

BOURTON & DISTRICT U3A
THE TENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 22ND 2021 at 10.30am
at the British Legion Hall , Bourton-on-the-Water,
and live screened via Zoom.

Present:- 71 members attended live and 7 attended on Zoom.

1. Chairman's welcome and apologies for absence

Susan welcomed the members and thanked them for the loyalty they had shown to B & D u3a by maintaining their membership through the difficult period of the covid 19 pandemic, during which the u3a had only been able to run a limited number of groups and activities. She also advised them that photos would be taken during the meeting and might be used for the website, newsletter and leaflets. She welcome Susan Parker, South West Regional Trustee.

Apologies had been received from: Diana and Brian Edwards, Gordon and Val Reed, Jo Young, Wendy Hoskin, Susan Liphorpe, Roger and Mary Harris, Neil and Madelaine Cox, Julia Wright, Sandra Hewitt, Dave and Janet Turnball, Cath Morgan, Rob and Christine Gorton, Jane Kernan, Glenn Barrett, Maggie Boyes, Robert Nemes, Alan and Judy Chambers. (24 members)

2. To approve the minutes of the 9th AGM held on 28th October 2020
(sent with autumn Newsletters) – **Susan Dodd**

The approval of the minutes was proposed by Betty Hedges seconded by Beryl Ferguson and approved by all present.

3. Chairperson's Report for November 2020/ September 2021 – Susan Dodd

1. Membership numbers

The membership currently stands at 271 members. 11 of these are new members, who had joined since the last AGM, (28th October 2020). Although we are still 89 members down on our pre-pandemic level, (about a 23% decrease), this is in line with other u3as losses. Indeed the national u3a has lost 20% of its members. I hope that many of our former members will rejoin us as activities restart. They have been contacted and invited back. A publicity campaign is being planned. This includes a newly designed leaflet featuring our members and groups. We have also applied for a grant from Bourton Parish Council to fund our campaign. If successful this will include the purchase of new banners and flags for use at publicity events.

2. Interest Groups

At present we have 31 Interest Groups, of which I understand 22 have, or are just about, to restart their activities. This number is lower than pre-pandemic levels (when we had 39 Groups); however it still exceeds the recommended

level of 1 group per every 10 members. I would hope new groups will be formed as we go forward.

My grateful thanks go to the GOs and deputies, who are the life blood of this organisation. A special mention must go to those GOs who managed to adapt their groups to run on Zoom, outdoors, or in smaller numbers, (as restrictions permitted), during the pandemic. Whilst not all groups could do this for practical reasons, those who were able to provide activities greatly improved the quality of members' lives in lockdown, particularly those living alone and or shielding.

3. Committee and Non Committee Roles

We've had a few of changes to committee since the last AGM. Darryl Carvey, our Webmaster and Beacon lead, stood down after making a very valuable contribution to our IT systems.

We were very pleased to welcome Ken Lamacraft to the committee adding the "Beacon Lead" to his "Equipment Officer" role. As technology has become increasingly important, Ken is a vital support to the committee and GOs.

We were also delighted to welcome Dawn White as our new Webmaster. Dawn has undertaken a major overhaul of our website, incorporating more photos, as well as improving the layout and updating information. Dawn also sourced a u3a mobile phone giving members a constant central point of contact.

Dawn and Ken's co-option onto the committee was one of the positive stories of this year. It has been inspiring to see two of our younger members coming forward bringing enthusiasm and new skills sets.

I would like to give a special mention to Mary Bryant who stood down from committee this year. However, Mary has continued to be Speaker Secretary and New Member Liaison, proving that Non Committee members can play a central role. I hope that more of you will support the committee in this way.

Roger Harris, our Publicity Officer, is standing down today, after serving five years on the committee. As he can't be with us, we have sent Roger a card and voucher as a thank you from us all.

As no member came forward to take on the Publicity Officer's role, one that will be very important as we re-build, Joyce Smith, our Assistance Officer, has kindly agreed to combine this with her existing duties. I know she would like a team to help her, including somebody who is social media savvy. If you can help, please let her know.

Running the u3a during covid has difficult, coping with new technology and dealing with ever changing circumstances. I would like to thank the rest of the committee:

- Catherine Firth, our Membership Secretary, who only joined us last year, for her work operating the Beacon renewals system. A very significant task, allowing members to renew in a covid safe and convenient way.
- Margaret Bainbridge, who, again, only joined us last year as Groups Co-ordinator, for taking on the challenge of working with the groups at a very difficult time. I'd also like to thank Margaret for writing the grant application to the Parish Council.
- Christine Gorton, Newsletter Editor, for the high quality newsletters and for reorganising the system to predominantly email, saving a considerable amount of money.
- Finally my fellow Officers, Business Secretary, Rosemary Quinn and, Treasurer, Paul Clark for all their sterling work and for supporting me throughout. Their efforts, often less visible to the membership, keep the wheels of the organisation in motion.

4. **Monthly Meetings**

From November 2020 we have run a Zoom meeting each month. Whilst these meetings could not provide the same level of companionship, they have given members the chance to “see” each other and listen to some very good speakers. Members also had the chance to chat via zoom in groups of their choosing. On average 30 – 50 members have logged in each month.

As live monthly meetings recommence, my thanks go to Janet Prout and the refreshments teams and to Ruth Manning for looking after the door.

5. **Beacon**

The national u3a database Beacon, still relatively new to us, has been a life saver this year. On-line renewals and the ability to send “all member emails complete with zoom links”, have been a vital tool in keeping in touch with the membership, at the cost of £1 per member per year its excellent value. Beacon also allows GOs to manage their groups on line, sending secure emails, producing class lists etc. I hope more GOs will start using it. Beacon has a number of other features, including a financial package, which the committee plans to investigate in the next year.

6. **New Chairperson, the Future and Personal Thanks**

This is the end of my time as Chairperson and it has been challenging, particularly during covid. Finding a new Chairperson has been a constant worry and I am incredibly grateful to Paul Clark for agreeing to stand. As he has already served 9 years as Treasurer, he is going above and beyond the call of duty. If it were not for Paul, I would now have the unenviable task of closing this u3a. I must also mention Diana White at this point, a brand new member, who has kindly agreed to stand as Treasurer, again without Diana's offer we would be closing down today.

I don't want to dwell on the negatives but I implore all members to understand that this is a mutual aid organisation. We MUST all take turns at the helm. Without that change of attitude, we may only be delaying the closure..

Let me finish on a positive note - We have exciting plans, the "Recruitment and Retention Group" are working on a publicity drive. We're planning a variety of new events including a Yoga Taster session, a Theatre Trip, A Barn dance and a whole programme of Speakers and new Activities for 2022. We have a strong committee standing for election. So please help us make B & Ds second decade even more inspiring, fulfilling and fun.

Finally my personal thanks must go to my husband Ray; I think committee partners are often the forgotten heroes! I know how much Ray has done for me, both in practical terms and emotional support. So my grateful thanks go to Ray, and also to the other committee partners and families, for their support of the committee members.

Thank you all,
Susan Dodd Chairperson.

4. U3A AGM – Presentation of Annual Accounts to 31st March 2021

Needless to say, the Covid pandemic has made this an extremely difficult year for our U3A. I am, nonetheless, very pleased to be able to present our Annual Accounts to you; what I believe will be my 9th and final set of accounts.

1. Social Account

Firstly, the more straightforward of our two accounts, i.e. our Social Account.

I remind members again that, under U3A and Charity Commission rules, theatre trips and non-educational outings are defined as being social and so fall outside our charitable objects. Such transactions must, therefore, be passed through a separate Social Account and not be included in any returns we make to the Charity Commission.

In the year to 31st March 2021, our opening balance was £1,000.00. No receipts or payments passed through this account during the financial year and so the closing balance remains at £1,000.00. You may wonder, therefore, why I have prepared an account, but I wanted to confirm to you that this balance remains unchanged and our Auditor agreed he should do this with me.

2. Operating Account

So to our main account. I just remind members that, under Charity Commission rules, we are allowed to prepare our accounts on a simple Receipts and Payments basis and, as your Treasurer, it has been my choice to do that using a traditional format.

Our key Receipt is our Subscriptions. Unfortunately, consistent with what has been happening in many other U3A's across the country, a significant number of our members chose not to renew during the last financial year mainly because of the Covid pandemic. As a result, Subscriptions fell from £4,366.75 to £3,188.50. We can only hope that, as we return to some sort of normality (whatever that may mean), some of those people who left us may re-join. Overall, I was greatly encouraged by the significant number of you who did keep faith with our U3A and joined again. From the heart, I thank you for that; our U3A means a great deal to so many of us.

Sadly, the effects of Covid actually disguised the great success your Committee enjoyed during the year when it implemented the Beacon System, the U3A's own tool for managing membership databases. The result has been that the vast majority of members can now renew their membership in a much simplified way and we enjoy the bonus of much improved communication and management information tools.

Otherwise, Group Activities Income inevitably fell from £4,708.50 to just £633.31 as so few groups were meeting; there were Donations of £84.50; and, there was Other Income of £15.01. Member Meetings Income was, of course, zero because we were unable to hold our monthly meetings.

Expenditure wise, I look first at the monies we have to pay to the U3A National Office. Our Membership Subscription fell slightly from £1,365.00 to £1,260.00; our Direct Mail costs fell from £813.70 to £250.00 mainly due to many of our members choosing not to receive Third Age Matters anymore; our Beacon System costs increased from £63.10 to £363.00, a reflection of our first full year's costs; and, Other payments fell slightly from £97.00 to £75.00.

Under Member Meetings and Administration Expenses, a new cost appears this year, namely PayPal Commission, but, at only £59.41, this is a small price to pay for the service that enables most of our members to renew through the Beacon System. In the past, our major cost has been our Newsletter. This year, however, your Committee decided to use the tool within Beacon to send our Newsletter to most members attached to an email. This enabled us to reduce our costs from £2,335.62 to just £97.22. In addition, other costs significantly reduced mainly because of the effects of Covid. We incurred no costs under Hall Hire, Advertising and Travel, Refreshments and Other costs; Speakers cost us just £100.00; and, we spent just £109.75 on Gifts and Flowers. The only cost under this heading that warrants special mention is Printing, Stationery, Postage and Computer. At £502.46, this might, at first glance, seem quite high. I ask you all to appreciate, however, that your Committee have worked really hard during the pandemic keeping our U3A going and implementing the Beacon System. Although unable to meet in person, we have continued to conduct our business on Zoom every month and hence our costs under this particular heading have been much the same as in any other year.

Group Activities wise, the total expenses were just £114.00.

Summarising all of this, we started the year with an opening balance of £2,324.69. Total Receipts of only £3,921.32 and total payments of only £2,930.84 passed through the account during the year. This left a closing balance of £3,315.17.

3. Other Matters

- Firstly, I say a great big “Thank You” to Diana White who has very kindly agreed to stand as your new Treasurer, thus enabling me to stand as Chairman. I really am most grateful to her.
- Secondly, I spoke earlier about the great success your Committee had enjoyed this year in implementing the U3A’s Beacon System. This was in no small part due to the tremendous effort made by two former Committee members, Ralph Williams and Darryl Carvey, and a current Committee member, Catherine Firth. I sincerely thank them for all they achieved. Ken Lamacraft has now taken on the Beacon lead role and I am very grateful to him.
- Thirdly, towards the end of the year, I was able to put together everything that was needed to register us for Gift Aid. Although it fell after the year end, I think it important I report that, in early April, I was able to submit the application to HMRC. I had read in the press that HMRC were experiencing serious staffing and technical difficulties and our Auditor confirmed that his firm were facing the reality of this. Eventually last month, after a four and a half month delay, we heard that our application had been successful and that we are now registered for Gift Aid. As a result, once Diana and I have been able to settle into our new roles, we plan to look at how we can claim our first tax refund through Beacon. Following that, we will have the more daunting task of looking at how we achieve retrospective tax refunds through our old spreadsheet system.
- Fourthly, I sincerely thank Ian Quartermaine of William Hinton in Stow for continuing in the role of Auditor (at no charge) and for doing such a great job.
- Last, but certainly not least, I hope every member realises what a brilliant job your Committee have done on your behalf during the Covid pandemic. Outstanding above all others, however, has been Susan who has done the most fantastic job as your Chairperson. Our deep appreciation should be extended to her. Thank you so very much Susan. I hope you will feel able to continue to make a significant contribution to our U3A, but we will miss you as Chair.

Thank you everyone.

Paul Clark – Hon. Treasurer

5. To receive and approve the Accounts for year ending 31st March 2021.

Proposed by Ruth Manning seconded by Joyce Smith, unanimously agreed.

6. Approval of the continued appointment of the examiner of accounts :-

Proposed by Janice Ford and seconded by David Prout, unanimously agreed.

7. Election of Officers

- a) Election of Chairperson: Paul Clark nominated by Myra Ford and seconded by Steve Ford unanimously agreed.
- b) Election of Business Secretary :- Rosemary Quinn, nominated by Sandra Gavin and seconded by Terry Gavin, unanimously agreed.
- c) Election of Treasurer:- Diana White, nominated by Peter Boxall and seconded by Irene Summers and unanimously agreed.

8. Election of Officers

We have received nominations for Committee Members as follows:

Joyce Smith – nominated by Mary Bryant and seconded by Ray Dodd
Christine Gorton – nominated by Mary Tebbutt and seconded by David Tebbutt
Margaret Bainbridge – nominated by Mary Bryant and seconded by David Smith
Catherine Firth – nominated by Steven Ford and seconded by Myra Ford
Dawn White – nominated by Mary Bryant and seconded by Peter Boxall
Ken Lamacraft – nominated by Alan Ferguson and seconded by David Stanfield

All Committee members were unanimously elected.

9. Proposals from Members- None

10. Any other Business-

Roger Harris asked for an announcement that he is planning a theatre trip to the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham to see "Private Lives" next February. If anyone was interested they were asked to add their name to the list on the table or contact Roger directly. The theatre is holding 20 tickets for us at the moment and we have to confirm number by mid November.

Meeting declared closed at 11.10 am.