

**Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on  
Monday 4 March 2024 at 2.00pm  
at the Methodist Church Hall**

**Present:** Peter Halse, Richard Spoerry, Peter Searl, Kay Edge, Peter Williams, Stuart Jones, Martin Long, Val Froot, Val Crawshaw-Gander, Jackie Moran

**Minutes:** Kay Edge

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**24/031 Chairman's Introduction**

Peter Halse welcomed everyone to his last committee meeting as Chairman.

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**24/032 Apologies for Absence**

None.

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**24/033 Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 5 February 2024**

Approved.

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**24/034 Matters Arising**

**23/189 Interest Groups Survey: update**

Jackie Moran reported that there had been a good response to the Survey with 105 replies, 84 from members and 21 from group leaders, which was felt to be an excellent result, especially as there had been some very interesting and thought-provoking comments, which made the exercise worthwhile doing.

**24/004 AGM Arrangements/Communications Secretary role**

Kay Edge reported that the Beehive would serve tea and coffee at £1 per head, and she has ordered 70 cups to be served (the quorum number is 59, which hopefully we will achieve). She will bring biscuits.

Stuart Jones will be displaying the agenda and accounts on the screen for this meeting.

Peter Searl said that even with the new committee member, Jo Chown, we would be down to eight serving committee members and the constitution stipulates nine, so we are still in need of another person. Peter Halse will ask for volunteers in his address to the AGM. (Val Froot is no longer able to serve on the committee as she has done her six-year stint, but will continue as Webmaster and therefore be invited to attend meetings.)

As regards the necessity for a Communications Secretary, Peter S said that although Jo Chown had initially been interested in the role and came to his house for a demonstration of what was required, she felt it was too complicated to take on. Peter currently does the work using a u3a laptop and wondered if this was really necessary and might be offputting to a likely candidate; he made the point that it is only a case of sending out emails which could surely be done from any machine. He felt the difficulty of finding someone might point to

Beacon becoming an attractive proposition.

### 24/021 Beehive Open Day, Saturday 6 April, 10am to 2pm

Kay Edge asked about the location of our blue display boards – Val C-G said they were now in her garage and she would bring them along to the Beehive by 10am on Open Day. Val F has the A3 laminated sheets about groups, some of which need updating, and there are new groups as well. She is off on holiday shortly but Kay will liaise with her about these on her return.

Peter S, Jackie, Martin, Richard Spoerry, Kay, Val F and Val C-G indicated they were all free to do a stint on our stand and Kay will work out a timetable based on their availability.

Martin Long thanked Val F for all her help with updating our publicity leaflet and making it look attractive (it had been an odd size but hopefully the template will now be simpler and future updates will be easier to implement). There was some discussion about whether having St Paul's church as the front illustration was misleading, but it is the town's landmark; Val F complimented Peter Williams on an atmospheric photograph he'd submitted to the Photography Showcase. The committee decided on printing 75, on thinner paper as it's easier to fold. Any spares can be given out to visitors at the monthly lectures or included in 'membership packs'.

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### 24/035 Treasurer's Report

Peter Searl circulated the following figures:

#### 1. Reconciliation on 29 February 2024

Bank	£2,760.08
Books	
BF 01.01.24	£2,332.18
Receipts	579.50
<u>Payments</u>	<u>344.60</u>
Balance	<u>£2,585.08</u>

Unpresented cheques: £100.00 (813); £75.00 (816)

Petty cash £60

- Receipts since last meeting:** Subs (£85); Visitors (£32); Writers' group (£6.50); History group (£65); Games afternoon (£20). **NB** Subs = £15 for 2023/24 and £70 in advance for 2024/25.
- Payments since last meeting:** Speaker (£75); Beehive (£100); Awliscombe (£30); Postage (£18); Pickleball demo session (£27.60); Refreshments (£5)

Peter had been a bit perplexed about the Pickleball payment, but the committee had given approval to paying for the hire of two courts for the demonstration at the January committee meeting (see 24/012) in the hope of helping a new group to form. (June Brown has secured a couple of slots at the Leisure Centre in the Easter holidays so the group can now move forward.)

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### 24/036 Secretary's Report

Kay Edge reported that Caroline Retter at the Beehive had emailed about parking problems there, specifically people parking on the yellow 'emergency' lines. She passed the details of the message on to Martin so he can add something to the Bulletin.

The monthly email Bulletin from the Third Age Trust had arrived with details of workshops, etc., which Kay will forward to committee members in case anything is of interest to them.

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### **24/037 Membership Secretary's Report**

Stuart reported that we now have 299 members, so just failing to reach the magic 300! (Two of these are 'carers', only permitted to attend the Beehive meetings to help their clients.) We have 8 Associate members. A total of 89 people attended the last meeting, a record 16 of whom were visitors.

He will be handing over Membership Secretary information to Peter Halse shortly, as Peter is taking over the role, so everything will be set up by 1 April. The new membership forms are ready to roll out as soon as the AGM has approved the new fees. Stuart will give Peter S the necessary card and paper for membership printing purposes at the AGM. If no new committee member is found the position will be marked as 'Vacant' on the membership cards.

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### **24/038 Group Coordinator's Report**

Peter Williams said there was little to report, apart from outlining a query from Janet Young re the Singing for Fun group. The Gittisham Hill residential home is proposing turning the space she is currently using for the group into offices (and there is an ongoing parking problem there) so she is investigating alternative venues. She is also keen to expand the group so wondered about the viability of putting posters up in public spaces (the library, health centre, the Beehive, etc.) to invite outside people to attend, but with the proviso that they must then become members of u3a. There is also the question of insurance for such people (Stuart felt it would be ok – like a person coming to a taster session). Martin said we'd not done anything like this before and Peter H felt a poster would need approval from the chairman and committee before it could be displayed. Val F thought it could be valuable publicity for u3a – and singing is proven to be a real tonic, especially for older people. Richard said there should be a *format* for such things, with Martin pointing out *clarity* was vital. It was agreed that Janet could map something out and bring it to the committee for approval.

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### **24/039 Webmaster's Report**

Val F had nothing to report.

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### **24/040 Programme Secretary's Report**

Val C-G said she had requested the speaker for the AGM, on dogs helping with diagnoses, to be succinct as time is limited. A donation to charity will be made in place of a speaker's fee, and she felt a bucket at the door for a collection would be suitable too.

She had been approached by the Booking Secretary for Totnes u3a about the possibility of contributing to a register of good speakers that all Devon u3as could access (other counties have similar arrangements). Indeed, the previous Beehive speaker had asked her if there was any register she could recommend, so she will take this forward.

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### **24/041 Publicity Report**

Martin Long had nearly completed this month's Bulletin, and asked if any further items could reach him by the evening. He has sent off a batch of press releases to various organizations over the last few days, including the Honiton Flyer and the Midweek Herald and hopes they will be used. He will also be contacting community magazines and newsletters shortly, though he feared that some were having difficulties keeping going.

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### **24/042 Events Group Report**

Val C-G said the final tabletop games afternoon is scheduled for 22 March, and she and Jackie are then hoping to turn it into a formal Games Group in April. Each time about 20 people have participated and they are all keen to keep going. The Mountbatten Park hall is happy to continue to accommodate the group and parking is easy there. (**NB** Peter S needs contact details of the organizer.) Now the question of subs, a day and dates, payment for refreshments, a rota to organize this, and perhaps a kitty for buying new (i.e. charity shop!) games must be agreed with the likely members. Possibly the group would not want to meet in the summer and in

December, but Jackie said details will be reported at the next committee meeting. Subs would be paid annually (with reductions for people joining mid-year, as with the History group), not monthly.

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#### **24/043 Network Coordinator's Report**

Richard Spoerry had only returned from holiday this morning, but in his absence Kay had circulated a document she'd received from the Third Age Trust regarding an online Board meeting that had been held on 21 February. Stuart expressed astonishment about the wording under 'Financial Results' and said it was unintelligible, and we all were tickled with the message at the end that the document should not be taken as an 'authoritative statement'. We merely noted it had been received.

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#### **24/044 Any Other Notified Business**

Val C-G asked if proxy votes are allowed at the AGM – several members had mentioned it to her; they are not.

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#### **24/045 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 1 April 2024 at 2.00 pm, in the Methodist Hall. (This is Easter Bank Holiday Monday but most people are able to attend.)

Peter Halse thanked everyone for attending and for all their hard work and support during his time as Chairman, and closed the meeting at 3.30 pm.

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