



**Minutes of the U3A Thames Valley Network Representatives' Meeting held at Benson Parish Hall, OX10 6LZ
on Friday 8th February 2019**

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: Sophie Wellings

Representatives: Eileen Page, Fay Sinai and Ray Francis (Abingdon), Moira Bishop and Sheila Satterthwaite (Aylesbury Vale), Jay Oldknow and Mike Bellamy (Bourne End & District), David Lenton and Carol Clark (Bracknell Forest), Ian and Josephine Wright (Carterton), Bob Borwick, Tony and Val Darbyshire (Chalfonts), James Cadle (Chess Valley), Bryan Roebuck (Chinnor & District), Shirley Rouse (Didcot & District), Christine Townsend, Deborah Miller and Mike Price (Greater Thame), Ann Partridge (Headington), Jean Myhill (Maidenhead), Fred Bass (Milton Keynes), Eleanor McGregor (Princes Risborough), Jane Sellwood and Mary Butcher (Reading), Annette Thompson, June Waterson and Nina Stonham (Ridgeway), Phil Taylor and Christine Philips (South Bucks), Jack Telling (Wallingford), Lyn Toms, Penny Wixey and Malcom Wetherill (Wantage and Grove), Belinda Horn and Liz Lawrence (Wendover), Kenneth Shaw (Weston Turville), Beverley Birmingham (West Oxford), Jane Clarke (Witney), John Waddington (Wokingham), Pam Rook (Woodstock).

Susie welcomed all Reps and Committee members to the meeting. Susie apologised for the temporary access problems to the TVN website. With this problem in mind it is felt prudent to find a member with the expertise and willingness to shadow Len with a view to taking over as and when this is appropriate.

Reps were advised to “refresh” the website when using it so that new items can be seen as they are added to the site.

Sadly we had learned of the death of Jim Fish, Chairman of Wallingford U3A, and offer our condolences to his family, the committee and members of Wallingford U3A.

1. Apologies:

Apologies had been received from: Len Smith, TVN committee website support (Wokingham), Peter Metcalf (Chiltern), Ann Walsh (Goring Gap), Penny Gerrard and Barbel Cheesewright (High Wycombe), Ian Ross (Maidenhead), James Wright (Marlow & District), Linda Durant (Witney), Hilvary Robinson (assistant to Regional Trustee)

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

The Minutes were approved.

3.0 Matters arising.

None that would not be dealt with as part of this meeting.

4.0 Chairman's Report.

4.1 The U3A “Learn, laugh and live” information leaflet has been revamped and no longer includes “University of the Third Age” under the logo. The Third Age Trust download on the website still has the logo with the strapline underneath but it is possible to remove it.

4.2 The new model Constitution for U3As is now available. All new U3As will adopt it; it is optional for existing U3As; contact National Office if you wish to change to it. It will not be available on the Third Age Trust website until that is re-launched in April.

4.3 Social prescribing is another issue for which guidelines are being developed by the Development sub-committee. It is beneficial if Doctors' surgeries and others such as local clergy are aware of U3A but it needs to be made clear that U3A is not a welfare organisation. A generic letter will be made available for U3As to adapt and pass on to GPs, clergy etc. as they choose.

4.4 A new friendlier version of the Trustee Induction presentation is now available. All Committee members are Trustees of their U3A and, as such, should have information about their responsibilities.

The presentation could form the basis for a TVN workshop in the autumn with opportunities for discussion between committee members as part of the workshop. It was agreed that this was a good proposal and the Events Team will work on it.

4.5 The new Development Plan Steering Committee at the Third Age Trust oversees 3 working groups. The overall brief is to raise the profile of the U3A generally and to identify areas where there is little cover.

4.6 Woodley (in the TVN area) has been identified for a new U3A, this is currently being considered by a pre-launch group. Discussion followed around this as both Reading and Wokingham U3As have members from Woodley and the Chairmen have heard of this through hearsay. Consultation and the opportunity to be involved would have been appreciated. Susie said that by the very way in which these proposals begin, hearsay is inevitable but she understood that both chairmen had been informed of the possibility. SE Regional Trustee confirmed that consultation with neighbouring U3As was not usual practice.

5.0 Treasurer's Report

The Financial Statement to 31st December 2018 including additional notes had been circulated. Derek explained that it does not include any monies received or expenses paid during 2017 in respect of events/study days which took place in 2018. It does include income and deposits paid for events taking place in 2019.

The nine events/study days realised a surplus of £687.04 which was close to breakeven, as intended. Derek thanked Patsy and the Events Team for producing such an interesting programme.

The Balance at start of the year was £8261.24 and £8779.98 at the year end. Of this £1062 is set aside for planned events, £2000 contingency/emergency fund and £5717.98 is available for future events.

Overall the financial position is a healthy one and affiliation fees will not be required for the foreseeable future.

The meeting approved the accounts which will be presented for adoption at the AGM on 10th May 2019.

6.0 SE Region Trustee's Report

6.1 Bob Duckmanton explained that the new Trust Development Plan is a 3 year plan to enhance the movement which currently has around 450,000 members. It will be designed to support learning, raise the profile of U3A and grow the movement. Each working group is made up of at least one Trustee plus U3A members

6.2 While the SE Region has 189 U3As Yorkshire and Humber has only 50 U3As there is therefore potential for growth.

6.3 Currently Third Age Trust/U3A logos are being re-registered taking into account recommended modifications e.g. omitting "University of the Third Age". Once this has taken place they will be available on the website.

6.4 Bob reminded Reps that the Third age Trust newsletter is available on-line and is a valuable source of information keeping members up-to-date. To register go to u3a.org.uk/newsletter

6.5 Regional Support Volunteers are needed to support the work of Regional Trustees. To date Hilvary Robinson (past Regional Trustee for our region) has agreed to become a support volunteer.

6.6 Financial advice and information on Trustee responsibilities will be put on the website.

6.7 Following a comment from Reading U3A re report forms required by the Charity Commission if a U3A exceeds the income limits applicable to its current status, Bob said that a template is being developed. Availability will be publicised in the on-line newsletter.

6.8 The Beacon System (item 9 on the agenda as requested by Wokingham U3A but dealt with here in the Regional Trustee's Report and with discussion from members of the meeting to the satisfaction of Wokingham)

An independent consultant has assessed the Beacon system for the Third Age Trust and recommends that it is replaced. A Working Group has been set up to look at options/other systems.

Currently the Beacon system is still operating and is supported by volunteers. When changes are made the intention is that these will be seamless. A third of U3As use Beacon which has been subsidised by the Third Age Trust and a substantial deficit has accrued. U3As that use Beacon will have their fees doubled from 50p to £1 per member in April. This will not decrease the deficit immediately but it will certainly prevent the deficit increasing in the future.

The Third Age Trust sent a survey about administration including Beacon up-grade to 991 U3As, (all for which national office has valid addresses) including Beacon and non-Beacon users, 571 responses were received.

The Third Age Trust is committed to keeping Beacon going and U3As can still sign up to use it.

The Beacon up-grade working group includes members drawn in for their expertise. Many hours have been put into how to take this forward. It is anticipated information will be disseminated as it becomes available via U3A business secretaries/contacts. It would, therefore, be helpful if all U3As in TVN are pro-active in up-dating their contact details held by the Chairman of TVN.

The Network is very important for communication including "networking" between U3As.

7 Events Team Report Patsy said she was very grateful to Events organisers for all their hard work.

7.1 Report on Events since last meeting.

1st November Medicine and Art day – an excellent day with first class speakers, thanks to Gill

6th November Financial Matters Third Age Trust workshop led by John Bent, Regional Trustee for London. A very informative day.

27th November Convenor's Day TVN workshop Organised by Mike Hender, this was a very valuable day with a lot of interaction between delegates and very useful discussions. Susie will check on feedback which was to have been made available.

12th December Christmas concert in London ... organised by Paul Booker was excellent; two performances arranged as it was so popular.

7.2 Further Events for 2019

5th March Repeat Dunkirk study day –at the River and Rowing Museum. Full with 12 on waiting list.

4th April Arctic Exploration part 2 at Benson. Full.

30th April Medicine, Science and Art repeat ... 20 places remaining.

28th May "History on Film" in Abingdon arranged by Fay Sinai. 200 places available. An excellent venue with purpose-built auditorium, disabled access and good parking facilities. Details just out.

30th August The Work of William Morris visit to Kelmscott before it closes for refurbishment. Details out shortly.

7.3 Other proposals. Members are encouraged to suggest future topics, some of the following have come from feedback received from the survey in 2018.

June/July? First Aid training day - Susie

October Ukulele meeting at Benson , Greig Sneddon

Oct/Nov - Autumn workshop – Induction of Trustees plus sessions/discussion on the roles of Committee members,

no date Geology day Jane Sellwood possible

December Christmas Concert possible

2020

History of the Thames and its boats

Spanish Civil War many people in Oxford and Oxfordshire were involved.

Please let Patsy know of any topics you would like covered. The Events Team is available to support members in organising an Event.

7.4 Shared Learning Project – Woodley (a town between Reading and Wokingham)

This project is supported by Woodley Town Council. There are 13 researchers covering Woodley airfield, the development of transport, oral history, schools and churches. The next meeting will be in April.

7.5 Research Retreat at Royal Holloway College TVN members are invited to take part in a research retreat in April. This will be free and will provide the opportunity to research particular events and is intended to augment research that is already on the website. Details on the TVN noticeboard or available from Patsy.

7.6 i/ In response to a concern raised : Events organisers have given permission for their details to appear on flyers.

ii/ Reps are asked to ensure members of their U3A are aware that it is a member of TVN and therefore there is no need to pay an extra £2 when applying for an Event. In future such overpayments will not be refunded.

iii/ When information re Events is sent out by Susie it is also sent to Len to be posted on the website.

iv/ It was agreed that Mike would send the information (flyer and booking form) to his database of past delegates within 48 hours

8 Safeguarding Policy Presentation by Sophie Wellings (Third Age Trust National Office)

Points noted from the presentation, the PowerPoint is available from Susie (and is now on the TVN website under the Reps' meetings tab).

- **Safeguarding means protecting people's health, well-being and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.** It is fundamental to high quality health and social care. (Ref Care Quality Commission). Third Age Trust report "Learning not Lonely" recommended, contact National office for a copy.
- **The Care Act 2014 contains six safeguarding principles:**

1 Empowering –personalisation 2 Prevention- steps to take 3 Proportionality- appropriate responses 4 Protection – looking after members involved 5 Partnership – working with relevant bodies 6 Accountability –recording and reporting.

- **Charity Trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefitting from or working with their charity are not harmed in any way through contact with it.** They have a legal duty to act prudently taking all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that this does not happen.
- **Safeguarding practice within your U3A.**

Consider what, if any, are the main safeguarding issues you have encountered? E.g. unwanted advances, a member with a conviction re paedophilia, a member who wants to keep walking with the walking group even though he has already experienced 2 falls on recent walks, several other examples given.

- **Promoting Wellbeing** – U3A’s enable members to find new friends, feel supported, learn new skills, feel healthier, build their confidence, become engaged with the community, manage life changes such as retirement, illness or bereavement.
- The **Safeguarding Policy and Procedure** is not a legal requirement but is recommended by the Charity Commission. It provides guidelines.

Serious incidents will need reporting rather than investigating

The procedure could relate to issues that are experienced by a member outside of U3A meetings.

U3As are not social care organisations therefore do not need to take on statutory requirements but do have a duty of care.

Attention needs to be paid to the importance and limits of confidentiality.

The Third Age Trust has taken legal advice and can use that to support/advise U3As. Need to know who to talk to and consult when concerns are raised. Where/when there is a concern a record should be kept.

- **Practical steps for your U3A Committee**

Put safeguarding on the agenda for the next committee meeting.

Consider adopting a procedure.

Identify types of issues to be covered e.g. someone collapses at a meeting, have a designated person at meetings who is responsible to phoning emergency services.

Identify local bodies to report to should an incident occur. .

Talk to Group Leaders/ convenors about safeguarding.

Focus on positive aspects as well as the difficult ones.

9 Network Information

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

In response to a query: Speakers who are also U3A members cannot be paid a fee, expenses can be paid. A payment may be made to a charity chosen by the Speaker but the U3A accounts must record this as “payment in lieu of speaker fee”.

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 especially following an AGM. Susie will be e-mailing contacts who do not respond to invitation to Reps’ Meeting.

9.3 Events Contact List (maintained by Mike Price) Some e-mails bounce back, if members think they should have received notification of an event or hear a similar comment from others in their U3A let Mike know. events_info@u3atvnetwork.org.uk (note the underscore between the first two words)

9.4 Website (maintained by Len Smith) Should be back up and running in 48 hours following this meeting.

10 A.O.B. i/ Notes and slides from the Group Convenor’s Day have not been made available to date, Susie will follow this up.

ii/ Reading U3A is holding its 6th annual piano masterclass on Sunday 31st March. Entry is free.

Date of next meeting AGM/Reps’ meeting Friday 10th May 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

12/02/2019

Useful details:

TVN www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk

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

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