

Arun West U3A

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday April 28th 2021 at 11.00, via Zoom platform

1. Welcome and Introductions

Jean Inwood, the Chair since January 2021, formally introduced herself and the members of the committee to the members present. The names of the new committee and their roles can be found at Appendix A. She thanked those members for attending the first virtual AGM of the organisation. She reminded the meeting that all the relevant papers, including the minutes of the previous AGM, in April 2019, had been available for scrutiny by the membership on the website.

She asked that the members attending undertake a trial of the voting system which, unfortunately, did not function over two separate attempts. She advised that, in subsequent matters put to vote, the members raise their hands, physically or virtually, to indicate their vote.

2. Apologies for absence

The secretary, Neil Clark, advised that he had received 16 apologies, to which was added a seventeenth by proxy. A list of those making apologies may be found at Appendix B.

A total of 74 members were in attendance. The secretary has a list of these should any member wish to see it. The AGM was comfortably quorate, with a minimum of 49 members required by the current constitution.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 24th April 2019.

The Chair asked for any comments, queries or clarifications to these minutes; none were forthcoming. She asked for formal approval of these minutes via the online voting system, but, again, the votes could not be counted.

On a show of hands, the motion to approve the minutes was carried, with none voting against and with two abstentions.

Derek Waite raised a point of order on the show of hands, pointing out, that members attending in tandem on one screen, might have been missed. A further show of hands confirmed the unanimity of the vote.

4 Chair's Report for year ended 31 March 2021.

(The following is a verbatim record of the Chair's remarks)

When I volunteered to take over from Glyn as Chair I never imagined we'd still be in a pandemic and in our third lockdown.

Firstly, I'd like to publicly thank Glyn for his chairmanship over the last four and a half years, ably supported by Masha and the rest of the committee. He did a great job making Arun West the successful u3a it is today. Along with Glyn, we also thank Angela for her years as Secretary and Chris who both retired from the committee.

I would also like to thank Masha for all her efforts since the first lockdown to keep Arun West members connected. She started up a Buddy system to support isolated members. She established Facebook groups for AW members, Plants and Gardens and Snap Happy which have provided a source of information and opportunities for members to share their news and thoughts. These websites together with the National u3a Facebook page have enabled members to stay in touch. She also set up a jigsaw library so members could exchange jigsaws. I know that many appreciated the service during the year.

I would also like to thank Mary Curd for the Beacon Newsletter which she has produced monthly so members can keep abreast of activities and news.

Membership

I'd like to thank Teresa for all her efforts to undertake the renewal process in lockdown which wasn't without a number of challenges

Following the recent membership renewal our membership now stands at 334 compared with 446 in 2020. Although the membership is down there are a variety of reasons while people have chosen not to renew this year. Once we begin to open up the groups we're hopeful the numbers will increase.

Groups

At the moment there are only a few of our 41 groups running due to Lockdown restrictions. Current Affairs, Virtual Geography, Writing 4 Fun, Wednesday and Readers and German groups have used Zoom for their meetings. The Art group also met outside during the summer 2020. Since April 12 2021 Gentle Walking, Intermediate Walking and Petanque have started meeting in small groups outside.

Pip Slater has decided to stand down from leading the Calligraphy group – thanks to her for all her hard work.

Julie Gillson has decided to resign as Groups Co-ordinator for personal reasons, we thank her for the work she did.

Coffee Mornings

These stopped in March, but Masha has successfully started up Virtual Coffee Mornings with the help of Mary Curd. They have been a great success with a raffle and quiz. The Breakout room facility on Zoom has enabled people to meet and talk in smaller groups during the session which has been much enjoyed. She is planning a face-to-face coffee morning in July in St Mary's Hall providing the road map goes to plan.

Charity Donations

The funds raised from the tables from January to March raised £270 for the Vulnerable Family Project/Women's Refuge this included a generous donation from Gill and the Bread Making Group. Thanks to everyone who contributed plants and items to buy and sell.

Events Team

It was a very quiet year for the events team but they managed to finish the year with a fun quiz on Zoom with our quiz master Peter providing a variety of challenging questions.

Monthly Talks

The team organized a full programme for 2020 but obviously it was curtailed after lockdown in March. With the purchase of a zoom license from October we were able to deliver talks virtually. The team is planning to continue with Zoom talks for the rest of 2021 until members are happy to meet again together.

The challenge going forward for the committee is to enable groups to restart again when they feel safe and comfortable to do so. It maybe that more groups would like to stay in touch via zoom.

Finally I'd like to thank all my committee members for their hard work– we're a new group and to date have only been able to meet virtually which has not been without its challenges.

Arun West are a small u3a but the Committee has been proud in what they have

achieved, with the help of their members, to keep in touch during these difficult times and thank all those members for their help, kind messages and support in “keeping us going for the future”.

4. Annual Report and Accounts

Mike McKrill, the Treasurer introduced himself; he had taken over the position from Christine Cann in January 2021 and he thanked Chris for her help with the transition. He reminded the meeting that the Statement of Financial Activities up to and including 28th February had been on the group’s website, and that these accounts had been independently examined and verified by Alan R Moyses, on 4th April 2021.

The Treasurer noted that the group’s assets at year end were £3224, compared to £3610 in 2020. Expenditure has exceeded income over the past two years; in response to a query from Paul Butler, he stated that our finances are fundamentally sound.

As there were no further questions to the Treasurer, the Chair proposed that the annual accounts be formally adopted. This motion was seconded by Margaret Minty and was passed nem con, after two votes.

The Treasurer then proposed that Alan Moyses be appointed as examiner of accounts for the coming year, a motion seconded by Chris Cann. The motion was carried nem.con

Chris Cann then thanked Mike, on behalf of the membership, for stepping up to the post in January.

6. Appointment of new committee

The Chair proposed that the seven members of the committee be formally approved en bloc. She also reminded the members that, despite many entreaties via newsletters, Beacon updates and Facebook pages, no-one had come forward to offer themselves as either Groups Co-ordinator (following the resignation of Julie Gillson) or ex officio member of the committee.

Her motion to appoint was seconded by Malcolm Keight and carried nem.con

7. Timetable for resumption of group activities.

June 21st, on the government’s “road map” out of restrictions, remains the likely date for full resumption of our programme. Much will depend, of course, on the nature of the activity and on the readiness of group leaders to take responsibility for such resumption. For the time being, for instance, the Monthly Talks will continue online. The first “in person” coffee morning is scheduled for early July.

8. Proposed amendment to the Constitution.

The Committee had put forward a resolution to amend Clause 16, Part iv of the constitution, and had published the motion to amend on the agenda. Glyn White had proposed a different amendment to the Secretary, a motion seconded by Masha White. After discussion, it was resolved to put Glyn’s amendment to the members present and to rescind the original proposal.

The Motion is to amend the constitution to read

“There shall be a quorum when at least 10% of the number of the members of the U3A are present at the AGM. In the event of an AGM being conducted online, the quorum shall be 5%”

This motion was then passed nem.con

Derek Waite drew attention to likely changes to the constitution of the Third Age Trust. The Secretary suggested that the committee be instructed to address this at its next meeting in May .

9. Any Other Business

Glyn White wished to thank everyone for the support and encouragement he had received during his extended Chairmanship. He reminded us that the U3A is “ for the members, by the members” and activity can only be sustained with such support.

The Vice Chair reminded everyone about the upcoming “virtual” coffee morning.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11.55, with a further apology about the voting glitch.

Appendix A Committee members 2021-2022

Jean Inwood	Chair
Mary Curd	Vice Chair
Teresa Gess	Membership Secretary
Gill Henry	Webmaster
Mike Mc Krill	Treasurer
Jennie Marchant	Monthly Talks Co -ordinator
Neil Clark	Secretary
Vacant	Groups Co-ordinator
	Member without portfolio

Appendix B Apologies for absence

Julie Gillson, Ann Netley, Annabelle Amison, Jennifer Bartlett, Barry Dimond, Melanie Dean, Alix Evans, Loraine Nash, Vicki Raymond, Yvonne Lees, Eileen Anderson, Jo Lark, Jill Wellman, Evelyn Pilkington, Tony Turley, Anne Hollis