MINUTES OF U3A COMMITTEE MEETING 19th July 2023

1. . Present

Mike Best (MB) Chair Ian Marshall (IM) Treasurer

Rosemary Jensen (RJ) Groups Coordinator

Derek Jones (DJ Assets Manager and Outings team
Peter Watson (PW) Committee Information Administrator

Heather Quiney (HQ) Newsletter Editor and Publicity Officer (and Minute Taker this meeting)

Maureen Best (MaB) Welfare Coordinator

Apologies for absence were received from Pat Jones (PJ), Terry Parker (TP), Hilary Jinno (HJ), Anna

Fletcher (AF) and Phil Garrison (PG).

Maureen Best (MaB) was welcomed as the new Welfare Coordinator and committee member.

- 2. Minutes of the previous meeting (21 June) were accepted
- 3. Matters arising from the previous minutes:
 - Item 3:4 MB still hasn't had an official response from the Town Twinning Association about speaking at the start of the October monthly meeting but Gaynor Jones has said unofficially that someone will be there. MB to follow up.

MB

IM

IM

PG

MB

PW

IM

- Item 4 Christmas Concert: This has been confirmed for Wednesday 29th November in place of the usual monthly meeting. The speaker previously booked has been cancelled by Trauti Hard Speaker Organiser.
- Item 10: Gentle Exercise Group equipment. IM will be meeting Mary Davies (tutor) tomorrow (20 July) to verify what equipment we are selling to her for a nominal £10. All the equipment has been depreciated to zero already, due to age.

DJ questioned whether there was a music player included and whether it could be used by another group. IM agreed to look out for anything along those lines and withdraw it from the agreement if he felt it could be useful. It was also agreed that if the equipment continued to be stored at the venue, then Mary should arrange her own agreement with the Town Council which does not involve Du3a.

4. Chair's report (MB)

- MB is unable to attend the monthly meeting next week (26 July). PG has agreed to stand in for MB for the afternoon. MB will supply notes to PG to share with the members.
- PW is due to speak on behalf of Dunmow Rotary at the start of the meeting.
- PW asked what equipment Patrick Forsyth (the speaker) needed? IM agreed to ask Trauti when he spoke to her about paying the speaker.
- 5. AGM Comments (MB)
 - The business was concluded in 12 minutes a record to date.
 - The Speaker (Danielle Barnet) was good and well received.
 - One member said that her friend, also member but who wasn't on email, didn't receive the AGM paperwork in time for the meeting. As the friend wasn't named, nothing further could be done to follow it up.
 - A speaker has already been booked for next year's AGM Tony Harris, who will dress up as Shakespeare. He has previously spoken to Du3a as Henry VIII and Churchill.
- 6. September meeting / Games Afternoon (MB in HJ's absence)
 - Wednesday 27th September in place of usual monthly meeting.
 Offering something different. Potentially attracting new members to existing games Interest
 Groups. Possibly starting new groups if enough interest. Might lead to a General Games Group with different board/tabletop games being played each time.
 - The afternoon needs planning and advertising so decisions needed to be taken at this meeting.
 - Proposed: 20 tables, each with one game and one person to lead that game. (20 games x average of 4 players = 80 members (approx attendance at monthly meetings)).

• HQ agreed to co-ordinate which games to be offered, who would lend them for the afternoon and who would lead each one. Will email committee members this week asking for 6 suggested games that they can lend/lead. HQ will then compile a master list (removing inevitable duplicates), choose 15-20 (in addition to our existing games groups) and re-circulate the list asking for a volunteer to lead each game. Once the list is confirmed, HQ will send the list of games, lenders and leaders to HJ. HQ will then step back.

HJ

HQ

- Our Canasta, Bridge, Mah Jong and Whist groups will be there. Scrabble yet to be confirmed. Chess, Backgammon, Dominoes and Crib were suggested.
- MB confirmed that the Foakes Hall booking had been extended to 5pm and the games could be played from 2pm-4.30pm.
- It was suggested that refreshments could be served all afternoon. MB to talk with Margo Rogers as she might need more helpers that afternoon.

- It was primarily for existing Du3a members (not a recruitment afternoon), though potential new members were welcome, as per any other monthly meeting.
- It was felt that a raffle would be good, possibly with a games theme. MB to talk to Pat Kelly.
- IM offered his apologies he wouldn't be at the September meeting.

MB

IM

 MB

7. Treasurer's report (IM)

• The Foakes Hall hire rate had increased again without any notice, just an increased rate on the invoice. IM has tried to contact the Town Council to raise this but hasn't heard back as yet.

• It was agreed to order the Poppy Wreath (c) with the u3a logo for Remembrance Parade/Armistice in November. IM to sort.

IM

- A payment for £10 was returned from the bank with minimal details. IM contacted TSB and established that it was from David Jones who had sadly passed away.
- There is an unknown payment of £13 received from a Patricia Geraghty. Presumed to be a membership fee but TP hasn't received any accompanying paperwork. IM to ask PG to mention it at the monthly meeting next week. Patricia Geraghty might be there or someone might know her.

IM/ PG

8. Group Update (RJ)

Pickleball

- There are 16 members interested in this new group and Selva Govender has agreed to lead the group with Debbie Miller's assistance.
- Two badminton courts have been booked at Helena Romanes School, though the days and times won't been confirmed until the school timetables have been finalised.
- RJ has completed a Group Equipment Fund request for 16 paddles (£22 each) and 16 balls (£2 each). There was much discussion about whether Du3a should buy and own the paddles, or the players would be invited/expected to buy their own paddle, or whether they could try the sport before committing. References were made to the Gentle Exercise equipment and the mallets from the Croquet group of many years ago.

RJ

- It was agreed that Du3a would buy 16 balls and they would remain the assets of Du3a. Du3a would also buy 16 paddles, 12 of which would be available for members to buy (at cost) once they had decided that the game was for them. There would always be 4 paddles retained by Du3a for new members to borrow until they bought their own.
- It was also discussed how much the members would be asked to pay per week or month vs the hall hire costs (£15/session) and how much profit was being proposed. Until the days and times were confirmed, it wasn't known how many of the 16 interested members would actually join.
- It was agreed that members would pay £10 per month in advance, whether or not they attended every week. This would create a potentially healthy balance (if all 16 members joined) to buy more paddles as and when needed. If the balance rose more than expected, the fees could be reduced.
- WAG1 (Wine Appreciation Group 1) It was reported that the WAG1 met last night for the first time since the start of the year. They will consider writing something for the September newsletter (out end of August).

- 9. Table Tennis Risk Assessment (RJ)
 - The Risk Assessment drawn up by Lucy Myers (leader) was circulated and discussed.
 - It was suggested that, because Table Tennis was a physical activity, there should be a list held by the leader of the group every week with emergency contact numbers for all players in case of injury/ unconsciousness, in the same way that the Outings team collect emergency contact numbers. IM agreed to speak to Lucy Myers.

IM

- It was also suggested that, while not every possible risk could be foreseen, the room should be checked at the start of every session for potential tables, chairs, other equipment which might cause obstructions to the play.
- Also, those who open out and close up the table tennis tables at the start and end of the sessions should be made aware of the risk of trapping fingers, etc. IM agreed to take this also to Lucy.

IM

DJ/

MB

- 10. Membership Secretary's update (TP)
 - In his absence, TP's report was shared.
 - Current members 550 ... 494 renewals and 56 new members this year.
 - Outstanding non-renewals: 57 (which balances the new members) and 30 resignations.
 - Last year we finished with 577 members.
- 11. Outings and trips (DJ read PJ's report in her absence)
 - Thursday 6th July Hemingford Grey Manor
 "This went well and we received several complimentary emails from members."
 The committee thanked the Outings Team for all their hard work pulling everything together.
 - Wednesday 2nd August A Day at the Seaside Southwold £22 Full
 "The outing is a 'coach only'. 63 people have booked to go. A walk has been organised by Mike Best for those who would like to do this."

MB requested that the coach return to collect everyone 30 minutes later (4.30pm instead of 4pm) as the proposed walk took 4-4½ hours. MB and DJ to discuss further and notify all attendees, in case any of them had plans for later that evening.

- Wednesday 13th September The Lion King Lyceum Theatre £60 Full "This outing is fully booked with 32 members going."
- Friday 17th November Ely Cathedral Christmas Gift and Food Fair £27 (approx.)

 "We have 40 tickets reserved for this outing and they will go on sale later in September. The coach quote has been accepted."
- There was a suggestion/request for a trip to The King & I in London next year (2024)
- 12. Waverley Paddle Steamer (DJ and PW)
 - "We are looking at a trip September / October on the paddle steamer from Southend to London. Tickets are now available to buy on the website and we are in the process of looking at how this would work and how much it would cost. Potentially about £75"
 - PW explained: Arrive in Southend mid afternoon. Allow 1 hour to walk/ride the train to the far end of the Pier. Board the paddle steamer at 4pm, travel up the River Thames, into London, under Tower Bridge (which will be illuminated) and disembark at Tower Pier about 8pm. The coach will collect from there and drive us back to Dunmow.
 - Only limited dates available and many clashed with Du3a, Rotary and other Dunmow events.
 - Sun 24 Sept, Thu 28 Sept, Fri 29 Sept, Fri 6 Oct, Sat 7 Oct, Sun 8 Oct
 Proposed Sun 8th October or Friday 29 September. PW to follow up

PW

- 13. Newsletter (HQ)
 - Deadline this evening. Lots of contributions so 24 pages again.
 - There will be a September newsletter, emailed out August Bank Holiday.
- 14. Publicity (HQ)
 - Continuing to update Du3a facebook page with monthly meetings and past outings. Attracting positive comments from members who attended the events.
 - Will be uploading montages from General Craft group and Quilting and Stitching group shortly.

	 No feedback from committee members as not many present were signed up to facebook. Suggested HQ included something in the August NL (if space) 	HQ
15.	Quiz Night (HJ & MB)	
	 MB and HJ have discussed another quiz night in the Autumn. Several members have requested a larger hall so more teams can be accommodated, and allow friends who might not be members to join teams. 	
	• HJ to contact Foakes Hall or one of the schools, eg Helena Romanes School.	HJ
16.	Welfare (MaB)	
	 Although only accepting the position last month, MaB has already been contacted about transport and parking at monthly meetings, especially by disabled drivers who cannot walk from one of the local town car parks. 	
	It was agreed that there wasn't much that we could do about non-Du3a cars using the car park	
	even though the new caretaker closes the car park beforehand and opens it for our use.	MaB
	 MaB agreed to investigate DigiGo (which uses the Essex Travel App). £2/person/trip but free if using a bus pass. 	IVIAD
	 Also UTC bus. Might be able to sort a predetermined route on meeting afternoons to pick up at agreed stops and drop at the hall. Then collect and drop back at the end of the meeting. 	MaB
	 MaB to send HQ a short piece for inclusion in the August NL. Possibly also email all members. Agreed not to ask PG to mention it at the meeting next week. 	
	 MaB had also heard from Sandra Walker, who sends cards to members if she hears they are not well, asking if she could have some more postage stamps. 	
	IM advised that there is a Welfare budget of £100 and that he could reimburse for stamps. MaB offered to buy the stamps on Sandra's behalf (and claim the money back) as necessary.	MaB
17.	Date of next meeting 20 th September 2023 10am at The Hub	
18.	Any other business	
	• HQ and 4 other Du3a members attended the recent Hutton u3a Activity Day at New Hall School. It was a very good day and all enjoyed it. A choice of morning and afternoon workshops, refreshments through the day and a cooked meal at lunchtime plus two talks, including Bobby Seagull (from University Challenge and a maths whiz). It was suggested we might book him for a future monthly meeting. HQ to look out details and share with Trauti.	HQ
	 It was suggested that Welfare and Publicity be added as regular Agenda items for all future committee meetings 	AF

The meeting closed at 12:06pm