

Agenda for Committee Meeting at 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 13th December 2023

Room 2, St Pauls

No	Description	Lead	Pages
Standing Items			
1.	Apologies for absence	Chair	
2.	(i) Approval of Minutes of the 8 th November meeting and any actions arising (ii) Review of Action Log as of 10 th December	Chair	2 – 5 6 - 8
3.	Monthly Updates from TAT and Committee Members	Chair	9 - 12
4.	Update on Trustee and other volunteer recruitment	All	n/a
5.	Purchases, Procurements & Contracts for information and, if required, approval	Secretary/Treasurer	13
6.	Other Committee Approvals Required for matters not the subject of Non-Standing Items: (i) Updated version of the Finance section of the developing GLs Handbook (ii) Draft AGM 2023 minutes Draft 8 th Dec (iii) Committee Procedures Draft 8 th Dec	Treasurer Secretary Secretary	14 Emailed 8 th Dec Emailed 8 th Dec Emailed 8 th Dec
7.	Trustees Calendar Update	Secretary	E-mailed 10 th
Non-Standing Items for Discussion			
8.	Post AGM Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting times/dates for 2024 Signing of Forms for Charity Commission & TAT Induction of New Trustees Bank mandate changes 	Secretary	15
9.	Group Finances: Restricted Reserve balances	Treasurer	16 - 18
10.	Report on Membership Renewal	Treasurer/Members Coordinator	19 - 21
11.	Christmas Party	Members Coordinator to lead	n/a
12.	Trustee Tasks List (spreadsheet e-mailed 10 th Dec)	Secretary	22
13.	Aims for 2024 and Draft Topics by Committee Meeting	Chair/Secretary	23 - 24
14.	AOB Social event for January [please bring diaries]	Chair	

Draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held 8th November

St Pauls Room 2

Attending: Chair (Jim McGough), Secretary (Margaret Lloyd), Treasurer (Graham Friday), Communications Coordinator (Sue Parker), Members Coordinator (Jacqui Mercer) and Access Coordinator (Janet Newson).

Apologies: Groups Coordinator (Peter Beckley) due to a kitchen emergency

The Chair opened the meeting by stating that this would have been the last meeting attended by Peter Beckley as a Trustee. He thanked Peter for his contribution as a Trustee over his term of office.

Standing Items

Agenda Item 2(i): Minutes of the 11th October meeting

The minutes were approved with no corrections. The Access Coordinator pointed out that she had been confused by the Action for the Chair under Minute 9(v) ("to pass to Trustees the comments he had received from a prospective new GL on things to consider when setting up a new Group") not appearing on the Action Log, given that she had not realised that the Exploring Local History group description (see the copy of this under the 8th November Agenda Item 3 Groups Coordinator monthly report) was what the Chair had been referring to.

It was agreed that in future Actions completed before the subsequent meeting would be retained on the Action Log for that meeting, but with a clear indication that the action had been completed.

Action: Secretary to note this at the top of the Action Log and in the Committee Procedures

Agenda Item 2(ii): Review of Action Log

No points made.

Agenda Item 3: Monthly Updates from the Third Age Trust and Committee Members

(i) Third Age Trust (TAT) AGM

The Chair stated that although he did not recommend Trustees spend time viewing the video of the AGM itself, the other, much shorter, video presentations were worth viewing. See <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLsB2t41TNozHt-u2ZAECuWh3uXjs3tEeW>

(ii) Members Coordinator Report: Update on Membership Renewal

The Members' Coordinator reported current membership stood at 616 consisting of:

2022/23 members renewing	528
Pre 2022/23 member rejoining	1
New members joining after 1st Sept 2023	64
2022/23 members renewal outstanding	23
Total current	616
2022/23 members not renewing (resigned or died)	49

She reported that the Membership Support had already contacted most of the 23 members whose renewal is outstanding and the Members' Coordinator would be contacting Membership Support once she returns from holiday on 28th November to ask her for updates.

It was likely that most of these members would not renew giving us a total loss of members for the year of slightly more than 10%. The Chair said this annual level of loss was to be expected given the age profile of the members though it would be useful to know if members were resigning for reasons other than health and infirmity, such as not being able to join the Groups they wished to because they were full.

The Secretary expressed her surprise at the high 74% of continuing members not wishing to continue receiving Third Age Matters (TAM) now it was charged for separately. This rate seemed to be higher than for other u3as, judging by comments made on the Chairs Forum Facebook site.

(iii) Members Coordinator Report: Christmas Party

The Members' Coordinator reported the following:

- The working group now numbered four: herself, Carol Allen, Sue Mearns & Carol Palmer and would meet on Tuesday 14th November.
- Hampers for the raffle prizes had been ordered
- The prices for the food order were still under discussion with the potential suppliers
- The Master of Ceremonies had been confirmed (subject to receiving a copy of the party programme)
- 8 RUGS would be required, 4 to be in the kitchen, 2 to sign in attendees and 2 to wander around troubleshooting.

She thanked Sue Parker for her notes from last year's party.

The Committee agreed that members attending would be charged £1 to reserve their place in advance. This would cover both the entrance and raffle tickets.

Other points made were:

- The u3a possesses a CD suitable for large venues
- The Treasurer would ask Peter Beckley if he still intended to provide a quiz. Sue Parker had a lot of quizzes available if Peter was unable to provide one
- The Members Coordinator should feel free to ask other Trustees to assist her if necessary

Action: Chair to ask the agreed member to dress as Father Christmas and to recite appropriate verse. Father Christmas would also give out the raffle prizes.

Action: Members Coordinator to ask each Trustee to contact by phone a list of members not on e-mail to issue invitations before the e-mail invitation is disseminated.

(iv) Treasurer's Report: Decision on New Display Screen

The Committee agreed not to purchase a new screen, for reasons of storage and transportation.

Action: Treasurer to let the Speaker Organiser know of this decision.

(v) Group Coordinator's Report: New Group Description Pro-forma

It was pointed out that this pro-forma (used for Exploring Local History) did not include anything on costs.

Action: New Groups Coordinator (as elected at the AGM 2023) to redesign the New Group Table.

(vi) Group Coordinator's Report: O&A 8

The Treasurer reported that 10 members attended the initial meeting on 6th November. Different members will be organising trips and he will be writing an article for the Newsletter on the group.

Action: Treasurer to provide an article for the December newsletter on the O&A Group 8 programme.

(vii) "Give it a go" programme

The Treasurer is also intending to run, with his partner, a "Give it a go" programme with each session focussing on a different activity, such as zip wiring, willow weaving, pottery, hawking which members may have always wanted to try but never had the opportunity to do so.

Non-Standing Items for Discussion

Agenda Item 4: Proposal for addressing Short Mat Bowls loss

The Chair stated that he had been trying to address this loss since August but had received little in the way of response from the Group Leader (GL). He believed that the Group should be run on more financially sustainable lines in order to prevent the same situation recurring, rather than just trying to break even. The Treasurer stated that the objective should be merely to break-even and that he believed that this could possibly be achieved by running just the Wednesday group.

The Committee agreed that the Chair would inform the Group Leader, after the AGM, that:

- The Monday group would close after December 2023;
- The subscription for each Wednesday session would rise to £3.50 per person from the start of January
- The length of the Wednesday session should be reduced by 30)
- The fee would be reviewed at the end of every term – if the number of members increase then there may be scope for reducing the fee and still break-even.

[Early on 10th November the GL did send a response to an earlier e-mail sent by the Chair but contesting the need to raise the subscription]

Action: Chair to communicate Committee decision to the GL.

Agenda Item 5: AGM Final Update Report

The Secretary ran through the list of procedural matters (since included in the "Annotated Final Agenda" disseminated on 9th November to all Trustees).

Agenda Item 6: Report on 30th October Coffee Morning and Date of Next Event

The Committee agreed with the points made in the report and that the additional publicity had paid off. The following decisions were agreed:

- The Crafts stall would feature in just one coffee morning each year, the one held in the first term.
- The u3a would continue to hold a dedicated meeting for New Members similar to the one in September 2023 for New Members after the Open Day but otherwise continue with the monthly small gatherings at St Pauls (the responsibility of the Members Coordinator & Membership Support). New members would be sent a special invitation to the 1st Coffee Morning subsequent to their joining.
- There would be dedicated tables at future coffee mornings for new members.
- One of the Committee Members would be based in the Friary hallway to steer new members to one of the dedicated tables.

- If the Friary has availability the date of the Next Coffee morning will be Tuesday 20th February.

Action: Secretary to try to book the Friary for 20th February 2024

Action: Secretary to amend the report on the Coffee Morning and place on the website and to feed recommendations into the draft Events Checklist

Agenda Item 7: Group Development

The Access Coordinator (& prospective Groups Coordinator after the AGM) pointed out that the Development of Groups, whether it be taken to refer to improving the quality of indoor groups (as it does here) or to the creation of new groups, is a different concept to that of “Support”. “Support” should not have been used as part of the original title.

She went on to say that, once she was formally elected to the role of Groups Coordinator she would want to visit all the Groups and be seen as the key Committee contact for Group Leaders (GLs). It would confuse the GLs to receive communications from other Trustees.

The Committee agreed to defer any investigation into, or other work on, the quality of group learning for at least a few months to give the new Groups Coordinator opportunity to assess the need and/or scope for this.

Action: Chair to forward to the new Groups Coordinator copies of correspondence conducted over the last few months with the Group Leaders and others with which he has communicated on quality matters.

Final Standing Items for Discussion

Agenda Item 8: Trustees Calendar Update

The agenda for the December meeting was agreed, subject to the addition of an item on the Update of the Accessibility Policy (originally intended for this meeting but deferred).

Agenda Item 9: AOB

None

The meeting finished at 17:55

Agenda Item 2(ii): Action Log as at 10th December 2023

Includes all actions arising from:

- The previous meeting, with those completed indicated as such by pale grey shading; and
- Those from the minutes of previous meetings which are still outstanding (unless they have been superseded by an action from subsequent meeting).

Comments *in italics* in the right-hand column indicate that the action is not yet fully completed and will be carried forward to the subsequent Action Log.

Meeting	Agenda Reference	Action	Progress/Comments
26th April	11. Contents of crates handed over by Janet Boniface	Sort and log the historic items and old u3a papers held by Janet Boniface	<i>Work in progress. Yielding some useful info.</i>
14th June	3. Comms Coordinator	Comms Coordinator to produce an Events Checklist - a list of actions which need to be carried out prior to monthly meetings, coffee mornings, and other events.	<i>In progress, with assistance from Secretary and Groups Coordinator(GC) and Assistant GC.</i>
	6. Outstanding Beacon Access Privileges and GDPR actions	General Management Items 4 & 6: Secretary to establish processes to ensure and demonstrate compliance	<i>In progress</i>
		Amend Beacon Roles as approved and communicate to all Beacon users once done so	All Committee and the Seasonal Outing & Speaker Organiser ones done. <i>Others still o/s</i>
12th July	O&A Phase 2.	To produce a checklist and guidance for organising outdoor trips.	Phase 2 Leader sent draft version to members of the WG for approval on 25 th Sept (a few sections still outstanding and Priority Seating on Coaches to be added).
	1. Priority Seating on Coaches and at Friary Meetings	Access Coordinator to amend the proposal to take on board the Committee members' suggestions before sending to the leaders of the RUGS and/or the O&A Leaders to seek their views on the practical and best approach to implement this idea.	To be trialled at the 12 th January monthly meeting with view to being incorporated into the planned Events checklist.
11th Oct	9. Actions from 2 nd Oct Group Leader meeting:	New Groups Coordinator after the AGM to ask GLs their views on a new centralised phone number being used for phone Group enquiries (would need to purchase a new phone as the 2 nd phone – the 1 st phone being retained by	

		Membership Support for responding to calls to the Support number quoted on the reverse side of the 23/24 Membership cards - cannot be found).	
		Secretary to look into the GDPR implications of GLs operating WhatsApp for communications within their group	This is fine if all participating members agree
		Secretary to place the Draft GL Handbook on the web GLs page, with the newly approved Finance section and other existing sections, replacing the current Procedures & Reference Guide.	<i>Still outstanding, to be done very soon, to include new Finance Section (subject of Agenda Item 6(i))</i>
8th Nov	2(i) Approval of Minutes	Secretary to amend the notes introducing the Action Log and the Committee Procedures to reflect that all actions from the previous meeting are to be included in the Action Log, with those which have been completed indicated.	Amended the notes the Action Log.
	3(iii) Christmas Party	Chair to ask the agreed member to dress as Father Christmas and to recite appropriate verse. Father Christmas would also give out the raffle prizes.	Superseded
		Members Coordinator to ask each Trustee to contact by phone a list of members not on e-mail to issue invitations before the e-mail invitation is disseminated.	Done
	3(iv) Treasurer's Report	Treasurer to let the Speaker Organiser know of the decision not to buy a larger screen	Completed. Speaker Organiser has acknowledged the decision.
	3(v) Group Coordinator's Report	New Groups Coordinator (as elected at the AGM 2023) to redesign the New Group Proforma	Done
		Treasurer to provide an article for the December newsletter on the O&A Group 8 programme.	<i>Deferred to the January newsletter as will likely have more impact then</i>
		Chair to communicate Committee decision to the GL of Short Mat Bowls	<i>Now deferred pending the outcome of Agenda Item 6(i) on new Finance section of the GL handbook and Agenda Item 9 on Group Reserves. Then Treasurer and Groups Coordinator to meet with the GL. No date fixed yet.</i>

	6. Coffee Morning	Secretary to organise the booking for the Friary for the 20 th February	Done. Coffee Morning to be 11:00 – 12:30 rather than 10:30 – 12:00 due to an earlier booking.
		Secretary to amend the report on the Coffee Morning and place on the website and to feed recommendations into the draft Events Checklist	Amended and on website. Recommendations in draft Events Checklist.
	7. Group Development	Chair to forward to the new Groups Coordinator copies of correspondence conducted over the last few months with the Group Leaders and others with which he has communicated on quality matters.	Chair states “there is little in writing from my oral discussions with a few group leaders but I will fill anybody in for wishes to know more”.

Note: Have removed the 12th July Action on the updating Newsletter hard copy distribution and trying to reduce the number of newsletters sent via the post, as this is clearly an ongoing task. The Communications Coordinator will instead comment on the latest position in her monthly reports (as she has done this month).

Agenda Item 3: Monthly Updates from the Third Age Trust and Committee Members

Action for the Committee: To note

Third Age Trust (TAT): National Level

1. "Your Questions from the Third Age Trust AGM 2023"

This was sent to Chairs, Secretaries & Treasurers on 16th November. Items of interest include:

- The Treasurer's slides shown at the AGM are now available on <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/agm-2023>
- The TAT forecasts that it will not need an increase in the Membership Subscription above £4.00 until 2026/27
- TAT undertakes randomised anonymous research with u3a members every 10 years and this shows that the age profile in most u3as is increasing. There is interest amongst the membership that this research takes place more often and it is being considered for the 2024 workplan.
- The merchandising and branding centre (<https://u3abrand.org.uk/> - password required) is under review, to make accessing the site easier for u3a members.

2. Festival 2024 18th – 20th July 2024

Details on costs and accommodation are on <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/festival-2024>

3. The u3a Pilot Council (from Susie Berry South East Region Trustee 15th Nov 2023)

Chair e-mailed to Trustees 23/11/23

To give u3as a more powerful voice, the Third Age Trust is considering changes to its governance. Change is being driven by the u3a Board of Trustees, all of whom are u3a members with twelve being elected regional or national Trustees.

In order to improve the skill set of Board members and allow elected representatives of regions and nations more time to attend to matters concerning their member u3as, we believe the u3a movement requires this change.

The vision is for a smaller elected Board to handle governance alongside a regionally and nationally elected Council, with delegated powers, representing u3as.

This will also provide a vitally needed forum where u3as' ideas, concerns and experiences can be discussed and used to shape decision making. We are testing how this model might work through a 'Pilot Council'.

Three Pilot Council meetings have now been held. The next is to be held on 13th December, by Zoom, **and then one in person on 28 February. Any members can submit topics and agenda items.** Questions can also be dealt with by Susie Berry.

4. Other

A new Web menu button "Members Area" now appears on the TAT website, with a sub-menu showing "Support for u3as" (which was a stand-alone menu button), "Member Communications", and "Trust & Board Updates". This makes accessing the material included in the latter two sub-menus more easily. There does not appear to be any fresh content.

South East Region u3a

Chairs Meeting 14:30 Monday 4th March (from Pam Davidoff WSN Chair 15th Nov 2023)

Susie Berry's announcement of a meeting of all Chairs in the SE Region to discuss the TAT's proposals on changes to Governance, designed to allow individual u3as more influence over decisions (copy of Susie Berry's 15/11/23 e-mail u3a Pilot Council attached).. SERN, the group of Network Chairs in the South-East

Region, agreed that a meeting should be held of all the u3a Chairs in the region, to discuss whether they agree with the broad proposals or not.

West Sussex Network (WSN) (from Pam Davidoff WSN Chair 16th Nov 2023)

1. Autumn Gathering on Zoom 16th Nov 2023

This was titled “All About Subject Advisers” and open to all u3a members in the region, especially group Leaders. There was particular focus on French, Creative Writing and Climate Change & Environment. This gathering was covered in the WSN meeting of 20th October and included in the minutes from that meeting received 23rd October but were not communicated within Crawley u3a. Hence we only realised it was happening when the flyer was forwarded by the WSN Chair on the 9th and our French GLs were otherwise engaged. The Vice-Chair attended a short part of it.

2. Next WSN Meeting on Zoom 10:00 12th January

Chair (Jim McGough)

1. I attended the **AGM of Crawley Community Action (CCA)** at Gleneagles Court on the 9th of November. This is an organisation, grant funded, whose purpose is to support the local voluntary sector. You might find it interesting to consult their website for a detailed breakdown of their purpose at “crawleycommunityaction.org “. There may be a case for our joining (at no cost) but we will have to determine that after further research. I was able also to have a brief discussion with the Chair of Diverse Crawley around the topic of ethnic minority representation in the u3a and we agreed to explore the issues in the new year
2. I participated in a **Beacon Course specifically for Chairs** on the 28th November. Sadly, none of the material conveyed was new to me, and to many others who attended, it appeared
3. On the 30th I took part in a useful presentation on **managing complaints**. The material will be uploaded to the website
4. While a domestic emergency prevented my joining this month’s **chairman’s forum**, I now find its usefulness limited but I will circulate separately a link to the business discussed

Secretary (Margaret Lloyd)

Most of the month was spent on matters included within the meeting’s agenda but in addition I undertook the following:

1. Meeting with the new Groups Coordinator to discuss aspects of her role;
2. Amending the Constitution following the passing of the resolution on clause 10 (still waiting for conformation from the Third age Trust), and updating the AGM 2023 Volunteers web pages to reflect the outcomes of the AGM.
3. Assisting the Treasurer on the new Tutor contract form
4. Updating the Induction checklist, for the use of the new Vice-Chair, including an update on the various ways in which to contact the Third Age Trust, and its various newsletters and Facebook groups.
5. Assisting the Communications Coordinator on developing the Events checklist/Guidance and liaising with the Groups Coordinator on the aspects for which the Assistant Groups Coordinator has responsibility (booking of venues and liaison with RUGS).

No significant **correspondence received** (other than that from John Walton on EDI matters which I passed onto the Chair -see above.

Treasurer (Graham Friday)

1. Bank

The new deposit accounts have now been opened.

2. Gift Aid

A claim has been lodged and acknowledged by HMRC for the 2021/22 financial year, but payment has been held up until a new CHV1 change form has been completed and submitted. Form has now been received from HMRC and I will be processing it as soon as I can.

As an organisation we do not seem to have updated our records with them for several years, so I'm not sure if the requirements have changed, but now we need to provide them with three nominated officials to manage the account with them. As well as the 'authorised' official (Treasurer) who manages the day-to-day account and relationship with HMRC, we also need to nominate two 'responsible' officials who need to counter sign any future changes to the organisation's records, like the Bank mandate arrangements. To match in with the Charity Commission records I'm going to assume these will be the Chair and Secretary.

This will require an additional task to be added to the Task List for the Treasurer to remember to complete a new CHV1 when there is a change-over in personnel within those three posts.

3. Group Leaders Handbook

Following on from the Committee's email discussion a new version of the Handbook's Finance Section has been issued to Group Leaders.

4. Trust Finance Committee

Meeting held to consider the Trust's half year financial position. Nothing to report.

The National Treasurer has included my request to find out where u3as invest their surplus money in this latest Finance Newsletter to all u3a Treasurers.

I have a telephone 1-2-1 set up with Sam Mauger on the 16th Jan, to talk about TAT governance and communications with u3as.

5. Afternoon Exercise Group.

An Exercise Instructor has now been approached and has agreed to provide the necessary content input into this activity. The Secretary, Group Coordinator and Treasurer are developing a template format for a Tutor Agreement to use in these situations.

This new group will meet on a Monday afternoon (excluding Bank Holidays) between 3pm and 4pm at the Friary.

The booking time will be 2.45pm to 4.15pm, to allow for set up and hall clearance.

The initial cost per session will be £3.50 per member, but this will need to be kept under review depending on the actual number of Members that decide to attend. For the group to cover its costs it will require a minimum of 25 attendees each session. The maximum number that can attend each session will be capped at 40.

Each Member attending will be asked to sign a disclaimer to say they are able and fit enough to undertake the exercising. Members who show any signs of colds, coughs or having movement problems will not be permitted to take part that week.

Groups Coordinator (Janet Newson)

As I settle into the role, there is not much to report from the Groups Coordinator other than:

1. **Groups Directory** – updating and finalising December edition. Will be sent out to relevant parties.

2. **Trustee Tasks List** – finalised the Assistant GC's task list and guide and reaching the completion of the Groups Coordinator task list and guide.
NB: This work was in progress prior to the proposed Trustee Task changes. Discussion is underway with relevant Trustees on the impact.
3. **Local History Group** - The Asst GC advises me that there are now 7 people who have expressed an interest in the new Local History Group. I will inform the Committee at the next meeting if there is a change to this number.
4. I attended (via Zoom), a **Beacon** session for **Groups Coordinators** on the 15 November, which I found very instructive and answered some questions. It also gave me an idea for using Beacon regarding the Faculty functionality, which could be used once the new group Classifications are agreed.

Communications Coordinator (Sue Parker)

- 1) The **December newsletter** was emailed to members on Monday 4th December. The postal copies were dispatched on the same day. Work has begun on the January newsletter.
- 2) I have worked my way through the **newsletter distribution list** again. I will repeat the exercise towards the end of December and submit the latest figures in my January update. The good news is that one kind member has offered to cover Langley Green and West Green which reduces the postal list by five, meaning that around 19 will be posted in future. This is a good reduction in the number of postal copies, which was up in the thirties at the start of the year when I began posting monthly copies to those without email.
- 3) The **Events Guidance/Checklist** is almost complete. There are a few items which I need to add under Open Afternoon and Midsummer Celebration but being unwell last week delayed completion of the task.
- 4) My priorities for the rest of the month are the January newsletter, deciding which tasks to allocate to the two new Publicity Assistants and belatedly redesigning our flyer.

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Members Coordinator (Jacqui Mercer)

Agenda Item 5: Purchases, Procurements & Contracts for information and, if required, approval

Action for Committee: To respond to the questions in green

This is a new **standing item**, described in the Draft Committee Procedures (section (J) 5) as follows:

“To include requests for approval on purchases or contracts (> £100 or whatever is amount is specified in Financial Policy Delegated Decisions 5.4.3) which are not expected to require anything beyond a short discussion. Also to include the setting up of working groups on any proposed strategic contracts (as defined by the Trustee Task list) and reporting on their progress”.

There may be some months when there is nothing to approve or report

1. Working Group for procuring a new E-mail Hosting contract

As the groups Coordinator explained in her e-mail to all Trustees on 9th Nov our current host providers (123-reg.co.uk) for the @Crawley.org.uk domain is increasing the charges for each account, with each new account being invoiced for separately. The webmaster, Stuart Spreadborough, who acts as the administrator for e-mail hosting, is keen to move to a cheaper provider with only one invoice a year.

Section 7 (yet to be fully reviewed) of the new Trustee Tasklist states that *“Software for the Committee (accounting software, file sharing systems, e-mail hosting) should, as is the case when negotiating with St Pauls, the Friary, and any legal and professional advisers, be administered through a special Working Group set up for this purpose (with all contracts to be signed by the Chair, after formal approval by a full Committee meeting)”.*

The Treasurer, Secretary & Webmaster will form a fixed-term Working Group (Task Group) to look at options for alternative providers and to bring a recommendation back to the Committee.

- 1. Does anybody else wish to join us?**
- 2. Should I ask John Walton (beacon Administrator) if he is interested in joining us?**
- 3. Does the Committee approve the setting up of this Working Group**

2. Paid Instructor Agreement (Contract) For information only

As stated in the Treasurer’s monthly report, item 5, the Secretary, Group Coordinator and Treasurer are developing a template format for a Tutor Agreement to use when using an external instructor.

Agenda Item 6: Other Committee Approvals Required for matters not the subject of Non-Standing Items

Action for Committee: To respond to the questions in green

This is a new **standing item**, described in the Draft Committee Procedures (section (J) 6) as follows:

“This is to formally approve any policies or other proposals which require formal Committee Approval (see section (M) below) but on which Trustees have already had the opportunity to comment and on which no issues have been raised which it is believed require further discussion. Trustees will be notified before the meeting of these items and will have the opportunity to object to this – giving reasons - and that it should be moved to become a Non-Standing Item”

The final draft documents for each of the below were sent to Trustees on 8th December.

6(i) Updated version of the Finance section of the developing GLs Handbook

Does the Committee approve this updated section?

If approved it will be included in the new draft Group Leaders’ Handbook and placed on the web

6(ii) Draft AGM 2023 Minutes Draft 8th Dec

I placed the Draft Minutes on the AGM 2023 website on 4th Dec, inviting members to send any comments to me. We also announced they were on the website in the December newsletter). So far nobody has contacted me.

Does the Committee approve the Draft Minutes? (subject to formal agreement at the 2024 AGM)

6(iii) Committee Procedures Draft 8th Dec

One item was raised requiring further discussion but which was judged not to be a Committee Procedure matter as such but an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion one. This was

in reference to (F) 5 and around whether we, within the u3a, should ever “mandate” the use of WhatsApps (raised by the Chair). I suggest we place this on our agenda for January’s meeting when we are due to return to the EDI/Accessibility policy.

Does the Committee approve the Committee Procedures?

The intention is to review these procedures annually, in the first meeting after the AGM.

Agenda Item 8: Post AGM Actions

Action for Committee: To Action items in green

1. Agree a meeting slot for 2024

2. Signing of Forms

- Commission Eligibility Form (will bring a copy of forms with me since each form can include 4 trustees) but the link is here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/confirmation-of-charity-trustee-eligibility>

- Third Age Trust. Document here:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/files/c/crawley/docs/essentialdocumentsforu3atrustees.pdf>

You need only print off the final page where you sign

3. Induction of Vice-Chair

Vice-Chair to say what would assist him in terms of meetings.

4. Changes to Bank Mandate

Treasurer to recommend which Trustees should appear on this for 2024./

Agenda Item 9: Restricted Funds

Action for Committee: To both adopt the criteria and procedures outline and approve the two applications from the reserve.

Crawley u3a

Report on the criteria and procedure to be applied for allocation of the Restricted Reserve balance.

Purpose

As at the 1st Sept 2023, the sum of £14,776 is being held as an unallocated element in the Restricted Reserve Fund. The purpose of this report is to firstly, establish the criteria and procedures that the Committee will use in applying those reserves to support Activity Groups, and secondly to approve two initial allocations of these reserves.

Background

The Restricted Fund represents surplus money generated in previous financial years from Group activity. In accordance with Charity Commission rules and the Financial Reporting Standards this Fund can only be used to support similar activities from which it was originally generated.

The sum of £14,776, is a combination of both Group surpluses generated during the financial years 2017/18 to 2020/21 and the donation (plus associated Gift Aid).

The Trustees must administer the Fund, in a way that is transparent and fair to all Activity Groups.

To administer the funds in a fair and equitable way the Committee need to establish both the criteria it will use to consider any application of the funds and procedures to be followed in allocating those funds.

Applications for use of the funds can either be made:

- directly from an individual Group, or a combination of Groups,
- deriving from a review instigated by the Committee,
- derived from the closure of a Group, or
- by request from the Treasurer.

Criteria

The Committee, will use the unallocated balance to allocate money to groups that are:

- struggling to cover their costs due to a falloff in membership numbers,
- incurring sudden and unexpected costs,
- where the deficit has arisen from a change in policy or external change in governing legislation, or
- as a 'start-up' grant towards the initials costs of getting the group up and running.

Procedure

Where a request has been received from a Group or combination of Groups to cover deficits, the Committee will ensure that the following series of actions have been worked through with the affected Group(s), to ensure their finances cannot be improved before considering the application.

The Group(s) will need to show that they have:

- Marketed the group to improve attendance numbers.
- Reviewed the Group's cost base to see if costs can be reduced (i.e., alternate accommodation, revised operating times etc).
- Review the delivery methods of the group, to see if things could be done more efficiently and effectively.
- Considered the scope to increase the fee to balance out the costs being incurred.

Once this has been done the Committee will receive a request from the Treasurer to approve the application.

Where a request arises from a change in internal Policy or from changes in external legislation or guidance, then the Committee will receive a report from the Treasurer setting out the background and implications before improving the application.

Start-up Grants

When setting up an activity group costs might need to be incurred, which can be seen as a barrier to Members bringing ideas for new groups forward. Other charitable organisations, such as the Scouting movement issue grants to new activities to fund their start-up costs. It is proposed that we introduce a similar approach, with new groups being allocated a grant of up to £100 to cover initial start-up costs. This could include, the initial meeting room hire, purchases of small equipment, or cover income shortfalls, due to low attendance numbers until the group has got established, etc.

The Treasurer will allocate the grant to the group once it is up and running. If the costs are below £100 the Treasurer and Group Leader will agree the amount to be allocated. If the costs exceed £100, then the Group Leader will have to take the excess into account when setting their Group's fee level.

It would be fair given the introduction of the New Group classification and the remaining content of this report if this grant policy was backdated to the 1st Sept 2021.

Committee action: to approve the introduction of a grant policy to support new activity groups to fund their start-up costs to a maximum of £100.

Current Applications for approval

1. The Painting and Drawing group have over the period 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2023 accumulated a financial deficit of £812.78. A review has been undertaken in accordance with the above procedure, which has resulted in the Group increasing its Fees to match its current costs. With the size of the Group, it is unlikely that it will be able to generate sufficient surpluses in the future to recover this deficit. To provide the Group with a sound platform to move forward it is recommended that the deficit of £812.78 be funded from the reserve.

Committee action: to approve the application of the reserve.

2. The introduction of the new Group Classifications gives both more autonomy and places more accountability on Group Leaders over determining the future level of fees to be charged for their activity. It would be a positive gesture to not encumber them with deficits incurred over the last two years, whilst taking on this new task.

This primarily impacts on the Room Based groups and would relieve them of a significant impact on their deliberations next May/June over what the collective attendance fee will need

to be for 2024/25. If the deficits were to remain, then they would have to be recovered as part of the Fees over a reasonable period, say 1 to 3 years.

The proposal is to therefore 'zero' the collective surpluses and deficiencies balances on the Room Based groups, so they begin the 2023/24 years with a net 'Zero' balance.

A schedule of the impact on individual groups is set out on Annex 1.

It is therefore recommended that £1,690.91 be applied from the reserve to implement this.

Committee action: to approve the application of the reserve.

Annex 1

	Accumulated balance
	over last two years
	£
History	321.50
Quizzing	262.90
Quiz 2	236.26
Ukulele	180.82
Book Group 1	147.30
Film Circle	138.80
Science	116.48
Art Appreciation 2	78.02
Art Appreciation 3	51.33
Folk Music	17.45
Family History	-1.50
Rummikub & Canasta	-19.69
Bamboo Pipes	-74.30
Topical Discussion 1	-90.13
French	-116.15
Singing for Fun	-142.49
Poetry	-196.05
Folk Dancing	-276.62
Bridge for fun 2	-379.50
Bridge for fun 1	-528.50
Short Mat Bowls (Mon)	-668.37
Short Mat Bowls (Wed)	-748.47
	-1,690.91

Agenda Item 10: Report on Membership Renewal

Action for the Committee: To note the findings and actions, plus consider the issues identified for Committee deliberation.

2023/24 Membership Renewal Report

Purpose of this paper is to report the outcome of this year's renewal process and any lessons learned for consideration next year.

After introducing the change regarding the Third Age Magazine (TAM), the number of Members opting to receive TAM as per the 14th Oct return to TAT was 194 (137 existing members, 57 new members) this compares to 366 in July. A reduction of 47% (63% if you exclude new members).

Membership Statistics

Number of Members as at 31/8/23	602	
Number of Members as at 2/12/23	600	
Number that renewed membership from previous year	535	
Number of new members since 1/9/23	65	600
Number that did not renew, (now recorded on Beacon as, Deceased, Lapsed & Retired)	67	
<i>Deceased</i>	9	
<i>Lapsed</i>	18	
<i>Retired</i>	40	
<u>Renewal Forms distributed by</u>		
Post	551	
Electronically (via email)	51	
<u>Renewal payments made by Renewed & New members</u>		
Bacs	210	35.0%
Cheque	390	65.0%

What did not go well?

- Hand over to new Members Coordinator due to lack of documented procedures.
- Electronic renewal email was too complex with the Membership Form incorporated into the email, instead of being an attachment. This caused members problems in returning the form.
- It was also unclear on the electronic renewal whether both Joint members needed to respond or just one for both.
- Timing of the September Membership clinic, given so few Members used it.
- Trying to save costs by distribution Membership Cards at Group meetings, without full prior engagement of Group Leaders.
- Offering free membership at the celebration event, without any follow up new member meeting to capture their interest. XX members who joined after the celebration event did not renew.

What did go well?

- Very few negative comments from Members on renewal process, compared to previous year.
- The enveloping and posting of renewals were simpler and less resource intensive than the previous year, because of not needing to distribute AGM paperwork at the same time.
- All renewals were sent out prior to 1st Sept.
- Payment process went smoother than previous year. There were thirteen overpayments mostly from New Members who paid for TAM.
- Reconciliation process went smoother than previous year, due to the Members Coordinator and Treasurer agreeing a procedure in advance.

Lessons for next year

1. Processes to be documented.
2. Clinic to help Members with renewal problems was too early in the process. Should be rescheduled for later in the year.
3. Consider bringing forward timing of Celebration Event and not offering free membership.
Already discussed and agreed by Committee.
4. If an electronic renewal option is considered, then the following issues will need to be considered.
 - a. Sending forms as attachments and not part of an email,
 - b. Fully automated process with Members having access to update their own records,
 - c. Timing of when Members records are validated. Early validation (June time) would simplify and speed up the process. Might also provide an early indication if Member who are considering not renewing.
 - d. If Member take responsibility for updating their own records, then Membership cards could be issued immediately upon receipt of payments.
 - e. Issuing electronic membership cards.
5. Agree process with Group Leaders for them distribute Membership Cards at their meetings.
6. Membership form needs to have a 'title' box added to avoid problems as to what gender the Member is. Example: If the name were Chris Smith, would we assume that was a male or female?
7. Membership Form and Gift Aid form need to be combined as new members are not noticing the Gift Aid.

Actions already taken by the Members Coordinator.

1. Documentation of processing underway.

Actions Outstanding.

2. Clinic to be programmed into meeting or events timetable to take place at the end of October, once a renewal chasing process has been undertaken.
4. Members Coordinator, to initiate a working group to consider automation of the renewal procedure.

5. Members Coordinators to discuss Membership card distribution with Group Leaders at their summer meeting.
6. Members Coordinator to amend Membership form.
7. Treasurer to combined and re-issue joint Membership and Gift Aid form for use with the website.

Issues for the Committee to be considered before next year.

- Now we have signed Membership Forms acknowledging that the member understands the need to comply with the principles of the u3a movement and Member Code of Conduct, do we need for potential disciplinary reasons to retain the forms for a longer period than the scheduled 2 years, or are we anticipating they need to reconfirm each year?.
- Some of our older long-standing members are registered disabled and cannot make the meetings or read the newsletters and emails that we send out, do we want to consider introducing a 'discount' for those members? *Verbal examples will be given at the meeting.*
- The older members are the ones that need more support to help them engage and enjoy their membership. It is proposed that a new carer/support role be introduced to provide a more ambassadorial support to these members.

Agenda Item 12: Trustee Tasks List

Action for Committee: Agree Proposals in Green

Reasons for Developing a Trustee Task List

1. So no individual tasks are missed either because nobody realises they need to be done or everybody believes somebody else is doing it. We have had a few instances of this over the last year.
2. Where Trustee posts have not been filled, to divide up their responsibilities amongst existing Trustees/Support Roles in a transparent and fair way.
3. For resilience purposes – so if a Trustee or Support Role holder suddenly becomes unavailable then at least know what they did, so making covering for them easier. We are also in the process of preparing Guides on Events and Membership Renewal to assist newcomers to these roles (and to make them seem less intimidating).

Outstanding on Main Trustee Task List

- Confirmation from Members Coordinator (on her tasks and what is delegated to the Membership Support), the Beacon Administrator & Web Administrator (I only contacted them last week)
- The Vice-Chair's tasks are provisional only – these will be agreed in discussion with the Chair once the Committee Aims for 2024 are known
- Tasks connected with Events will need to be checked against the Events Guidance (title now amended from Checklist) once that is completed

Agreeing how we cover the Vacant Trustee Roles Tasks

I suggest we adopt the following approach for now:

Systems Coordinator Role

I am happy to cover this, since I have been liaising with both the Beacon Administrator and the Webmaster over the last few months and this is not a heavy load (assuming we can recruit somebody to undertake the website migration)

Events Coordinator

The only event we have committed to at the moment is the 20th February Coffee Morning. I suggest that we ask for a volunteer to be responsible for this now. This should not entail much – we already have the date and booking confirmed and the Assistant Groups Coordinator is liaising with the RUGS.

We can discuss responsibility for the Celebration Event once we have agreed the form and nature of this (as part of 2024 Committee Aims).

Next steps

- 1) Trustees to let me have any amendments/corrections. Note that on what requires Committee Approval I have tried to be consistent with the principles laid out in the Draft Committee Procedures, but feel free to challenge my judgements
- 2) Secretary to obtain confirmation from Members Coordinator, the Beacon Administrator & Web Administrator and share amended version before the January meeting

This document will be amended frequently as part of the Secretary's monthly processes following each meeting, with the latest version shared monthly (along with the Trustees Calendar) with changes since the previous version highlighted and mentioned in the accompanying e-mail.

Margaret Lloyd, Secretary, 10th December

Agenda Item 13: Aims for 2024 and Draft Topics by Committee Meeting for 2024

Action for Committee: Agree Actions in Green.

We need to take some time to formulate and articulate our aims and targets for the coming 12 months and this paper lays out a proposed pathway

Set against the pillars of Continuity and Change Crawley u3a's principal aims are the continuing maintenance of its resilience and effectiveness, and a firm accent on actions which promote its growth and development. If we were to articulate a vision, we might see ourselves as a valuable community asset which will continue to offer high quality educational and leisure facilities, and companionship, for those no longer in employment.

From these principles, suitable strategies should flow, with Activity leaders proposing goals and strategies appropriate to their responsibility and roles. As happened last year the Chair and/or Vice Chair will discuss these with individual committee members at the beginning of the year before agreeing plans of action.

While no prescriptive proposals are laid out now, I see no surprises in some of the suggestions below, since they have been the subject of discussion for some time now, and proposals are in hand. We will of course need to ensure that our aims align with the SMART criteria

Principal Aims to Prioritise:

1. Membership Numbers

Having already achieved our target membership aim for March 2024, I would suggest we set a new target of 660 members recruited by March 2025 (the u3a census cut off). There needs to be an emphasis on retention of members and an attempt made to ascertain why members leave after only a short time.

2. Activity Groups

(a) Resilience

Improving the resilience of the activity Groups by encouraging Group Leaders (GLs) to appoint deputies, to plan for their succession and to encourage other Group members to share in the administrative and organisational tasks. Increasing the level of support for Groups and their Leaders, particularly in the more academic areas. The Committee plans to produce a comprehensive Groups Handbook with a checklist for GLs starting up a new Group.

(b) Number

Increasing the number of new activity groups in all categories to at least eight in 2024. To match this, we will need to take action to increase both our physical (venues), and human resource capacity.

3. Filling Trustee Vacancies and Recruiting Volunteers for Working Groups

To continue efforts to recruit committee members and other volunteers thereby enabling us to make more use of Working and Task Groups, for longer term and shorter-term purposes respectively, to support Trustees on events and projects. This way we would expand the number of volunteers who then may decide after a time that they wish to become a Trustee or take a more active support role.

Other Possible Aims – and please suggest others

4. Members' Events

To consult with members on their preferences in terms of all member events (such as coffee mornings and the Christmas party) and improve the quality of these events.

5. Reduce Venue Hire Costs

To review our venue hire costs with the aim of reducing these through negotiation or relocation.

6. Streamlining Committee Meetings

To consider the streamlining of committee meetings, with a view to reducing the numbers of formal business meetings and freeing up time for more operational matters

Actions for Committee

1. To agree the principal aims

2. On other aims, Trustees are asked to comment on these suggestions and to consider what are their priorities in their own areas of activity.

[Input by Secretary] If the Chair and/or Vice-chair are to discuss these with each Trustee this will obviously take some time.

Should Trustees send their suggestions (copied into other Trustees to avoid overlaps etc) to the Chair & Vice-Chair by a fixed date, and the Chair/Vice-chair consider them together and meet further with individual Trustees if they think it necessary?

3. Comment on the Draft Topics by meeting (a tab within the Trustees Calendar)

Jim McGough 7th December