

MINUTES OF THE AGM OF EXE VALLEY U3A HELD AT OLD HEATHCOAT SCHOOL COMMUNITY CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH 2023

Mike welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies: Phil and Rachael Hart, Doreen Burton, Sally McDonald, Brian and Noreen Scorer, Alison Robertson, Maggie and Ray Rice, Bunty Coffin, Tricia Harwood, Paul Reap, Lynne and David Lyddon, Janet Phythian, Ro Darlington, Tricia and Tony Clarke, June Turner, David and Heather Meredith, Ben and Margaret Mayo, Helen White, Marion Cottrell, Jackie Ridgeway, Nigel and Yvonne Tupman.

Presentation and Adoption of Minutes:

The minutes of last year's meeting had already been circulated by e mail plus some copies were available on the afternoon. They were adopted.

Proposed: David Harvey, **Seconded:** Tim Dyke and unanimously approved.

There were no matters arising.

Chair's Report: I can hardly believe that it is twelve months since the last AGM when I took up the role as your Chairman. During that time our activities have largely returned to normal with our two hundred or so members participating in a variety of activities as part of twenty eight active interest groups, additionally wider social activities such as a quiz and coach trips have been resumed.

However, before I give more details in my brief resume of the past year, may I ask you to remember those of our members who have sadly passed away over the past twelve months. They are: Sarabella Dawson, Chris Hammett, Jennie Hodgson and Kathleen White.

Sarabella and her husband York moved to Tiverton in 2007. At that time Tiverton u3a was full and not accepting new members. To overcome this problem a steering group was formed to set up a second u3a. At the inaugural meeting Sarabella became one of the founder members of the new Exe Valley u3a participating in setting up no fewer than four interest groups, including activities as diverse as bridge and Scottish Country dancing!

Chris Hammett passed away on 13 th February this year. He was an active member of a number of groups including Boules, Local and World Histories, Gardening, Skittles, Musical Discoveries and Members On Their Own (MOTO). Somehow he also found time to write regular quizzes for the Newsletter. He was responsible for introducing me to the u3a, for which I am very grateful. Chris was the leader of the World History Group to whom he gave interesting talks on a wide range of subjects, ranging from Spanish history to the practice of decorating drinking water wells, all illustrated with his own photographs taken whilst on holiday in Derbyshire. Arguably, Chris's finest hour, although it ran on for months and at times seemed never ending, was how with Tim, he kept us all in touch with his Zoom presentations. These were eagerly looked forward to and a great deal of fun, helping to brighten up some very dark times. Chris actually went "nationwide" delivering his talks to various parts of the country. Chris' funeral will be taking place on Friday 24 th March at the Tiverton cemetery at 12 noon. In accordance with his wishes it will be a simple ceremony with a few words being spoken as he is laid to rest. His wake will be held afterwards at the Tiverton West End Bowling Club where Chris was an active and well respected member.

Members are invited to attend the wake even if they are unable to attend the committal at the cemetery.

Jennie was another founder member of the Exe Valley u3a. A well regarded member of the Discussion Group, she enjoyed writing poetry and is remembered for always making people smile. There is to be a memorial for Jennie at the Uffculme village hall on Saturday 18 th March between 2.00pm – 4.00pm. An open invitation is extended to anyone who knew Jennie and wishes to attend.

Not all of these people were known to all of us but we are grateful to the contribution they made to our organisation over the years and they will all be missed.

To return to my report, social activities resumed with a trip to Dartmouth by booking places on an existing Blakes' Coach trip which included a river cruise and a ride behind a steam locomotive. This was followed by a highly enjoyable Quiz in November at the Old Heathcoat school when there were very favourable comments about the quality of the food provided. Due to the enthusiasm generated at the talk about the SS Great Britain on 18 th May 2022, it was decided to organise a coach trip to Bristol so that we might see the ship for ourselves. The trip took place on 8 th March and, despite some rather inclement weather, an interesting and informative day was enjoyed by all.

Anne Bush our Social Organiser is willing to plan more trips and events, perhaps in partnership with our friends in the Tiverton u3A. This would provide a bigger pool of people to draw on to ensure we can run events in a cost effective way, coach hire being a particularly expensive thing to do. Anne has a number of possible future trips in mind, including visits to Cotehele or Forde Abbey near Chard (not National Trust) and she would be pleased to hear from members if this would be of interest to them.

Attendance at our monthly meetings is, sad to report, down on previous years. The average numbers of members attending these meetings has reduced to just over 50 people, which is not enough to cover the cost of the hall and the speaker. In the January monthly newsletter I advised members of this situation which your Committee were planning to address to stop the continuing loss to our funds. However, I promised that no action would be taken until you the members had been given the opportunity to give us your thoughts about this situation at the AGM. The committee will be considering this matter at our next meeting. Please ring, email etc any of us with your thoughts about the way forward regarding our talks and monthly meetings.

It would be remiss of me to conclude my report without offering a huge vote of thanks on your behalf to the people who make our organisation "tick". In addition to your committee, who have all helped me greatly over the past twelve months, I should like to thank all the Group Leaders, Lynne for producing our monthly newsletter, Marilyn our welfare officer, Wendy our website manager, Nigel for his technical expertise and deputising for Lynne with the newsletter as well as his furniture moving skills ably assisted by Yvonne and Nick. Sheelagh, Gwen, Jill and Sue for greeting people coming to the meetings and for taking money at the door and Tim for his continuing help and expertise with matters technical and much else.

The Chair's report was unanimously accepted.

The adoption of the accounts was **Proposed by:** Sue Woodard, **Seconded by:** Sue Phillips and unanimously approved.

Eric then informed members that the monthly meetings had been running at a loss for many months as attendance had fallen greatly. Members were encouraged to attend the meetings and encourage others to attend too. The new committee will be discussing ways to make the meetings viable either by increasing the monthly amount of admission or by increasing annual membership, or possibly other ways. The accounts were signed by the chair.

A vote of thanks was given to Tricia Clarke for auditing the accounts.

Election of Officers

Nominee	Name	Nominated by	Seconded by
Chair	Mike Turner	Ken Kelly	Carol Powney
Vice Chair	Deborah Lal	Marilyn Dawson	Helen White
Secretary	Chris Redhead	Jenny Justice	Jean Barnett
Treasurer	Eric Oakley	Irene Oakley	Sue Woodard

Each was voted on separately and all were in favour.

Committee Members were voted in en bloc and all were in favour

Joan Kelly	Ken Kelly	Carol Powney
Jill Riddiford	David Harvey	Jean Barnett
Jo Jeffrey	Sylvia Smith	Carolyn Holmes
Anne Bush	Carol McIlwrath	Susan Guscott
Carol Boote	Helen White	Vicki Bristow

Mike thanked everyone for their attendance and co-operation and also announced that someone had come forward to take over from Eric as treasurer. He will be attending our next committee meeting when we hope to co-opt him on to the committee.

The meeting was closed.