chairman, Harry Burnham, made the following comments:

i too much time is spent on agenda items at reps meetings, he would like more time to speak with other Chairmen.

ii he very much appreciated the fact that the table name cards for each U3A were double-sided.

9.4 A Family History study day has been arranged by Chiltern U3A on 9th March 2014. A few places are still available for members of other U3As. Flyers were available at the meeting. A Jazz festival has also been arranged for August.

9.5 Molly Milner, Chairman of Chinnor and District, asked how other U3As let their members know when a member passes away. This prompted a variety of responses with some U3As announcing the news at meetings, putting a notice up on a noticeboard, publishing in the newsletter while others did not do so or informing the relevant groups.

9.6 Patsy Thornton addressed the issue of running minority interest study days. She felt it was worthwhile but the likely level of interest needs to be considered when costing the event.

9.7 Mike asked if there was any interest in having Speakers after lunch at Reps' Meetings. There was none.

10 Date of next meeting

AGM on Friday 9th May. It was agreed that this should be at Benson Village hall.

Mike thanked all for coming and thanked Susie for providing lunch.

Dates of meetings 2014:

Representatives meetings 10am for 10.30am

Friday 9th May – AGM ... Benson Village hall.

Friday 25th July at the Sports Hall, Watlington, courtesy of Ridgeway U3A

Friday 3rd October at the Sports Hall, Watlington, courtesy of Ridgeway U3A

TVN Committee meetings 10.30am

Tuesday 1st April

Monday 30th June

Monday 1st September

date

Chairman

12/01/14