

MINUTES BURTON U3A COORDINATORS' MEETING - THURSDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2023

THE PRIORY CENTRE, STRETTON AT 09:30

Mike Barlett (Interest Groups' Coordinator) chaired the meeting and started by introducing himself and welcoming the 15 group coordinators; he then introduced 4 committee members. The Chairman and Secretary attended as Group Coordinators.

There were 7 apologies and Mike also explained that the Treasurer was unable to be present as she had contracted Covid recently, and although she was well, it was felt better that she did not attend. If there were any questions for the Treasurer, the Secretary could note them and they would be passed on; one question had been received prior to the meeting, which the Treasurer was dealing with.

Full list of attendees / apologies is attached to the Minutes, as Appendix 1.

Quarterly Registers / Reports

Mike said one thing he and the Treasurer had done, to try and lessen the workload, was on the Quarterly Registers that have to be sent, with monies to the Treasurer. With immediate effect, Groups will be divided in A or B and he will email Coordinators to let them know which group they are in. One group will be those that have income and pay rent, the other group have no income or expenditure. Nothing has changed in relation to completing or returning these.

Shakespeare Group

This group has not existed for a while and currently there are various books etc in storage. Mike asked if there might be a possibility of restarting it. Janet H explained the history of the group to the meeting and felt it was not very optimistic.

Accessibility Office Hugh Rodger was introduced.

Hugh explained he had been in post since June and that he sees his role as a resource and support role and would like to visit groups to see how they manage. He explained that his first task had been to update the Accessibility Policy, which is now on the website, it was a good starting point for moving forward but we must remember u3a is a membership charity, so we **do not have** the same duty of requirement as we are not a public service provider.

He went on to say he would like to find out how groups manage people with different needs over the next 12 months so he can then write up statements to match the policy but he said not one size fits all. He would welcome comments or suggestions from members or group coordinators, and both groups need to feel confident they can comment freely.

It was pointed out a lot of accessibility issues are the venues responsibility e.g., wheelchair accessibility/loop systems and these should be available prior to groups using the venue. A suggestion was made that a list of venues be put on the website so that people can ascertain if somewhere might be suitable, however Hugh felt it might be worth looking at a bit further.

One coordinator cited an incident where the group relocated to the home of a member who was unable to drive for a short period.

Hugh said he had had feedback after the AGM re listening / hearing; this prompted a lot of further discussion about speakers using / not using a microphone. It was pointed out by coordinators that it is written in our terms for speakers that they should be using a microphone. However, some speakers claim their voice is loud enough and do not use one. This can be difficult to challenge at that point and to avoid confrontation so the speaker has continued without a microphone.

Hugh finished by reiterating that he would welcome feedback or comments and is available for advice so please get in touch.

Burton u3a Roller Banner

Peter “the Greeter” showed everyone the (new) publicity banner that he had worked on with the Publicity Officer - this was very well received by all present. Peter explained how to use it and gave a very descriptive definition (caused much hilarity) of how to pack it away to prevent damage. This banner is available to anyone / any group for use at any time. Please contact Peter.

As the agenda items were complete the floor was opened to questions

Members being verbally aggressive / rude / sharp

Raised by a group coordinator who said this had happened and it was very upsetting. The person said we must remember that coordinators and committee members are all volunteers who take on a lot and have their own personal issues at the same time they run the u3a groups. This prompted a lot of discussion around support, being kind, whether a member could be removed from a group. The coordinator did point out that most members are delightful and appreciative. Mike Barlett offered his support to any coordinator if this happens.

It was agreed that this should be raised as an agenda item at the next committee meeting as it was felt something should be put on the website and in the u3a magazine.

Financial issues

One coordinator raised the issue of subs not being paid on time – this was causing stress. Various suggestions were made to try and help, including members to pay in advance – this would not work for all groups though.

Payment of monies to Treasurer – a question was asked if it was quite right that monies taken were paid into a personal account and then a cheque written to Burton u3a. It was agreed this was not the best way but that was what most group leaders did, however the Treasurer is looking into this – so please be patient. The Chairman explained that a sort code to pay electronically is available from the Treasurer.

A further coordinator raised concerns that if rents kept rising then it might be difficult to retain the group as it had small numbers and might not break even. Mike Barlett will discuss this with the coordinator.

A lot of discussion was held around financial issues: generally, it was felt groups did not actually close because of lack of funding. If a group is in trouble, then the coordinator should speak to the Treasurer as there is scope for central support.

Equipment

Mike said he had had several groups let him know what items they held, and he requested that if anyone has not let him know then please do so as soon as possible.

As there was nothing else anyone wished to raise, Mike thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.

APPENDIX 1

ATTENDANCE GROUP COORDINATORS MEETING 14TH SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESENT	
Mike Bartlett	Interest Group Secretary
Christina Neal	Art Appreciation
Chrys Smedley	Table Tennis
Iris Amey	Folk Group
Peter Wildsmith	Social Cycling
Bob Welch	Art 2
Dianne Brewster	Sunday Lunch / Social Activities
Dave Gasgcoigne	Friday Bowls
Paul Spencer	Singing For Pleasure
Ruth Roots	Wednesday German
Mike Payne	Short Walks / Chair
Gill Jangra	Antiquarian
Bimal Jangra	Newsletter Editor, Website, Publicity
Rosemary Marsden	Bowls Tuesday am & pm / Secretary
Janet Heckle	Social Whist
Linda Walker	Membership Secretary
Kyran Farrell	French 1 & 2
Margaret Clarke	French
Hazel Powl	Gardening
Glynis Lewis	Hospitality Team Leader
APOLOGIES	
Barry Appleby	Painting For Beginners / Lunches
Dave Sutcliffe	History
Sandra Dewsberry	Jazz / Ukulele
Mark Frost	Art 1
Jan Dingley	Cycling
Herb Croken	Longer & Challenging Walks
Vic Crumley	Photography 1
Kathy Hines	Treasurer