

BAKEWELL AREA U3A ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 29 June 2022

Attendees: J Kayley-Burgess (Chairman), Martin Pape (Treasurer), Alisoun Cunningham (Secretary), Sam Lewis, Anne Kayley-Burgess, John Andrew, Judy Hinsliff, Anne Boot, Trish Simmonds, Anne Peller, Glenys Moore, George Wolfe, Rosemary Wolfe, Sue Wickham, Jo Longland-James, Pip Young, Anne Pape, Hisako Robinson, Gill Roberts, Jane Gelling, Ros Stokes, Janet Challenger, Sheila Sidebottom, Philip Clarke, Jean Bowler, Pat Lewis, Pam Walker, Ann Topham.

1 Apologies: Gwyneth Anderson, Barbara Scrivener, Geoff Hinsliff, John Wickham, Tony James, Ruth Miles, Carol Sutcliffe, John Sutcliffe, Jackie Rawson, Jill Ormerod, Sue Fordyce, Malcolm Fordyce, Rick Naylor, Ken Watson, Di Watson, Neil Sharples, Carol Wickstead, John Wickstead, Marie Hawes, Jean Sutton.

2 Acceptance of Minute of 2021 AGM: These were proposed, seconded and accepted as a correct record by Anne Peller and Sam Lewis.

3 Matters arising: There were none.

4 Proposed amendments to the Constitution: Sam Lewis made a brief explanation of the proposed amendments, and these were unanimously, proposed and seconded by Sam Lewis and Jane Kayley-Burgess. Sam was thanked by one and all for his efforts to keep our constitution user friendly.

Item of the AGM agenda is a proposal by the committee that BU3A adopt an amended constitution which accompanies this note.

The current constitution is deficient in the following ways.

1. A member who is unable to attend a general meeting is denied a vote.
2. There is no procedure for decisions to be taken if a quorum is not achieved at an AGM.
3. The number of co-opted members of the committee is limited to two.
4. An officer who is unable to fulfil his or her role in consequence of serious illness cannot be replaced unless he/she resigns or dies.
5. If BU3A is dissolved, any remaining funds must be given to the Third Age Trust.

In the amended constitution now proposed, these deficiencies are remedied by:

1. New clauses 6 & 7 which enable the committee to make arrangements for remote participation by electronic means and by proxy votes respectively.
2. New clauses 5.2 & 5.3 which require the committee to reconvene a proposed general meeting which is not quorate and provide for temporary variation of the quorum, if necessary.
3. A change in clause 4.1.2. to allow any number of co-opted members to be included in the committee, provided that the maximum number of committee members (12) is not exceeded.
4. A new power of the committee (clause 10) to remove from office by unanimous decision of the other members of the committee an officer who is believed to be temporarily or permanently incapable of fulfilling his/her responsibilities to BU3A.
5. A change to the dissolution clause (12) to allow the committee to transfer remaining funds to existing U3As to which members of BU3A migrate on dissolution.

This opportunity is taken to rectify some minor errors of spelling, punctuation and status as an incorporated association and to remove references to the Branch Committee, Branch activity & temporary membership. A statement that the members of the committee are trustees and may stand for re-election at an AGM has been included.

The proposed changes have been agreed with the Third Age Trust.

5 Treasurer's Report: Martin presented the financial statement below, which was accepted unanimously, proposed and seconded Judy Hinsliff and Glenys Moore.

Treasurer's report for the AGM -

The Bakewell Area U3A accounts for 2021 can be found via a link on the members' pages of our U3A website (www.bakewellu3a.org.uk). They have been inspected by Mr Nicol and found correct. The "wealth" of our U3A has decreased from £12,100 at the start of 2021 to £11,400 at the year end. This was anticipated when our Committee decided that, due to the reduction in U3A activities caused by the virus, our members' subs could be reduced to £10. As usual, the largest item of

expenditure was our subscriptions to the national Third Age Trust (£800 @ £3.50 per member). Other significant (over £400) payments were for The Gazette, room hire and a new computer on which to record members' details.

You will have noted that our Committee decided to keep our subs at £10 for a second year. We anticipate another significant decrease in our U3A's wealth by the end of 2022 as Third Age Trust subscriptions are now £4 and we expect more expenditure on room hire. The Committee considered this to be acceptable as, by the end of 2022, our reserves should still be in excess of two years' expenditure. **Martin Pape**

Colin Nicol has been our auditor for many years, and this is his final year. Everyone offered him grateful thanks for his efforts on our behalf.

6 Chairman's Report:

This is a very personal statement and will not contain a report of everything we have done this year and a big pat on the back, although I do think we do deserve it. The Gazette covers our big adventures on a quarterly basis and I am not going to repeat that.

Since I spoke to you at the 2021 AGM our U3A has pretty much got back to normal working. Most groups are now operating again and people have been tempted away from their Zoom screens by coffee and biscuits in homes and meeting rooms but mostly by real contact with real people. Our first Meg Laird talk after the pandemic attracted over 100 people, which shows that a lot of people want to get 'back to normal'.

Personally I am in no doubt that Covid has some bad legacies. I feel, and I am not alone, that I have aged more than two years in the past two years, with much of the strain caused by wondering if I am doing the right thing, not just for me but for all the people I know and love. I have noticed that there is still a small but significant air of anxiety about public gatherings and we must continue to appreciate that there are those who are still nervous in public spaces. At the Medway on Saturday, where our choir performed a wonderfully upbeat summer concert, someone was anxious that one of the many doors was shut. 'There is still a pandemic on, you know', she said. It's easy to think that, for most of us, Covid is just like a cold, but it isn't for everyone.

On the flip side there have been extraordinary kindnesses shown as a result of recognising that there are vulnerable people in society who do require more consideration and this is a good thing. We are, by and large, an extremely fortunate generation. We have always had jobs when we wanted them, vaccinations and free health care and we could buy our own houses. We have had access to healthy and varied food, enjoyed holidays, have good pensions - in many cases paid for by our employers and we are, mostly, living into old age fit and well. The pandemic made me think that we should not take all this for granted.

We have also, for the past 40 years, had this wonderful institution, the U3A. This brings me, finally, to the point. We are operating again. We have had a walking holiday, an Out and About holiday, trips to the theatre and gardens, stitched and painted, photographed and cooked, written and read stories and poetry, spoken foreign languages, bowled and birded, scribbled and Scrabbled. We even have a new group. However several groups have struggled, mostly because no one has wanted to take on the responsibility of being coordinator for the group. Jayne Northcott has kindly taken over the Spanish Group after many years of fun with Mari-Carmen, and thank you to Jayne for that. But Bridge, one of our best supported group, is currently leaderless and not operating as it was before the pandemic.

The Out and About group, much loved by a significant number of our members and seamlessly run by Glyn and Lesley Peat, would have collapsed if we hadn't decided to approach it in a different way, a collaborative way, whereby the running of the group is a joint responsibility and members share the organisation of going 'out and about'. Whether we can get this to work or not remains to be seen, but we are not giving up. Losing Out and About would have been truly awful for our U3A and we need to find ways to ensure we can continue with it, and other groups.

I feel that I have given, over the past four years, all I can as Chair for our U3A. The two years of the pandemic were not, as some people have suggested, two years off. With the support of the committee, I am now standing down, and so are Alisoun and Martin. I thank them both from the bottom of my heart for making my life so much easier, for making committee meetings so much fun and for doing their bit for their U3A.

We have a nomination for Treasurer and one for Secretary. You can rest assured that your £10 a year will be well looked after and well accounted for and committee meetings will be scrupulously managed and minuted. We do not have any nominations so far for chairman despite numerous pleas, job descriptions being written and circulated and then a few more pleas. Constitutionally we can run our U3A without a chairman, but I think you will agree, it's not ideal.

My belief, supported by committee and members I have spoken to, is that a large number of our members have been members since the early days of our U3A, which was started in 1998. That's 24 years ago and most people have 'been there and done that' and will not be persuaded back into office by any amount of pleading and cajoling.

We are not as young a town generally as Matlock with its vast membership, and we know that people can't afford to retire as early as some of us were able to. But there must be people in Bakewell and surrounding villages for whom our U3A is perfect and yet I have met people who have not even heard of it. We need to address this, and do it in an organised, structured way. I am proposing that we set up a small group to market our U3A as widely as possible, starting with social prescription and regular articles about group activities. A concerted effort should reach more people and that can't be a bad thing. Hopefully a recruitment drive will bring into our orbit a chairman, a bridge group leader and people with ideas for new groups.

I have loved being chairman of Bakewell U3A. I have made some lovely friends and worked with some very able and committed people in the past four years and I have no doubt that we will endure. I would like to thank the committee, the group leaders, the social team and the Meg Laird team and everyone else who has worked to get up to Covid, through Covid and onwards.

As Buzz Lightyear would say 'To infinity and beyond!'

7 Election of Officers:

Neil Sharples was proposed and seconded for the post of Treasurer by Nigel Bartlett and Phil Kirk, and this proposal was accepted unanimously.

Sam Lewis was proposed and seconded for the post of Secretary by Alisoun Cunningham and Jane Kayley-Burgess.

Judy Hinsliffe was proposed and seconded as a committee member by Hisako Robinson and Sheila Sidebottom.

There were no nominations for the post of Chairman and this post therefore remains vacant.

8 Appointment of Auditor: There were no nominations for this post and this post therefore remains vacant.

9 Any other business:

John Anderson expressed his (and everyone's) thanks for the efforts of all members who have served on the committee. Rosemary Wolfe expressed particular thanks to Jane for her time as our Chairman.

Jane, Alisoun and Martin, who are standing down from their positions, were thanked profusely for all their efforts on BU3A's behalf, and were presented with tokens of our thanks and esteem.

