Downham Market & District u3a

Minutes of Annual General Meeting in Downham Market Town Hall

on 17th April, 2023 at 2pm

1. **Welcome by Chairman:** JC welcomed the assembled membership to the AGM.
2. **Apologies** were received from Marion Stamp, Brenda Stevens, Angela Sadler,

Sue Burnham, Pam Newman,

1. **Minutes of the previous AGM** were agreed and signed by the Chair.

Proposer - Mary Carter. 2nd. Caroline Hansford.

1. **Matters arising:** None were raised.
2. **Chairman’s report:** Our u3a will be 14 years old later this year and I’m proud to have been a member throughout and to have met so many wonderful people. I must start my report by paying tribute to all the current and previous Committee Members and Group Leaders who give or gave their time to running our u3a. We started the year welcoming a new Treasurer, Christine Dawson, a recent arrival in Downham but with many years’ experience in the role who rapidly got to grips with the complexity of our accounts and online bank. We managed to keep going with a very small committee but it was a great relief when we were able to co-opt willing volunteers Linda Elder, Sue Mussell and Jill Cornforth onto the Committee during the year.

We have enjoyed an excellent range of interesting talks at our monthly meetings thanks to the hard work of our Speakers Secretary Fay Greaves and she must also take much of the credit for organising our successful and well attended Christmas Special last December. From the point of view of organising monthly meetings it has been good to be back in the Town Hall with caretaking support for laying out seating, tables, microphones etc.

I want to make a particular point of thanking Ken Baker for his editorship of our monthly Bulletin which he has done for the last 5 years. A considerable commitment given that he doesn’t know much in advance what material he is going to receive and then turn it into such an attractive production. We may find it difficult to replicate his professional skill but still hope to continue providing a regular newsletter for members.

We use a u3a website for our online presence and unfortunately the Site Builder host company stopped providing services to the Third Age Trust last autumn. The Trust has secured a new host and our website is operational again but a lot of material was lost as a result. Our Business Secretary, Fiona Bembridge, has managed to review what’s missing, update and reinstate quite a lot for which we are very grateful. A small subcommittee will endeavour to complete this task in the next few months.

The Groups are the core of our u3a and I’m pleased to report that most continue to be well supported. New Groups have been started during the year for Photography, Card Games and I.T. Support and are doing well. At the time of writing this, the Play Readers and Ukelele Players have restarted so I hope we can look forward to a concert from them.

In a national context Downham u3a is quite a new branch; the u3a movement started 41 years ago and we are part of a substantial set up with 1035 branches with over 400,000 members. There is liaison between u3as and the Eastern Region Organiser has restarted an East Anglia Group at which Downham will be represented. During the year some of us may have accessed the talks and discussion groups freely available to all u3a members around the country via Zoom. I can thoroughly recommend these as they often involve specialists in their subjects which an individual u3a couldn’t provide. In fact the u3a offers a lot both locally and nationally and I do hope you will explore its full potential. Remember too that you can participate in groups, socialising and even starting a new Group.

1. There were no questions on the Chairman’s Report.
2. The adoption of the Chairman’s Report was proposed by Tim Stamp, seconded by Chris Carter and passed by a show of hands.
3. **Treasurer’s Report** The Downham Market and District u3a financial accounts for the year February 2022 to January 2023 have been duly audited and have been passed and certified as correct.

This past year has been the first full year of Meetings, Groups etc. since the Covid pandemic, which is why the accounts are looking better than previous years. Also at the beginning of the year we received over £1000 from our former bankers HSBC, made up of a refund of bank charges and compensation.

We have been lucky that our financial accounts are so healthy and no increase in subscriptions is necessary. The annual membership subscriptions are our only significant income. From this we hire the Town Hall, pay speakers for our monthly meetings, the Third Age magazine, our Branch Members’ capitation fee to the Third Age Trust, the Beacon system and administration costs such as printing and distributing AGM papers, Membership renewal forms etc.

1. The appointment of the examiner of our accounts was approved by a show of hands.
2. There were no questions on the Treasurer’s Report.
3. **Adoption of Treasurer’s Report** Proposed by Chris Carter, seconded by Tim Stamp and passed by a show of hands.

1. **Announcement of nominations for Committee Members.**

There were no nominations.

1. **A.O.B.**

JC asked if people would consider becoming committee members. Anyone interested would be welcome to attend a committee meeting to see what goes on. Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 10.00.

Thank you to the Singing for Pleasure group for doing refreshments.

Jenny Groom has organised a 50 mile British Legion bike ride where all war graves would have poppies.

There will be a Repair Cafe at Downham Library from 10-2.00 on May 13th where various crafts would be featured.

LL (Vice chair) said there would be a coffee morning probably in June and invited all, particularly new members, to come and get to know more about u3a.

FG (Speakers Secretary) will always welcome information from members about possible future speakers.

JC apologised for noise from building work at the Town Hall.

**14. Date of next AGM:**  8th April 2024.

**Meeting ended** 3.05 pm.

Signed………………………………………. John Cowin, Chairman

Date………………………………