



**Minutes of the U3A Thames Valley Network Representatives' Meeting held at Benson Parish Hall, OX10 6LZ
on
Friday 26th October 2018**

Present:

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

Regional Trustee: Bob Duckmanton

Third Age Trust:

Representatives: Eileen Page and Fay Sinai (Abingdon), Moira Bishop (Aylesbury Vale), Derek Jackson (Bracknell Forest), Bob Borwick and Mike Lawson (Chalfonts), James Cadle (Chess Valley), Peter Metcalf (Chiltern), Bryan Roebuck and Janet Erskine (Chinnor & District), Diamond Versi (Chipping Norton), Shirley Rouse and Linda Stannard (Didcot & District), Peter Foot (Faringdon), Gillian Thomas, Ann Walsh and Liz Janes (Goring Gap), Christine Townsend, Deborah Miller and Rosalind Coates (Greater Thame), Penny Gerrard and Barbel Cheesewright (High Wycombe), Jean Myhill (Maidenhead), James Wright (Marlow & District), Fred Bass (Milton Keynes), Gillian Wilkinson (Princes Risborough), Jane Sellwood (Reading), Annette Thompson, June Waterson and Nina Stonham (Ridgeway), Phil Taylor (South Bucks), Carol Bradbrook-Taylor (Thame & District), Neil Kelly and Paul Booker (Thameside, Wallingford), Mike Morfey (Wallingford), Lyn Toms and Malcom Wetherill (Wantage and Grove), John Smith (Wendover), Kenneth Shaw (Weston Turville), Pam Jones and Jane Clarke (Witney), Ian Grainge and John Waddington (Wokingham).

Susie welcomed all Reps and Committee members to the meeting and especially to Kenneth Shaw representing Weston Turville U3A who have now joined the TVN.

1. Apologies:

Apologies had been received from: Len Smith, website support (Wokingham); Aylesbury; Bourne End & District, Carterton, Chess Valley, Sue Hookway (Goring Gap), Mike Price (Greater Thame), Headington, Newbury, Margaret Lipscomb (Oxford), Mary Butcher (Reading), Christine Philips (South Bucks), Thatcham, Tring, West Oxford, Windsor & District, Woodstock.

2 Minutes of the last meeting (26th July 2018).

The Minutes were approved.

3.0 Matters arising.

10. 1/ Following trials and comparison of Reading and Ridgeway U3As' projectors TVN has purchased a new projector which proved very successful at the last study day.

4.0 Chairman's Report.

4.1 National Conference Susie reported that this was a successful conference. The conference presentations are available on-line and she recommended that of the main speaker, Professor Janice Thompson who spoke on "Moving, eating well and aging well."

Susie congratulated Pam on her time as Chair of the Third Age Trust. The new Chair is Ian McCannah and the Vice-chair is Hilary Jones.

4.2i Network link meetings Susie attended a meeting on 12th October in London. Hilary Jones is the new chairman. This is a useful forum for sharing ideas. The next meeting will be in May 2019 in London.

4.2ii New look for TAM Francis Beckett gave a presentation at the Network Links meeting about TAM and changes that are planned; TAM currently contributes considerable revenue to the Third Age Trust from its advertising space, but it is proposed that "In your own write" and possibly some of the letters pages will go on-line in order to free-up space in the magazine for other things. TAM will continue to be published as a magazine. Sources, however, will now only be accessible on-line. The National Office newsletter is also popular.

4.3 Finance Workshop , 6th November at Benson. This meeting has been arranged and will be run by the Third Age Trust. It is fully booked with 50 attendees. John Bent will be the facilitator. TVN Committee had not requested this workshop but, as with any National Office workshop, can be arranged by TVN.

5.0 Treasurer's Report

The Financial Statement to 30th September 2018 including additional notes had been circulated. Derek was unable to attend this meeting but it was agreed that TVN is financially sound.

In response to a query Reps were assured that no request for affiliation fees is anticipated and as and when they are needed U3As would be given at least 12 months' notice.

6.0 SE Region Trustee's Report

6.1 Bob Duckmanton gave a very full report and made the following points:

1. There are 10 Networks in the SE Region, the Network Link is an important forum. Of 70 Networks nationally, 35 attended the last meeting in October.
2. Look out for National events e.g. U3A Petanque weekend held recently on Hayling Island.
3. A National Finance workshop is to be held at Alton Community Centre on 5th November with John Bent. Other workshops available are "Communication is Fun", "How not to run an AGM", "Finance is not a bore". Places may still be available and can be booked through the National website.
4. The Trust newsletter, available on the website, gives up-to-date information from National office.
5. Resources can be accessed on-line.
6. U3As are encouraged to contact National office if they have any queries as there is a wealth of expertise among the staff.
7. U3A anniversaries can be recognised and celebrated if Bob is notified.
8. A new leaflet promoting U3A Plus (ensuring that U3A meetings are open to/accessible to all) is available on the National website (resources) and from National office.
9. Ian McCannah reported the progress on the strategic three-year development plan the main points being
 - Creating a relevant on-line presence
 - Addressing the word "university" in our logo as it is seen as off-putting, giving the impression that the focus is very academic. The cost and work involved to delete the word is prohibitive but it was felt that the words "University of the Third Age" do not have to be printed under the logo and U3As could use the strap-line "Learn, laugh and live".
 - Raising the Trust's profile within the media .
 - Raising the Trust's profile within national institutions that have links with those within their third age.
 - Considering the future national and regional growth of U3A
 - Consider how this can be implemented and funded.

The working group will finalise their recommendations for these topics by the end of the year. It is intended that implementation will draw on the expertise/ specialist knowledge of U3A members.

10. An independent consultant is assessing the Beacon system (an on-line membership system).
11. Security queries can be raised with Bob.

Discussion followed focussing on:

A concern that the emphasis on use of technology will marginalise those who are not computer literate.

Reps were encouraged to ensure that working groups are made aware so that any decisions address this. Inclusivity is vital to U3A. The movement does need to keep up with technological progress. Opportunities exist to use social media for the benefit of U3A and its members. Liz Drury (National office) can give a presentation on this.

Confusion over the two titles – Third Age Trust and U3A, people do not link the two.

Raising the Trust's profile – a national advertising programme could lead to a substantial response that would overwhelm current resources. Awareness is being promoted in the House of Commons through MPs, suggested it could be promoted locally in Doctors' surgeries and churches.

The Third Age Trust is a charity, should it be developing a corporate image? National office advises and supports U3As, members are the policymakers. It is important to keep sight of our educational aims.

U3A as a title - the word "university" in our logo is seen as divisive. Changing the name would be very expensive but one solution is to continue with U3A but change the "strap-line" underneath to "Learn, laugh and live".

Susie thanked Bob for his report. Reps and Members are encouraged to put their names forward to participate in working groups that will be set up to consider the main points outlined in the development plan.

7 TVN Constitution We have been advised by both the Chairman of the Third Age Trust, Ian McCannah, and the Chairman of the Governance sub-committee that they were in the process of drafting a model constitution for

Networks which would be acceptable to the Charity Commissioners. They were both aware that the TVN objects include “education” and that, together with the amount of our current turnover, means that we are required to register as a charity in our own right as opposed to under the umbrella of the U3A as a whole. However, registration takes time and is quite a complicated procedure so they advised that TVN should wait to apply to the Charity Commissioners until the document is published, hopefully in the New Year, as it would save time and effort for both parties.

8 Events Team Report Patsy thanked all who have organised events this year most of which are fully booked within a month of the information going out.

8.1 Report on Events since last meeting.

4th September Polar Exploration – a very successful day with outstanding speakers. It was very well supported with 120 delegates.

October 17th Web-building- a really good day led by Tony Darbyshire. Requests have been received for a follow-up day.

8.2 Future Events in 2018

1st November Medicine and Art day – there are 120 delegates. Gill has over 50 people on the waiting list and is looking to up-date and repeat this event.

27th November Convenor’s Day TVN workshop 20 U3As have responded and places are now available to anyone. All U3As were encouraged to send delegates. This workshop should provide excellent networking opportunities. The workshop is organised by Mike Hender (Chiltern U3A).

Christmas concert in London ... the afternoon concert is fully booked and the orchestra has agreed to put on a repeat performance at 5.30pm- 7.30pm. Currently there are 18 places available, contact Paul Booker (Thameside, Wallingford). Both performances are specifically for U3A. Paul has received a booking and cheques from two people but no contact details in any form.

8.3 Outline for 2019 the following are not yet on the website.

5th March Re-run of the Dunkirk and the Little Ships study day – at the River and Rowing Museum.

Polar Regions exploration to exploitation at Benson, 28th March but for catering etc. it is hoped that a date in early April can be agreed, awaiting confirmation.

28th May “Cinema, History on film” in Abingdon arranged by Fay Sinai

12th September Kelmscott this date agreed as the venue has applied for a heritage lottery grant and, if successful, could be closed for much of 2020.

Other possible events

October (last week) Ukulele meeting at Benson

A geology day – volcanoes etc.

Follow-up Web-building workshop

First Aid training day – how to use a defibrillator and an overview of what to do at an incident. Early in 2019.

Photography day

A questionnaire on study days and requesting ideas for topics was available at this meeting, please return to Patsy.

Patsy explained that an excellent Events Team is in place and can support anyone who would like to arrange a study day, the team is also very happy to organise study days suggested by members.

9 Share Learning Project – Woodley (a town between Reading and Wokingham)

Avis gave an overview of this project which had its first meeting in October.

The project is a joint one between Wokingham and Reading U3As and organised by Ann Smith (Wokingham). The two U3As are partnered by Woodley Town Council (the Town Clerk has been particularly helpful in facilitating publicity, meeting space and access to archives), Woodley Library, Reading Central Library, Berkshire Record office and the Museum of Berkshire Aviation. Research will be on the history of Woodley in the 20thC to date no research has been undertaken for this period. 20 people are currently committed to research and will be focussing on:

Woodley airfield, Sonning cutting and the arrival of the Great Western railway, census records, oral history, industries, shops, developments in housing and roads, churches, Sandford Manor and Mill, archaeology and early history, pubs, Woodley carnival and leisure activities. Oral history is particularly important as records need to be made before the stories and memories disappear.

It is anticipated that materials will be produced for display, talks and a local history book.

10 New U3As In response to the Strategic Plan the Third Age Trust is trying to identify gaps across the country where U3As are not established. Volunteers are being trained to facilitate cold start-ups. Please let Susie know if you

are aware of any gaps, also of any U3As within our network area who are not part of TVN at present. Currently there are 45 member U3As

11 Network Information

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

A new Speaker database is almost ready. Avis said it is useful to know how far speakers are willing to travel, plus any increase in their expenses.

The list of interest groups is taken from U3A websites and a new one is in preparation.

11.2 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 especially following an AGM.

11.3 Events Contact List (maintained by Mike Price) this is working well. All Events application forms include an option for the applicant to receive information re future events by joining this list. Information re Events is sent to TVN Reps before it is sent to people on this list.

11.4 Website (maintained by Len Smith) Susie will pass on any information from the website building day regarding drop boxes.

12 A.O.B. i/ advice was sought re : the need to carry out a risk assessment of meeting venues, it was agreed this was good practice. A checklist is available on the Third Age Trust website under U3A Plus. The venue should also have its own risk assessment available.

ii/ there is a health-check questionnaire on the website so that U3As can check how they are operating. it is not obligatory but is a useful tool for committees.

iii/ when holding an event or meeting there should be a named organiser, door stewards and information on the agreed meeting point if emergency exits are used.

iv/ in an emergency anyone with a 4G mobile should dial 112 for emergency services and the phone will be a source of the exact GPS location.

v/ the noticeboard is available to TVN U3As, please view anything on display.

vi/ Susie reported that School Readers who had previously given a presentation at TVN have had a lot of volunteers but they need more as more schools want to get involved.

Date of next meeting Reps' meeting Friday 8th February 2019 at Benson Parish Hall 10am for 10.30am followed by lunch if pre- booked (£6 payable on arrival) *

*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

01/11/2018

Useful details:

TVN www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk

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

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