

**Minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 23rd September 2019 at 3 Glendale Close.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Geoff Hoskin	GH	Chair
	Pete Burrow	PB	Social Activities
	Averil Fendley	AF	Membership secretary
	John Rutherford	JR	Group convenor coordinator
	Pauline Wilson	PW	Business secretary

**1). Apologies for absence.** Lesley Pattinson. Ian Webb. Chris Cann.

**2). Minutes of the last meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2019.**

Taken as a correct record.

**3). Matters arising**

**3.1** David Tanner had been invited to attend the meeting but was unable to attend today.

**3.2** LP has paid £247 for the hire of the Jubilee Institute from September 2019 to March 2020. In the future Christine Abbs has agreed to invoice us from the new financial year which aligns with the financial year of the Institute.

**4). Committee/Succession Planning – Role Descriptions, Communications Role**

Role descriptions were received from GH, CC, JR, and PW and previously from AF. LP, PB and IW will provide for the next meeting. PW asked if these could be sent electronically and dated. They will be held on file.

GH said that he would raise the need for recruiting to committee posts at the open meetings. PW asked GH if he stood down for 1 year as is the constitution requirement, would he be willing to return as chair. He said that he would want to come off the committee altogether.

There was discussion about communications via TA Matters. Currently IW sends out communications from his Gmail list of members which he updates from Averil's spreadsheet. JR thought that he could communicate with the convenors via TA Matters. At the moment he keeps a list of the group convenors and their members on his own system. GH sends emails to members via TA Matters from the Gmail list. It was agreed that this would be discussed again at the next meeting when IW is present.

**5). Finance: Accounting for all monies; Social activities bank account**

LP has now added PB as signatory for the Events account and there is a cheque book in addition to the card. She has organised another card so that she can use as a back-up. She has also added PB to the mailing list for TA Matters.

In relation to accounting for all monies, there was discussion again on how this could be achieved. JR said that few groups handle money. If the group convenors sent LP details of the money that they handle without it actually being paid into the account, where would that information be kept? GH posed the question, 'Is it poor



accounting for not having this information?' Other U3A groups include group monies in their membership fee which obviates the need for accounting for these monies separately. Handling money will be discussed at the convenors' lunch.

#### **6) Convenors' lunch**

The date will be the 12<sup>th</sup> October at 12.30 pm at GH's house. JR said that he had received a reply from 14 people and would follow up with the others. The format will be the same as previously so there will be a pooled lunch. JR will inform the group convenors. There will also be the opportunity to discuss succession planning and accounting for groups' monies.

#### **7). Social Activities**

PB presented the following report.

**7.1** The visit to Les Miserables took place last Thursday and was thoroughly enjoyed by everybody. He said that interestingly the community minibus was booked for this visit but the minibus became unavailable because it was being used as a service bus. The County Council paid for a replacement which cost £170, we pay around £75 for the community bus to Newcastle.

**7.2** The proposed trip to Edinburgh did not take place. PB said that he would make a request for free entry to Jupiter Artland in the new 2020 season, possibly a paid booking taking a minibus rather than a coach as access is easier.

#### **7.3** Forthcoming events

**7.3.1** An Inspector Calls, Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October at the Theatre Royal. This is sold out

**7.3.2** The Christmas Quiz at the Golf Club has been booked for Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December. PB said that he will pre advertise soon.

**7.3.3** The Messiah on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> Dec 2019 at the Sage has been sold out.

**7.3.4** The Marriage of Figaro on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at the Theatre Royal. 16 members have booked and there is 1 ticket remaining.

**7.3.5** We Will Rock You on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at the Theatre Royal. Deposits have been taken for 15 places.

#### **7.4** Possible future events

**7.4.1** Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony is at the Sage on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2020. Booking opens 1<sup>st</sup> January. 17 people are interested plus reserves

**7.4.2** Jupiter Artland as above

**7.4.3** The Alnwick Playhouse re-opens soon and the programme has just been published.

PB contacted the Playhouse about Group Bookings. He received a notification from Jo Scott at the Box Office last week saying that the Playhouse is happy to reserve group tickets for us. She said that it is best to call the Box Office to discuss, as the length of time we can hold the seats for, before needing payment will vary depending on the lead in time to the show. Usually she will hold the seats for 2-3 weeks but this will be less if the show is a month or less away.

Ros Hoskin has joined the Social Activities committee and has volunteered to help with bookings. PB has asked Ros to deal with the Alnwick Playhouse bookings and she has agreed to do this.

PB thought that we could explore the possibility of having an 'Alnwick Playhouse'



group within U3A for members who may be interested in shows and Live Screening at the Playhouse. They could be emailed about performances and respond quickly when contacted. There is the possibility that money could be deposited in advance so that the group is in 'credit' which would quicken up the process. The Playhouse, as a small venue with short runs, can sell out rapidly. It was proposed that this is discussed further.

#### **7.5 Other possible social activities**

PB said that he opened an Interest Sheet at the Open Meeting, for 'Feast of Fiddles' in April.

He is also considering looking at interest in the Simon and Garfunkel Story in May. He said that if the Messiah and Beethoven are successful then he could book further events at the Sage. He could book further Theatre Royal events after June 2020 when they are released. The 'Book of Mormon' is coming in September 2020 – group booking opens in the next few days The RSC are at the Theatre Royal in the spring with 3 productions. He will check interest in booking 'As you like it'.

There is the possibility of booking tickets for the free afternoon music events at Paxton House next summer. Further possibilities include;

- 'Handlebards', a touring Shakespeare Company.
- Outdoor films e.g. at Alnwick Castle
- Open Gardens
- Heritage Open Days
- Guided tours of Cragside
- Summer BBQ and quiz.
- Visit to the Traquair House festival.
- Minibus visits to local attractions.

#### **7.6 Event booking**

PB said that there have been some problems because of members' confusion over their bookings. Some have claimed to have made bookings or payments when this has not been the case, others have tried to pay twice! We need to have a system where we can acknowledge and confirm bookings to cut out misunderstandings and Jen Homer has volunteered to send an email response to all bookings received. Ros Hoskin has volunteered to take bookings and payments at the monthly meetings as Jen cannot attend these.

In relation to ticket prices, a few U3A members have commented that they would prefer the more expensive Stalls and Grand Circle seats at the Theatre Royal. For Opera and Ballet these could easily exceed £50. PB said that he would prefer to go for 'middle range' seats to encourage more people to go and the committee endorsed this view. The Alnwick Playhouse will be providing cheaper shows and will have lower transport costs.

PW asked about events at the Queens Hall in Hexham as she went to one of the book festival events in the summer. As she is now on their mailing list she will give PB the link. However, it was commented that going to Hexham is not an easy drive in the winter.

PB left the meeting after his report.

#### **8). Membership Skills and Interests**

AF tabled the list of members' interests when renewing their membership. Some of



the interests are already covered by existing groups. Others include wine tasting; quilting; golf; fishing; crafts; languages including speaking fluent French; ballroom dancing; local history; cultural exchange; archaeology; anthropology and psychology. It was noted that there were 3 people interested in French. GH said that Val Apted was only interested in speaking French with people who are fluent in French. Arts and crafts was mentioned by 3 people but PW reminded the committee that the craft group had previously folded. JR will ask the individuals if they are interested in convening new groups for those interests which are not already covered in the current groups. In relation to the membership form, AF asked if there would be a short version for membership renewal and a longer version for new members.

## **9). Standing items**

### **9.1 Chair's report.**

GH attended the Glendale show where the U3A had a stand. There was some interest, mainly from people from Wooler and Berwick. PW asked about the set up. GH said that there was a folding board on which various promotional material could be mounted. PW said that she had asked an NHS colleague about pop-up screens and had been directed to the website [creative@yourprintdepartment.co.uk](mailto:creative@yourprintdepartment.co.uk). She will investigate.

### **8.2 Business secretary's report.**

PW has received the Third Age Trust Annual Report and Accounts. The main change in the last year was the formation of a Trading Company in order to comply with HMRC requirements. There are now over 430,000 members with 30,000 interest groups.

PW will attend the regional meeting at Durham in October.

### **8.3 Treasurer's report.**

Nothing to add from item 5 on finance.

### **8.4 Membership secretary's report**

AF said that there are now 160 members but she thought that there would be more throughout the year. She also thought that Chris Drury would be coming back.

### **8.5 Convenor coordinator's report**

Nothing further to add.

### **8.6. Website coordinator's report**

No report.

### **8.7 Social secretary's report.**

Nothing further to add from item 7

### **8.8. Publicity secretary's report**

Nothing further to add from previous reports

## **9). Any Other Business**

GH reminded the committee of the annual lecture on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October. Posters have been distributed.

## **10). Time and date of next meetings**

The next meeting will be on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 2pm at Glendale Close. AF was thanked for her hospitality.