

**10th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING****FRIDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER 2021****HELD ON ZOOM****MINUTES****Rev 04**

During registration, Voting Delegates were requested to rename themselves by putting a V in front of their u3a name, followed by their own name, in order to facilitate the voting.

In the absence of a Chair (position currently vacant), the meeting was chaired by one of the Vice Chairs, Derek Harwood (DH). He welcomed all present, saying that the AGM would be recorded.

All relevant papers had been issued in advance to Chairs and Delegates and were available to be viewed online as links on the Delegates page of our website.

- 1. Confirmation of a Quorum:** Constitutional requirement: 5 member U3As  
With 28 (65%) of the total 43 member u3as represented [24 with nominated Voting Delegates] a quorum was confirmed. See Appendix for attendance record.
- 2. Adoption of Minutes of AGM 23rd October 2020:** these were accepted. No one objected.
- 3. Matters Arising:** None
- 4. Resolutions:** None received
- 5. Adoption of Financial Accounts 1/9/2019 – 31/9/2020:** The accounts were presented by DH in absence of Treasurer and adopted unanimously.
- 6. Election of Independent Examiner of Accounts for Next Year (Chris Feldman):** All supported.
- 7. Election of Officers and other Trustees to the Executive Committee 2021-2022**  
DH highlighted that the list of vacant positions was growing, and volunteers were urgently needed to allow the continuation of London Region of U3As (LRU3A) activities. The following were elected unanimously by a manual count of raised hands:

|                                     |               |            |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Vice Chair (South of Thames)        | Jenny Wilson  | Re-elected |
| Vice-Chair (Joint, North of Thames) | Derek Harwood | Elected    |
| Treasurer                           | Jim Jenkins   | Re-elected |
| Learning Coordinator                | Liz Day       | Re-elected |
| Communications Coordinator          | Vivek Nanda   | Re-elected |
| Public Relations Advisor            | Rodney Fox    | Elected    |

There were no nominations for Chair, Secretary, Joint Vice Chair (North of Thames), or Events Coordinator. Co-opting is possible throughout the year, so members were encouraged to come forward at any time.

## **8. News Updates, Questions and Comments**

**8.1 Chair's Annual Report & News Update:** DH referenced these previously issued reports. Highlight from the Chair's Report was that LRU3A activities had been able to continue through another year of the Covid-19 pandemic, providing activities to members where their local u3a had temporarily closed (due to Covid). The online talks programme, which had been started last year as a temporary initiative to keep members occupied and engaged, had been extended and was still running. This was based on use of the 'large Meeting' Zoom licence, supported with Regional Trust funds by John Bent, and technical support provided by Vivek Nanda and the Communications Team. Ongoing support to the u3as with Zoom had been appreciated. Thanks to Catherine Ware for arranging the successful online talks. [During FY 2020/21 they attracted over 5,500 attendees, of whom over 1,000 were first time participants in regional activities].

**8.2 Regional Trustee Comments:** John Bent (JB) thanked all of the Committee for their joint efforts and progress, including success of the Summer School in promoting an early return to meeting in person. He also thanked London Region u3as for re-electing him to the Board of the Third Age Trust as London Region Trustee for a fifth year. He spoke about the Third Age Trust's Strategy report and London Region contributions to the focus groups providing feedback from the movement.

### **8.3 Questions:**

**8.3.1** Chris Bulford (Islington u3a) asked when we might expect to see some action resulting from the Trust's Strategy, and the place of Networks in the evolving Trust Strategy. JB replied that there had been a high input from u3as in developing the update to the Trust's Strategy and this will take time to digest. Networks have developed relatively recently and now play an important role in the way the Trust interacts with the movement.

**8.3.2** Chris Bulford also asked about LRU3A priorities for 2022. DH replied that, after consideration, it had been decided by the Executive Committee to continue with the current programme since the Committee is currently rather a small team and lacks the resources to pursue new initiatives. However, an 'Open Door' policy was being discussed to encourage more regional initiatives with the contribution of local u3as.

**8.3.3** Joanna Tambouridou (Barnet u3a) asked about the future of the Trust u3a and asked what plans there were to feed members back to local u3as. JB replied that Trust u3a had about 1000 members, of whom about 50% are associate members since they are already members of local u3as. The Trust u3a is still growing with about 50 new members per month but its future is still under discussion. Details are taken of all the members so that they can be assigned to local u3as in due course if required.

## **9. Next Delegates Meetings 2022: Jan 28th, Apr 22nd, Jul 8th, Oct 21st (AGM).**

## **10. AOB: nothing arising.**

**The AGM was formally closed.**

**Recordings and archival documents:** The AGM was recorded and uploaded to the [Delegates page](#) of the London Region website, along with relevant papers.

## **DELEGATES MEETING:**

The AGM was followed by thought-provoking presentations by the two Guest Speakers:

### **1) Ian McCannah, Former Chair of Third Age Trust**

#### **“Reflections on the Challenges and Opportunities Facing the u3a Movement”**

##### **a) Some of the key issues mentioned by Ian:**

- i) The 2019 national u3a membership survey revealed that the average age had increased from 72 to 74 in the past 10 years, and there was a drop to below 20% of younger members in their 60s, signalling a potential lack of volunteers with serious consequences for the u3a movement. Much depends on the Recruitment and Retention campaign to regenerate u3a membership.
- ii) The impact of new technologies: this is evolving and hard to assess, but is likely to challenge the u3a tradition of meeting in person and therefore the type of activities and membership of u3as.
- iii) The communications deficit: members have traditionally joined a local, independent u3a (not a national organisation) but only about 10% show an interest in their local committees, and only about 5% show an interest in the wider u3a. Only about 50% subscribe to Beacon and 50% to ‘Third Age Matters’. It is therefore very difficult for the Trust/u3a Office or others to communicate directly with the majority of members and to gain support for national initiatives.

##### **b) Questions:**

- (i) Liz Day (Dulwich & District u3a) asked about national efforts to improve diversity and inclusion. Ian replied that this is up to individual u3a committees – u3as should reflect their own local communities. The older generations of ethnic minority groups tend to have their own support groups, but subsequent generations should become more integrated into wider society and more responsive to u3a recruitment initiatives. The re-branding exercise conducted during lockdown was intended to modernize the image of u3a and appeal to a new cohort of younger members.
- (ii) Vivek Nanda (Islington u3a) asked about plans for evolution of the u3a learning model/Learning Hub, in view of the fact that online resources like Future Learn are becoming more commercial and less accessible by u3a. Ian replied that the current u3a Development Plan has been focussed on a learning platform with material developed/provided by u3a members. This is complex, expensive, and will take some time to deliver. The Trust has also been working on an Open Door approach to encourage more cross-working amongst u3as and interest groups. The management of ‘associate memberships’ to support this has been a challenge for u3a Treasurers.

### **2) Ann Keating, Trustee for u3a in Scotland**

#### **“Online Across Scotland”**

- a) Demographics and membership: 19% of Scotland’s population is aged 65yrs+ but u3a members only account for 1% of this demographic. u3a in Scotland (a country-wide network), has 33 member u3as, mostly centred around the central belt e.g. Edinburgh thriving with 2,500 members, reflecting that u3a is a middle class movement. Glasgow only 271 members, reflecting old industrial town, working class community. Rest of Scotland -- the West Coast, Highlands and Islands – population scattered and rural with fewer, smaller u3as. Arran an exception, very successful.

Orkney and Shetland are thriving communities but have very few u3a members.

- b) Online Across Scotland: The initiative started during the pandemic, inspired by the success of online activities in Edinburgh. There is now a network of learning platforms, with 26 interest groups sharing resources across Scotland (more members can make groups more viable). Excellent programme of talks and discussions; Shared Learning Projects; partnerships with other organisations e.g. Stirling University and Scottish Older People's Assembly to promote recruitment and encourage more diversity

Some challenges e.g.

- Funding: No fees charged for Network membership (Zoom account subsidised with Regional Trust funds); Paid speakers – what to do with revenue earned?
- Managing growth -- Number of interest groups growing; programme expanding;
- Some perceived competition with local u3as.
- Proliferation of companies offering on-line courses and talks for the 50+ age group means that the u3a is getting squeezed out.

- 3) **Break out rooms**: Attendees were asked to discuss their thoughts on the ideas and issues raised by the presentations, and relevance to their u3as/London Region. Vice-Chair Jenny Wilson facilitated plenary feedback and discussions. These discussions were also recorded for uploading to the Delegates page of the website

- a) Key Points raised in the 5 Break Out Rooms included:

- i) The u3a is too insular – a change of mindset is needed. We need to be more out-going, inclusive and diverse; use social media
- ii) Use appropriate language -- not just 'older, retired'
- iii) Need for high-profile marketing, led by the Trust to raise the u3a profile
- iv) We need to get to grips with our USP (Unique Selling Point)
- v) London Region Facebook/social media could promote regional and local u3a activities
- vi) Promote outreach/partnerships with other relevant organisations
- vii) Cross-generational engagement e.g. studies/projects with schools & universities
- viii) 'u3a Online Across London' could promote activities similar to Online Across Scotland. Could also link up with other regions/countries
- ix) The u3a movement seems to be stuck in the Mon – Fri daytime slot. Organise more evening and weekend events (in person and online) to accommodate members with varying needs e.g. part-time workers  
Croydon u3a has started some evening interest groups, monthly quiz, talks, parties, and many of the 'older' members who live alone like it.
- x) More cross-regional workshops/Peer Support Groups – finding out what happens elsewhere / what works and what doesn't
- xi) Challenge: finding volunteers to make things happen. How to encourage more members take on responsibility – u3a ethos
- xii) Scotland is to be highly commended for showcasing their achievements.

## APPENDIX

| <b>Attendance</b>                  |   |                         |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|                                    | <b><u>Present</u></b>   | <b><u>Apologies</u></b> |
| <b>Committee &amp; other posts</b> |   |                         |
| Chair                              | <i>vacancy</i>  |                         |
| Vice-Chair, North                  | Derek Harwood*  |                         |
| Vice-Chair, South                  | Jenny Wilson*   |                         |
| Secretary                          | <i>vacancy</i>  |                         |
| Treasurer                          |   | Jim Jenkins             |
| Learning Development Coordinator   | Liz Day*  |                         |
| Communications Coordinator         | Vivek Nanda*  |                         |
| Public Relations Advisor           | Rodney Fox*   |                         |
| Webmaster                          | <i>vacancy</i>  |                         |
| Talks & Summer School              | Catherine Ware*   |                         |
| Research Ambassador                | Jo Livingston*  |                         |
| SLP Coordinator                    |   | Jo Walters              |
| <b>Third Age Trust</b>             |   |                         |
| London Region Trustee              | John Bent*  |                         |
| Guest Speaker/Formal Chair         | Ian McCannah*   |                         |
| Guest Speaker/Scotland Trustee     | Ann Keating   |                         |
| <b>u3a Representatives</b>         |   |                         |
| Abbeywood & Thamesmead             |   |                         |
| Barking & Dagenham                 | (V) Melody Cohen  |                         |
| Barnet                             | (V) Rosemary Mayes;<br>Joanna Tambouridou;<br>John Bent*; Ian McCannah* |                         |
| Beckenham                          |   |                         |
| Bexley                             | Jo Livingston*  |                         |
| Brent                              |   |                         |
| Bromley                            | (V) Sandy Boden; Angela Dowling   |                         |
| Crouch End                         | (V) Sally Whitaker  |                         |
| Croydon                            | (V) David Apps; Jenny Wilson*   |                         |
| Dulwich & District                 | Liz Day*  |                         |
| Ealing                             | (V) Derek Atkinson;<br>Phil Broomsgrove                                 |                         |
| Enfield                            | Chris Burnikell   | Michael Witter          |
| Hackney                            |   |                         |
| Hammersmith & Fulham               | (V) Sue Adams; Graham Tigg  | Angela Elkholy          |
| Hampstead Garden Suburbs           | (V) Arjun Matthai   |                         |
| Harrow                             |   |                         |
| Havering                           |   |                         |
| Hillingdon                         | (V) Rodney Fox*   |                         |
| Hillingdon South                   |   |                         |
| Hounslow                           |   | (V) Pamela Crampton     |
| Islington                          | (V) Sally Fox; Chris Bulford;<br>Derek Harwood*; Vivek Nanda*           |                         |
| Kenton                             | (V) Diana O'Reardon   |                         |

| <b>u3a Representatives cont'd</b>                | <b>Present</b>  | <b>Apologies</b> |
|--|---|------------------|
| Kingston   | (V) Linda Foreman   |                  |
| Merton   | Catherine Ware*   |                  |
| Mill Hill  |   |                  |
| North London                                     | (V) Edmond Cohen  | Michael Johns    |
| Northwood & District                             | (V) Rob Thomasson   |                  |
| Norwood  | (V) Brenda Whitaker; Judith Foskett   |                  |
| Orpington  | (V) Pauline Dawson  |                  |
| Palmers Green & Southgate                        | (V) Val Girling   |                  |
| Redbridge  | (V) Liz Kite; Lennart Christensen   |                  |
| Richmond   |   |                  |
| Sidcup   | (V) Sandra Applegate  |                  |
| SouthEast London/London SE                       |   |                  |
| Stanmore   |   |                  |
| Sutton Area                                      | (V) Graham Vincent  |                  |
| Tower Hamlets                                    |   |                  |
| U3A in London (Belsize Park)                     | (V) Maggie Crawford   |                  |
| Upminster  |   | Courtney Moita   |
| Waltham Forest                                   | (V) Barbara Humm; Dorrit Opoye  |                  |
| Wandsworth                                       | (V) Donald Brind  |                  |
| Wanstead & Woodford                              |   |                  |
| Welling  | (V) Maria Guest-Naharowicz  |                  |
| <b>TOTALS</b><br><br>Note: * dual entry de-duped | <b>28/43 (65%) LR u3as represented altogether</b><br><b>24 Voting Delegates (56% of LR u3as)</b><br><b>17 additional LR members present = 41 total LR members</b><br><b>15 u3as not represented (of which 2 sent apologies)</b> |                  |