

## Crawley u3a

### Minutes of weekly meetings 2021

#### Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January

- Committee nominations had been received at last week's monthly meeting
- Jean offered to continue with speaker organisation until July but will not serve on the Committee. If no nominations are received we will be unable to run the monthly meetings.
- We could consider Mirthy talks. Alan Charlton was also willing to give another talk. While meetings are virtual we could have speakers from anywhere in country (or the world!!)
- There had already been 35 applications for a place at the AGM
- The January newsletter would be sent out on paper with the February edition.
- Alan would send out reports from several group leaders by email. Jim would provide a few lines about Poetry (They are currently without a Group Leader)

#### Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January

- Jan had registered for a TAT seminar next week about National u3a Open Day in June
- Phil and Alan had continued their work on group fees and were meeting with Stewart by Zoom on Monday. They are moving closer to a cashless system which may involve spreading the collection of subs and payment by Standing Order
- Stuart has updated the logo on the website
- It was agreed to run through the AGM Agenda in advance to ensure the smooth running of the meeting in case of any technical problems
- If numbers for the AGM are low Phil will contact his O&A group to request they log on to ensure a quorum
- Jan will issue a reminder to members before the AGM to boost numbers. There are currently 35 screens and approx. 45 members.

#### Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January

- Alan had sent out the TAT email about insurance cover. Do we need to advise them about the Allotment Group's shed. UPDATE: Value likely to be less than policy's excess so NFA
- A newsletter was being sent on Sunday. Please send any contributions as soon as possible. It was suggested Ann may like to give a short description of her talk on Ecuador.
- There are currently 49 (UPDATE Now 51) members due to attend the AGM, including one couple joining by phone. A reminder email would be sent. We need 61 for a quorum
- Jan had attended a briefing on u3a National day on 2<sup>nd</sup> June. It was suggested we plan for both a physical and a virtual event. Jan would send out her notes on the briefing.
- Next week's meeting would start at 4.15pm to plan our approach to the AGM

#### Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February

- The meeting mainly focused on the AGM and who would lead each item.
- The meeting would be recorded and made available to members
- The voting regime was agreed
- There was a brief discussion about a proposal from Horley u3a to share groups and speakers

### Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February

- Jan will email members about 2 groups being offered by Horley u3a. She would also mention the history of Crawley exhibition being run by WSCC record office
- Peter had heard back from 18 Group Leaders about the proposal to share groups with Horley. One group did not want any more members. Ukulele was keen to have more. There was some concern about integrating new members via Zoom. It was thought to be good for quizzes, talks etc.
- We need to start thinking about planning how we will return to physical groups. We may lose a lot of members but others are very keen to return. No action can be taken till we know more of the roadmap out of lockdown.
- Alan and Phil had submitted returns to Charity Commission, HMRC and Gift Aid claim.
- Alan Phil and Stewart would meet next week to finalise their discussion about subs and fees
- We need to plan a full Committee meeting

### Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March

- U3a day planning was progressing. Costs should be less than £500 but the majority of the expenses will be for general publicity eg Leaflets, banners, stickers etc
- There had been 4 new members this week. No membership cards were currently required. They have been referred to web site for Groups information
- If non u3a members apply to join the Facebook group, Peter refers them to the membership form on the web site.
- Peter and Jan had added some events to the calendar and Jan asked Stuart to link it to the web site.
- Ann had set up new groups to keep track of members not in other groups. The first for new members, and Relaxed Seniors for other members
- The annual surplus so far is £342. The Gift Aid money had been received. We still need to pay capitation to TAT. It is estimated we will have reduced our surplus by £4.5 by the end of the financial year.
- Ann is keen to check how many members want to receive Third Age Matters. If we offer the option not to receive it, do we reduce the membership fee?
- Alan is keen to pursue affiliation with local u3as. He will check with TAT if it's possible
- Ann mentioned publicity ideas from her recent webinar including discount cards and using Doctors surgeries. This had been actioned several years ago and is an option for when we open up again.
- Ann had sent out the newsletter compilation to those without email. Some members don't want paper copies.
- The Comedy group had been receiving copies of a publication called Keep Smiling.
- Ann will name her environment group "Earth Matters"

### Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March

- Jim had done some research on the way forward when we re-open. He would keep it under review
- There was a suggestion that we offer 3 months free membership to people who had been made redundant. We would also need to think about our existing members. It could be part

of a future recruitment strategy. We could also approach companies who run retirement seminars (these are often contracted out)

- The Groups Directory and Handbook were out of date. These could be updated at any time and uploaded to the website and any new members directed towards them. Once we restart we can easily get paper copies printed.
- Work is continuing on the attendance registers. The macro being used will not support “history” as a group as this is a reserved word. The name will need to be changed on Beacon to History Group. Peter will advise Maureen. The Book Circles have also asked for their name to be changed to Book group.
- As we gradually exit lockdown we could encourage group leaders to begin planning ahead eg O&A7 have a planning meeting later this month and Walkers Extra are planning bubble walks of 6.

#### **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April**

- The coffee morning was successful with very positive feedback. Another one will be arranged.
- Two more new members had been enrolled. It may prove difficult for them to meet people. Perhaps a New Members Coffee Morning by Zoom would be useful.
- It is still unsure how popular the return to physical groups will be. Some members may be reticent while others are raring to go. Zoom coffee mornings may still be popular in the winter months.
- We may need to issue a formal Covid statement every year
- Phil had messaged GLs about the proposed changes to payment of fees and had received some positive responses.
- It was agreed that formal risk assessments were not required for informal group meetings. One of the Topical Discussion groups had met in the park
- George had received an email from Sue Howard about recruitment and retention. It would be sent to the Committee
- Jan would be using contacts from the Crawley Older Persons Directory to issue specific invitations to u3a day.

#### **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> April**

- There was a discussion about the web site updates paper. There had been a formatting issue with the Directory. This would hopefully be solved when the latest version is uploaded.
- Before taking any photos there should be a check that members are happy for their image to be used. There was a suggestion that photo consent could be included on the membership form.
- St Pauls are keen to know our plans for restarting groups. From 17<sup>th</sup> May indoor meetings are limited to 6 people so it would not be financially viable to start then. We do not yet know what will happen on 21<sup>st</sup> June and social distancing is likely to still be in place. Peter would tell Nicola that we hope to restart from September, but some rooms may be too small for adequate social distancing with our group numbers. It may be possible to have hybrid Zoom/actual meetings.
- It was suggested that all Committee members have a look for alternative locations eg Churches and other places of worship.
- At a member support meeting there had been some disquiet expressed that having encouraged the appointment of convenors we were now suggesting they wouldn't be needed to collect money. They would still be needed for registers etc.

- It was agreed to hold a GL meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May at 2.30pm. Peter would advise GLs of the date and invite agenda items by 5<sup>th</sup> May. He would then send the agenda and Zoom link. It was suggested we work more with GLs and listen to their ideas.
- 3 groups are likely to close as the leaders are stepping down, Poetry, prose and plays, Circle Dancing and O&A5. There had been some discussion about O&A5 joining in with other O&A trips.
- Beryl had asked whether a planned trip to South Pacific at Chichester should be arranged privately or through the u3a. Phil would ring her.
- There was a discussion about the cover photo on the Facebook page.

#### **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April**

- The Friary had been in touch with Peter about hall hire. They were not keen to only book from September. We would not be able to meet before 2<sup>nd</sup> week of July and have never met in August so it would only be one month. The speaker for July does not do Zoom and Ann had stepped in. There had been suggestions of having a tea party when we resume meetings and it could be a solution to hold this on 9<sup>th</sup> July. If the hall was not able to be used due to covid restrictions we would not have to pay and if we couldn't use it we could write off the cost (between £62-£67). The Friary were also keen for us to clear a cupboard we use; it was not sure what was stored but it could be audio equipment. Peter would contact them about hall hire and the cupboard. George could collect any equipment.
- We had a quote for a banner and car stickers of around £100. These could be used for future events
- The Painting group had asked about credits for approx. 7 sessions prepaid before the first lockdown. We had not been charged rent for these sessions. It was agreed to allow credits on a case by case basis.
- Concern was expressed that there had been a discussion with GLs particularly about convenors before matters had been agreed by the Committee. Some groups do have assistants to help the leader, eg taking the register or dealing with Beacon.
- One GL was not keen on the new finance proposals as she doesn't like change.
- Theatre trip: Beryl would arrange the South Pacific trip privately. Phil would offer assistance if any refunds were needed.
- It was agreed that we need not apply for a u3a day grant as we had healthy funds.
- A new member had joined having seen one of our new adverts. She seemed keen to help!
- Phil had had an enquiry from someone who had googled walking groups. She was going for a trial walk before considering joining the u3a.
- Concern had been expressed that we are promoting u3a day but may not have sufficient groups to offer potential new members. This is a long standing problem and one to which there is no obvious solution. We do not yet know how many members may not resume activities when they start.
- U3a day. Several GLs had responded to the request for input on u3a day. These are ukulele, folk singing, painting, film circle, book group, French, painting and drawing, quiz, tennis.
- George had had a request from Lewes u3a about the history of our u3a. Jan had some info and would pass it on to George
- The national u3a website has a template for a new members handbook which Ann and Stewart may find useful if they plan to redesign our booklet.
- Beacon 2 is not going ahead

- Only one suggestion had so far been received about the GL meeting and that concerned the practicalities eg distancing, refreshments etc.

#### **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

- There was a brief discussion about other u3a's annual charges.
- The new terms for hiring the Friary were discussed. There were limits of 25 in large hall and 15 in small hall, the kitchen was out of use and we would be required to clean toilets. It is possible other premises' hirers may also restrict use of the kitchen. As we will not know the exact nature of any Covid restrictions that may be in force in July, and subject to Phil's agreement, Peter would book the hall and we would cancel if necessary.
- The tea party in July was planned for the relaxed seniors group only
- More members had been enrolled
- The May meeting was with a London Blue Badge guide with a talk on 2000 years history in 7 buildings.
- Attendance registers would be necessary for all meetings. Members have always been required to sign in to monthly meetings
- The minutes for the weekly catch up meetings for 2021 have not yet been uploaded to the web site
- It is believed there had been a misunderstanding about the report last week of concern about u3a day and a lack of new members as this was not the case.

#### **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April**

- The Friary had responded to our queries from last week. Our July booking should be OK unless Covid restrictions are extended. If this happens we can cancel. The normal capacity for the 2 halls together is 200.
- There are some payments that require authorisation
- A refund of £8.06 had been received from TAT. We do not currently keep a note of the membership numbers uploaded to TAT.
- There was a discussion about whether we should offer the option of not receiving Third Age Matters and if this could be recognised by Beacon. There would be a survey sent with the renewal forms to establish if members wanted paper or email communications.
- We had not yet received confirmation from TAT of the submission of the Annual Return. Phil would contact them
- The members handbook was being revised. Any comments or change of photos should be sent to membership
- Peter had reminded GLs to update Beacon with changes to groups. This would be mentioned at the GL meeting
- There would also be a reminder about Member Support at the GL meeting
- The Beacon Calendar had not yet been uploaded to the website. Ann would contact Anne and Stewart with an offer of help through Haywards Heath u3a.
- There was a discussion about contacting all members about environmental issues, surveys, questionnaires etc. It was suggested that there could be a regular feature in the newsletter.
- There would be a full Committee meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May at 4.15.