

**Minutes of GU3A Committee Meeting
held online via Zoom, due to the continuing Coronavirus lock down
on 26 May 2020**

PRESENT: John Wardill, Brenda Elliott, Brian Smith, Diana Wardill, Peta Margetts, Sandra Davies, Wendy Milnes, Carol Williams, Pam Rayment (Minutes)

Apologies for absence: Hazel Merigold, Norma Richardson, Edna Featherstone.

1. Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 28 April 2020

The Minutes were agreed subject to a correction to item 4(1) and signed separately by the Chair.

2. Matters arising: None.

3. Correspondence: None

4. Treasurer's report:

(1) Financial update. Current account £4075, Deposit account £8193, cash £193. The change to the Current account balance related to membership renewals and payment of the Third Age Matters magazine subscription.

(2) Annual accounts and approval. Having been distributed in advance with notes for consideration, the accounts were approved. Under the current lockdown situation, it was agreed they would be signed by the Treasurer as Trustee. **ACTION BS**

5. Membership Secretary's report:

(1) Membership update. Total number of Members 351, including 21 new Members. Subscriptions received were 335 at £10 and 16 at £7.

(2) Members' "missing" email addresses project. With the aim of staying in touch with as many members as possible by email, DW and PR had contacted those who had not provided email addresses. The members contacted were those who had renewed in 2019 and 2020 and around 60 additional addresses had been collected. In addition, a number of the email addresses held by AG had failed when he emailed the Alternative Newsletter to members after the last meeting. Those that could be identified had been contacted. All of these members had agreed their email addresses may be held on the membership register and used for communication purposes by GU3A.

(3) About 30 Members appear to be potentially vulnerable. During the ring round, some members had been found to be potentially more vulnerable than others for a number of reasons, including poor health, recent bereavement, not currently a member of a group, lack of access to email or the internet, and very limited technical knowledge of their mobile phone facilities. It was

agreed these members would be phoned by a committee member every 3 weeks or so, to stay in touch and provide support. **ACTION DW, PR**

It was recognised some other members who might only join Excursions may also be feeling isolated and the Excursion Leaders were to be asked to consider this. **ACTION SD**

6. Interest groups:

(1) Update on group activities and contact. SD had contacted all but two of the group coordinators and gave examples of the restricted activities they were enjoying at present. It

was agreed full details would be sent to AG for the Newsletter and to PR for inclusion in these Minutes (see appendix 1). The Committee found it encouraging that so many groups were managing to keep active in different ways. **ACTION: SD**

(2) 5th Wednesday Lecture. JW reported that Garry Winn wished to step down from coordinating the group. Garry had raised the question of the group's value, feeling attendance was low and the lectures clashed with a walking group. It was agreed to consider at a future meeting whether to discontinue the group. The speakers could be added to the Members Monthly meeting schedule and publicised in advance with the aim of attracting more members to attend and the 20 minute restriction relaxed. SD suggested a small fee should be paid to speakers.

(3) 'Google Meet' vs 'Zoom'. JW summarised the actions he had taken in conjunction with the national body to arrange for Guisborough U3A to access Google 'Meet', as an alternative to using 'Zoom' for online meetings, which the Science group had suggested. Google had approved GU3A as a qualifying charity and access would be free. To complete the access process, a new website was required. As there were advantages and disadvantages with both options, the remainder of this item was deferred to a trial, after the end of this meeting.

Following this committee meeting, JW, BS, WM, SD and PR participated in a Google 'Meet' online meeting to evaluate the benefits. It was found that pictures of individuals appeared in different places on different screens; older laptops did not respond well to the technology and tablets etc had to be used instead; and there had been some image freezing, while sound continued. Overall, it was agreed that 'Zoom' was easier to use than 'Meet'.

ACTION: JW

7. **Venues and Accommodation:** (activities suspended)

8. **Links with other U3As:** None.

9. Newsletter:

(1) Outstanding from 28/4/20 – whether to produce a monthly newsletter to keep in touch with Members until group activities can resume. The historical situation and remit of the Newsletter were discussed and the potential additional workload of producing a monthly alternative newsletter recognised, as was the wish to maintain contact with Members during these difficult times of self-isolation and lockdown. Having regard to all of this, if AG preferred not to produce Alternative Newsletters, PR volunteered to do so, but only until group activities resumed. She would forward the document to the AG for distribution by email. The Newsletter would revert to its original remit under the Editor as soon as group activities resumed. The Chair would discuss the options with AG and establish his preference. **ACTION JW**

(2) Committee items for next newsletter – deadline 27/5/20 (monthly) or 24/6/20 (two monthly). Details of the Cat's Whiskers Bistro opening and imminent one-off Green Garden Waste bin

collections on 30 and 31 May were to be sent to AG for inclusion the Newsletter. **ACTION SD**

10. Website: It was noted that the moving banner had been changed. There had been 456 hits on the website during May so far, with 145 accessing Activities; Events had risen from 119 to 137 this month and, surprisingly, Photography had increased from 22 to 327 hits in May.

(1) Add a direct contact point to DW/membership. Agreed that a direct link for membership be added under "Contact us". **ACTION CW**

It was noted that 'Links' on the Events page indicated excursions were still active and agreed Group Coordinators would be asked to review the summary of their pages to ensure they were up to date. **ACTION SD**

11. Monthly Members' Get Together: 3 June (suspended). SD was in touch with potential speakers for when monthly meetings could resume. Suggestions for speakers would be welcomed.

12. Excursions: Suspended

13. Social Events and Travel: Art Appreciation (suspended)

14. Health and Safety: Agreed to discuss at a future meeting the practicalities of restarting each group in line with government and Third Age Trust guidance, to preserve social distancing and other H&S issues. **ACTION JW, SD**

15. Safeguarding: Nothing to report.

16. Northumbria Region: JW had attended a Zoom online meeting yesterday. Approximately 10 regional members had attended and there was nothing to report. No decision had been taken by the Third Age Trust about whether 'Site builder' would be discontinued.

17. National Annual U3A Day, 1 October 2020, International Day of Older Persons.

18. Any other business:

(1) Coronavirus. Government restrictions remained in force.

Next Committee meeting: 23 June 2020, 4.30pm on-line

Appendix 1 – Item 6(1)

What are our GU3A Groups doing?

Most groups are in touch either by phone, email or some by Zoom.
Here is a selection of what they are doing.

Ancient Greek/Latin for Fun/Res Classica Groups are keeping in contact through Google Class Room and members are invited to join.

The Spanish Improvers Group are receiving a weekly Spanish chat via email and members respond.

Book Club members are given information on suggested reading and have been informed about Borrow Box from the Library.

The Science Group are now using Zoom and speakers are still able to give their monthly talk. Details are emailed to members before the event. This has proved very successful.

The Guitar Group are keeping in touch and information is sent out on a weekly basis.

The Middle Eastern Dance Group have received information on dance videos they can try and are regularly contacted.

The Photography Group are exchanging photos, such as from walks and gardens.

The Laughter Yoga Group maintain contact via WhatsApp. Texts are sent to members unable to receive this App. Zoom classes, on a weekly basis, are being planned.

The Music Appreciation members receive a list of suggested music on the day that the meeting would normally take place. The group usually have a topic.

Knit and Natter projects are ongoing and quizzes have been circulating.

Some Walking Groups are keeping in touch via email and telephone, sharing photos and chatting.

Sandra Davies.