

DART VALLEY U3A

Draft Minutes of the 21st Annual General Meeting of Dart Valley U3A held at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 8th October 2020 by Zoom

1. Present

The following members attended online via Zoom: Gail Richmond (Chairman), Howard O'Keeffe, Lizzie Helyer, Jennifer Wright, Suzie Dodsworth, Iain McCall, Bill Riddell, Wendy Cullen, Peter Avis, Christine Milsom, Richard Rawlins, Gwendolyn Alker, John Alker, Rose Williams, Steve Williams, Jack Richmond, Pat White, Wiz Tehel, Julie Hadley, Jan Bolton, Claire Humpage, Jan Barwick, Rita Brunt, Dianne Emberson, Sally Walley, Patricia Putt, Ian Barclay, Bob Hattersley, Val Church, Avril Downing, Rosamund Tanner-Tremaine

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Colin Payne and Jenny Farr.

2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 13th June 2019

The minutes of the previous AGM, held on Thursday 13th June 2019, were approved by those present. Proposed by Julie Hadley and seconded by Jack Richmond.

3. Chairman's Report

The following report for the year by Gail Richmond as Chairman of Dart Valley U3A was circulated to all members and available on the website.

Well, here I am, at the end of my stint as Chairman of Dart Valley U3A; if, for nothing else, I shall go down in the annals of being the first chairman to stand for 4 years, for which the we had to change the Constitution. This only happened because there was no one prepared to take it on, as happens in so many organisations. By the time you read this, hopefully there will be a more substantial committee from members who came along to a coffee morning in Coronation Park.

So what has been achieved over the last 4 years? We have had even more members than ever, the vast majority coming along through word of mouth, although advertising, of course, helps. Currently we have 509 members, although just over 100 of those are not paid up yet. Beryl de Galleani was 100 years old last month and the Committee sent her card to celebrate this milestone! As a direct result of having had more members, we now have a greater selection of interest groups: Climate Change, Local History, second Book Group, Art, Pitch and Putt, a Sunday Lunch Group, Architecture and a third Pub Lunch Group. Let it never be said that we don't cover all tastes!

Another achievement could be that the AGM is now shorter than it used to be, with the accounts and the Chairman's speech going online for people to see beforehand; there are hard copies for those who need them, but it does now mean that we can have an outside speaker for almost the usual length of time for a talk.

All this is only possible with the backing and support of the Committee. My grateful thanks go to all of the members of the Committee, but especially to Lizzie, Treasurer, Suzie, Membership Secretary, Howard, Vice Chairman and Peter who combines newsletter, 3rd Age Trust and Group Co-ordinator. You can see why we need a bigger committee! Even my husband was roped in to take

over Speakers' Secretary. Without Peter, who followed Lindsay Charlesworth in being Group Co-ordinator and Secretary, I think Dart Valley U3A would grind to a halt, so my especial thanks go to him. In addition, there is Rosemary who ably copes with taking your money and signing you in on our main meetings and Rose Williams who kindly audits our accounts.

During this last year Dart valley U3A celebrated its 20th birthday. For the occasion we had Judi Spiers as our speaker, who gave us an entertaining talk with plenty of anecdotes about her life in the media. This was followed by a buffet lunch and prosecco, with a toast for another lively 20 years of Dart Valley U3A. A few of the original members came along with their memories of how it all started. And all this was enjoyed to the accompaniment of the piano played by our very own Norman Cork.

Until the pandemic, we had good numbers attending the main meetings, often nearing 100 members; perhaps this is a combination of good speakers on a huge mixture of topics and a general friendly buzz when people are enjoying coffee. There is the added bonus of a Meeter/Greeter who gives a special welcome to any newcomers on a Thursday main meeting, ensuring that they meet regular members and find out more about the Organisation.

This "speech" has had to be adapted as the AGM was moved on to October, due to Covid-19. The last few months have proved interesting and frustrating, as the Committee has tried to keep Dart Valley U3A functioning. The monthly newsletter has proved that many groups have "risen above" the virus and many people are keeping in touch with each other. As lockdown gradually eases, we are looking forward to returning to our monthly meetings in 2021; until then, talks will be given on Zoom in the autumn.

So I hope I leave the Chairmanship of Dart Valley U3A in good hands and wish my successor lots of luck. It has been fun and a privilege to be "in the driving seat" for 4 and a bit years. The greatest thing is to enjoy being part of it. Just remember the new strap line: Learn, laugh and live!

4. Annual Report and Accounts

The Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2020, verified by Rose Williams, were received. Proposed by Val Church, seconded by Dianne Emberson, and agreed by those present.

5. To appoint an Independent Examiner for 2020/21

Rose Williams kindly agreed to act again for the next financial year.

6. To elect Members to the Committee

The following 8 existing committee members agreed to stand for re-election: Peter Avis, Wendy Cullen, Suzie Dodsworth, Lizzie Helyer, Howard O'Keeffe, Gwendolyn Alker, Christine Milsom, Jennifer Wright. Two members who were co-opted during the year: Bill Riddell and Iain McCall have also agreed to become Committee members and two further members – Bob Hattersley and Vince Tehel have also agreed to stand. All were approved by the meeting, proposed Richard Rawlins, seconded Sally Walley.

7. Thanks to Gail Richmond

Howard O'Keeffe thanked Gail for her energy and enthusiasm in carrying out the Chairman's role for the last 4½ years. He said the committee would find a more substantial way of saying thank you at a later date, but we should recognise the significant growth that Dart Valley U3A made under her stewardship. The

8. Annual Subscription

There was no proposal to change the current subscription of £10 per person.

9. Any other business.

Bill Riddell reported the sad news that Peter Blundred had died. Peter was an active and enthusiastic member of the U3A, in particular running the popular Wine Group for many years. The meeting agreed for Bill to give our condolences to Peter's wife Annette.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.20 a.m. and was followed by a humorous and education talk on the 'History of Cartoons' by Ian Barclay.