



COTSWOLD LINK

[www. u3asites.org.uk/cotswold-link](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/cotswold-link)

<u>Chairman</u> Jane Flynn	<u>Secretary</u> Jane Mason	<u>Treasurer</u> Lynn Glaze
--------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

AUTUMN HALF-YEARLY MEETING & SEMINAR Thursday 4 October 2018 Gloucester Farmers Club GL2 9RG

Present: Delegates from Bishops Cleeve, Bourton & District, Bromyard, Cam & Dursley, Cheltenham, Cirencester, Evesham & District, Fairford, Gloucester, Ledbury, Leominster, Newent, North Cotswold, Northleach, Pershore, Ross & District, Tewkesbury, Winchcombe and Worcester.

Auriol Ainley – West Midlands Regional Trustee, Sophie Wellings – Advice and Volunteering Manager, National Office. Committee members – Jane Flynn, Lynn Glaze, Jeremy Furtado, Rosemary Wall and Jane Mason.

Apologies from Thornbury U3A and Jill Nicholls, South West Regional Trustee,

Welcome: A welcome was given by Marian Carroll, Chairman Gloucester U3A

Minutes of the last meeting held at Droitwich on 22nd March 2018 were accepted.

Matters Arising – none.

Chairman's Remarks. Welcome to everyone and thank you to Gloucester U3A for hosting today's half yearly meeting. Also welcome to Sophie Wellings (Advice and Volunteer Manager) from National Office.

Since I last met you all, I attended in April a two-day training conference in Surrey arranged by national office on "Keeping your U3A Legal" which covered particularly the new GDPR regulations (General Data Protection Regulation), as well as other issues such as equalities and safeguarding to bring the Third Age Trust into line with Charity Commission rules and new legislation. Some of you here may well have attended the sessions which were arranged at other venues. This was extremely useful in bringing delegates up to date.

I am shortly due to meet with the South West Regional Network representatives and I continue as a regional trustee volunteer for the West Midlands region. Later this month I will be attending a national Network Link meeting in London.

However, it is not all work. Last May I enjoyed attending the Cotswold Link choir day arranged by Malvern U3A, and in August went to Cheltenham's picnic in the park held at the university grounds.

I am pleased to report that since our last meeting Bromsgrove U3A has joined the Cotswold Link.

We held a successful Special Interest Day in July entitled “The Great Outdoors” and I believe everyone attending enjoyed the event with a wide variety of contributors on a hot summer’s day in Cheltenham. We have received various suggestions for future events, for which many thanks.

The executive has met to take forward arrangements for future meetings and events. My thanks to them all. I would like to pay tribute to Sue Arkell who has had to resign from the committee due to ill health. I would like to thank Sue for the hard work she has given to the Cotswold Link over many years. She will be greatly missed.

If you, or anyone else you know might be interested in getting involved with the Cotswold Link on the committee, please have a word with me, as we all know, more hands make light work.

At our next AGM in March Lynn our treasurer is due to retire. She also has been a treasure to the Cotswold Link. If you think you or any other member might be interested in taking on this role next year, please have a word with me or Lynn who is here today. It is not an onerous role but as you know, essential if we are to function in the future.

During the summer a letter was sent out to our Cotswold Link contacts re the new GDPR regulations asking for permission to hold details of delegates. Thank you for the prompt responses that were received by our Secretary.

I am grateful to those U3A groups who send me copies of their newsletters. As I have mentioned before, it is very useful to know what is happening within our regions.

I do have a nag though that information is not always getting through. From us to you and you to us. The reason we have named delegates for the Cotswold Link is not just to represent your U3A at these meetings, but to pass onto your committees and groups information about the Cotswold Link. As I mentioned, we had a very successful special interest day but were disappointed at the numbers of member U3As attending. In some of the newsletters I received, I didn’t notice any mention of our special interest day. All delegates were circulated with relevant information but I wonder if it was passed onto the executive committee for information or to the newsletter editor for publication. We do rely on you to let your members know of events that are open to everyone.

In the same manner, we have had some confusions following changes of committees and delegates and I would ask you please to let the Secretary or any other committee member of the Link know if there is a change of name following your AGM or at any other time so we can keep the correct person up to date. A short acknowledgement of emails to the Link Secretary is useful for her to know it has been received.

However, on a more cheerful note, I am very pleased to see you all here today and hope you find our arranged programme of interest. We always welcome your ideas of training or other issues you would like aired at our meetings.

Treasurers Report. the treasurer reiterated the plea made by the chairman for a volunteer to take over her role when she leaves the committee at next year's AGM. There is very little involved. At this year's AGM we broke even, the Special Interest Day made a loss of £600 because the committee decided to charge members for the food only, paying the speakers from the funds. This leaves £1700 in the kitty.

Regional Reports

Jill Nicholls – South West Region Trustee -in Jill's absence her report was read by the Chairman:

I am sorry that I am unable to be with you today. I would like to say how much I enjoyed your Great Outdoors interest day in July.

During the last six months most of my time has been spent away from home. I have been involved with trouble shooting and speaking to other groups. I do try to get to some interest groups at home in Carrick, but it doesn't happen often!

I have attended four NEC meetings (two days each), Strategic Planning, U3A Plus in London, the EGM in Birmingham and National Conference and AGM in Nottingham. In addition, the Network Link in London as well as the Cotswold Link, West Dorset, Tamar Valley, Callington AGM, West Cornwall Link Group, Devon Link, North Somerset, Plympton, and East Devon. I celebrated with Cheddar their 25th garden party and have visited with the Chairman Pam Jones the Isles of Scilly and Guernsey, in addition Llandrindod Wells "All Wales Learning Together", the launch at Palace of Westminster "Learning not Lonely" and Bristol "We are the Curious" a day of discovery about our senses. Workshops in Leatherhead and Launceston on Keeping it Legal, Induction for West Cornwall Link Group and finally a conference at Midsomer Norton, in North Somerset.

I have a desire to bring our region together, albeit in the ether! A good way to do this is to show off our own localities with writing, photos, paintings, sewing, science, history... make someone from outside your area want to visit that special place.

I was planning to get around the region using my bus pass, trains, walking and accepting lifts from members. To do this I may require the occasional bed! I don't propose setting off from one end of the region to the other, but suggesting to a network a timeframe and hoping for local help/knowledge and support. I am meeting Liz Drury, Publicity Officer on 9 October to work out the maximum publicity. I shall of course continue with my regular commitments at NEC. This will be my contribution to raising the profile of the U3A.
A final plea to use the South West Regional website.

Auriol Ainley – West Midlands Trustee

Auriol's report began with a map of the West Midlands Region (Salop, Worcs, Warwicks, Herefordshire, Staffs plus Birmingham and part of the Peak District) which shows the vast area that she covers. The five counties include large areas of comparatively sparsely populated areas of open countryside, small and large villages, market towns and busy, large urban areas. She visits as many u3a's during the year as she can acting as a go-between the local U3As and the National Office. She loves being invited to attend birthday parties celebrating a u3a's success.

Trained in trouble shooting she asked members to get in touch if they have a problem – earlier the better as things are much easier to deal with before they accelerate.

Auriol deals with requests for workshops from members – there is one for finance at the end of October and cyber-protection could be arranged locally. Please let her know if there are any topics that local groups feel would be helpful in running their U3A.

Since her last report she has attended the launch of the Learning, Not Lonely campaign which can be accessed via the National Office web site. In addition to being regional trustee representative she is chairman of the international committee which is setting up a data base of every known U3A in the world.

Finally, Auriol repeated the request to members to find members in their U3A willing to serve on the Cotswold Link committee.

Cotswold Link Bridge Competition.

Andrew Hague from Malvern U3A asked whether there was any interest from bridge groups within the Cotswold Link to participate in a bridge competition. He proposed a U3A could nominate one or two teams of 4 to enter and matches could be hosted by one team or the other. If there was sufficient interest he was willing to organise it.

There was quite a lot of interest from members present. Andrew said they would play under EBU rules but keep it friendly. It might even be possible to arrange a small league of different U3A players. Andrew to give the secretary details of his proposal for her to circulate to the Link contacts.

It was suggested that if successful this initiative could be extended to other sports groups.

Date & Venue for AGM/Half-Yearly Meeting:

Hosted by Bromyard u3a – **19th March 2019.**

Airing & Sharing

- a. Notice that choir day for Link groups will be hosted by Gloucester during the May half term school holiday next year.
- b. Cheltenham raised the Beacon contract and are annoyed at the lack of concern by National Office to their concerns. Auriol replied the issue of Beacon had been discussed at the last NEC meeting and the issues were to be resolved by a new commercial contract with another company. It was recognised that the system was more complex than contemplated and professional assistance was needed. Frank Bailey has taken over the lead on Beacon from Alan Stansfield. Worcester U3A said they had not signed the contract but were using the system, and Cam & Dursley said they used plus-net which had blocked Beacon. Brian Nash felt Beacon was designed for one u3a and got too big too quickly and volunteers were overwhelmed. Fairford u3a says Beacon excellent, contract not signed but still paying and using the system.
- c. Jill Wilson, Pershore, asked what etiquette was used by other u3as when they hear a member has died. Jeremy Furtado felt it appropriate to treat each case differently; Carla Auger, Evesham, said they have a welfare officer, not on the committee. There could be a problem when groups do not tell the membership secretary. Other members felt that the death of a founder member or a long serving committee member should have an obituary in the newsletter; but otherwise it is more appropriate for the relevant group members to acknowledge the family and send a representative to the funeral.

- d. Eileen Richmond, Bromyard, asked what people do about visitors. The chairman answered that Link members have a reciprocal arrangement that members could join one u3a group in another u3a without joining that u3a. More than one group they would need to join both u3as, one at a reduced rate (minus the capitation fee). Carla Auger, Evesham, said they had made reciprocal arrangements with a neighbouring u3a who is not a member of the Link. Patsy Condi, Leominster says they register as a visiting member.

Insurance Issues

Sophie Wellings, Advice & Volunteering manager, National Office spoke on insurance and highlighted the following points.

- Confirmed there was Insurance cover arranged by the Third Age Trust for all U3A groups– a Public, community and charities policy:
- Damage to equipment and theft. Not for normal wear & tear or for unsecured equipment.
- Damage to home contents during u3a activity.
- Cash held in peoples' homes, venues, in transit but not accounting.
- Member to member injuries
- Travel trips – although advised to organise through travel agents where possible.
- Indemnity for trustees. Sophie confirmed trustees have cover even when making an erroneous decision unintentionally. She gave various examples of where liability rests and where it does not.
- There is no cyber insurance yet.
- Insurance while performing is provided but check that the venue has public liability insurance.
- Risk assessments are not a legal requirement but a sensible precaution.
- First aider on site – no legal obligation, but be aware if and where there is a defibrillator
- Accident & incident forms filled in as soon as possible after the incident.
- Please consult National Office (NO) if you have any insurance queries

Keeping it Legal

Sophie then outlined the advice given at the national workshops held on 'Keeping it Legal'

- All current advice is available on the National Office (NO) website
- A telephone Advice Line at NO is available 9.30 to 16.30 Monday to Friday and is manned by 3 trained u3a volunteers.
- Workshops on many areas are available for groups and links – details on NO website
- Legal advice is available from outside advisers and consultants
- The 'blue file' is now redundant as new policies are decided and the intention is to reduce paper circulations. A team of proof reader volunteers are now checking all documents to ensure accuracy before circulation.

Equality & Accessibility

The national Office uses the EHRC (European Human Rights Commission) recommendations as in the 2010 Equality Act which replaces all former legislation.

Discrimination.

Direct and Indirect discrimination are covered, so be aware and make reasonable adjustments for a member. Hilary Jones is leading on this issue as Disability Officer.

Consider –

How inclusive are we currently?

What do we do well?

What could we do better?

How open are we to members? U3A+ - physical disabled volunteers looking at issues – including dementia.

Trustees Responsibility

‘Learning not Lonely’ is a new publication written by the Chief Executive.

Steps to take:

- Adopt a safeguarding policy
- Consider the u3as approach to & role in respect of well-being.
- Groups co-ordinator to talk to group leaders
- Discuss any identified problems within the committee and agree actions
- Dementia friends training
- Have clear complaints, grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Report safeguarding concerns to National Office.
-

GDPR

Sophie confirmed that since the implementation of legislation last May, further advice has been given by solicitors to NO, and the main areas to consider are -

- Safety in storing of personal data
- u3as have a legal & moral duty to protect their members’ data
- A relationship of trust between the committee, group leaders and members
- Minimal data should be retained on an essential ‘need to know’ basis. Financial accounts should be kept for six years.
- Personal information should be deleted after 12 months if person is no longer a member
- Committee should decide who has a legitimate interest in information.
- Useful to have a privacy statement and safeguarding policy

Sophie said it was not intended to make onerous demands on committees. If there was a breach of policy, contact people with an apology, record event and move forward. Let NO know of any particular problems. It could be useful to have a sub- committee looking at inclusivity and communication with group leaders.

The Chairman thanked Sophie Wellings for her comprehensive session and hoped members had found it useful. Please let her know if there are any particular workshops they would like arranged by the Cotswold Link.

The meeting closed at 4pm