

# RINGMER U3A VIRTUAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## Agenda and Supporting Papers

1. **Apologies:** Not applicable.
  
2. **Minutes of the last AGM (15<sup>th</sup> May 2019):** The minutes of the 2019 AGM are on our website under Resources. No member has raised any issues about the accuracy of these minutes.
  - a. **Proposal 1:** It is proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the 2019 AGM.
  
3. **Matters arising:** There are no matters arising.
  
4. **Chairman and Trustees' Report:** The report for the past year is at Attachment 1.
  
5. **Treasurer's report:** The Treasurer's Report for the year April 2019 to March 2020 is at Attachment 2.
  
6. **Financial Proposals:**
  - a. **Proposal 2:** It is proposed to reduce the Annual Fee for full members to £8, (after 1st January £6) and the Annual Fee for Associate Members to £4.
  - b. **Proposal 3:** It is proposed that Sue Tibbenham be the Independent Examiner of Ringmer U3A accounts for 2020/21.
  
7. **Interest Groups' Report:** A report on our interest groups during the past year is at Attachment 3.
  
8. **Sussex U3A Network (SUN) representative's Report:** A report on the activities of the SUN is at Attachment 4.
  
9. **Election of Executive Committee:** All current members of the Executive Committee, except one, wish to remain on the committee. Jon Elphick, our Newsletter Editor, has stood down from the Committee as he has plans to move home. Jon has been a valued member of the Committee and we have all benefitted from his excellent newsletters. He has brought a professional touch to our newsletters and has a good

eye for detail. We will miss his contribution to Ringmer U3A and we wish him and Pam all the best for the future. Recently Deirdre Booth volunteered to join the Committee and she was co-opted at a Committee meeting on 29 June 2020.

- a. **Proposal 4:** It is proposed that Deirdre Booth be elected on to the Executive Committee for 2020-21.
- b. **Proposal 5:** It is proposed that the following current members be elected en bloc on to the Executive Committee for 2020-21 (Ian Loughborough, Sylvia Coleman, Kay Fitzgerald, Ken Boot-Handford, Jill Collins, Keith Moore and Tim Polwart).

**10. Format of Virtual AGM:** The AGM agenda and all supporting papers will be circulated to members on 19 July 2020. Members will be given until 26 July 2020 to ask any questions (by email) in the relation to the supporting papers and proposals. Answers will be circulated to members. Members will then be sent a Voting Form enabling them to vote on each proposal. Voting Forms must be completed within one week of receipt. A Virtual AGM will then take place at 10 am on Wednesday 12 August 2020 on Zoom. The minutes of this whole process will then be circulated to all members.

#### ***Enrolment for 2020-21***

*Enrolment Forms for 2020-21 will be circulated by email to all current members and put on our website once the AGM has been completed. Members are asked to then complete the form and return it as soon as possible with a cheque. We ask that you do not send cash in the light of the current pandemic.*

#### **Attachments:**

- 1. Vice Chairman and Trustees' Report**
- 2. Treasurer's Report**
- 3. Interest Groups' Report**
- 4. Report on Sussex U3A Network**

## **Vice Chairman and Trustees' Report for 2019 – 2020**

This has ended up being a very difficult year. We had a very good start to the year with a healthy number of members and a reasonable number of interest groups. The only difficulty was the perennial problem of persuading members to join our committee. Things all changed though in March 2020 when the world was brought to a stop with the Coronavirus pandemic. All meetings stopped as the country went into lockdown. We all started to look for ways of communicating with family and friends. Many of our interest groups were unable to continue, but some held online meetings using a variety of means. In May 2020 we started a Monthly Newsletter, which continued throughout lockdown. Your committee communicated by email and WhatsApp and then held two online committee meetings.

At the time of writing this report we are still not able to hold face-to-face meetings. The Annual General Meeting has been postponed from May and your committee have agonised over when and how to hold it. On a positive note our finances are sound. As a result, we are able to reduce our annual fees for 2020-21. Your committee constantly strive to reduce overheads and members help with this by accepting that we communicate through the internet and print very little material. Only three of our current membership are not on the internet.

The year 2020 marked the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ringmer U3A, but so far, we have been unable to hold any celebrations. This pandemic will pass and your committee is confident that we will be ready to offer our full range of interest groups and hold an appropriate celebration. Meanwhile we must continue to keep in touch and stay safe. This will be my last annual report as by next year we must have a new member in the Chair. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in the Chair and I wish to thank everyone for their support.

Ian Loughborough  
July 2020

## **Treasurer's Report**

This is my first annual report to the AGM and firstly I would like to thank Sue Hall for her help and support at the beginning of my tenure and Sue Tibbenham, our Independent Examiner of Accounts, for checking and agreeing the Statement of Accounts for the year April 2019 – March 2020, which I submit to the AGM. A signed copy is on file.

Our main source of income is our annual subscriptions, which is currently set at £10.00 full membership and £5.00 associate membership (members of other groups such as Lewes). There are a number of major outgoings every year; the National U3A subscription fees, Direct Mail charge, Beacon subscription and we pay a small amount to Sussex U3A Network Affiliation. We have recently been notified of the possibility of increased charges for some of our major outgoings such as the National U3A subscription (£3.50 to £4.00) per member and Direct Mail (£2.90 to £3.00) per copy; the Beacon Licence as far as I'm aware will remain the same.

Due to Covid-19 it has proved impossible for groups to meet in the usual way and because of this, the committee has agreed to reduce the fees for next year (2020/2021) to £8.00 for full membership, £4.00 for associate membership. If joining after January 1st then full membership will be reduced to £6.00 and Associate Membership will remain at £4.00. There are adequate funds to withstand the current changes in the short term. However, we will need to raise the fees in 2021-2022 to take account of the increases previously stated.

We have recently set up online banking to ease settling invoices. Once a payment has been submitted a second person is required to authorise the payment, which works in the same way as a double signatory on a cheque.

Sylvia Coleman  
July 2020

Ringmer U3A

Accounts for the Period April 2019 to March 2020

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Membership Subscription	1637.00	Affiliation Fees Third Age Trust	560.00
Group Hire Village Hall	37.25	Beacon Licence	181.00
Scout Hut Hire Photography Family History	501.00	Direct Mail	355.20
Diaries	105.00	Diaries	82.50
Donation	1.00	Sun Affiliation	7.75
Miscellaneous	50.00	Branch Hire of Rooms Village Hall	82.58
Balance at 31.03.20		Group Hire of Rooms Village Hall	37.25
		Group Hire of Scout Hut	501.00
		Miscellaneous	120.44
		Stationary	24.99
		Photocopying	17.20
	<u>2331.25</u>		<u>1969.91</u>
	£		
Balance at 31.03.2019	2061.34		
+ Income	2331.25		
	<u>4392.59</u>		
- Expenditure	1969.91		
	<u>2422.68</u>		
Cash not paid in	40.00		

Examiner's Report: It is in my opinion that the above Statement of Accounts gives a true and fair view of the income, expenditure as at 31st March 2020

Signed   
 Sylvia Coleman  
 Treasurer  
 Date: 22/04/2020

Signed   
 Sue Tibbenham  
 Examiner  
 Date: 22 April 2020

## Interest Groups' Report

**Astronomy:** Observation evenings are being considered starting in August with a small number of members meeting in the garden to control social distancing. These meetings would use eyesight and binoculars to observe objects in the clear sky and by watching Brian's telescope via the computer screen potentially to show details normally unseen. Encouragement is also being given to start small observation-based projects.

**Computer Group:** Since the last AGM, we have held various presentations on 'Camera, Computer and Sewing Machine to Create Textile Art', Transfer VHS to digital format, Photographs enhancement/cropping/scanning, file management, and a presentation on the Cloud. Since lockdown we continue supporting group members with an online service, enabling members to ask questions to the Support Team. We hope to welcome members back in the near future and continue to add information on the computer group page.

**Family History:** A large and very active group with good attendance. Highlights include discussion on DNA ancestry tracing, and use of military history sources along with many other fascinating topics. Since lockdown the group has been circulating newsletters offering encouragement and sources for research.

**Gardening Club:** The Gardening Club has been exchanging pictures, questions and answers by email. They then went on to hold a Zoom meeting with 11 members participating.

**2 Garden:** Usually we have six meetings in various members' homes and four outings to gardens by arrangement. The first meeting in February saw a change to our schedule in that we invited the Head Gardener at Glynde Place to speak about his life in that role over the four seasons of a year, followed by a practical demonstration of seed sowing and taking cuttings. In March, one of our members spoke to us with illustrations about her great number and variety of roses and how she cares for them. Lockdown put an end to the normal meetings but it is not all doom and gloom since two of our members, who are also artists, have opened their gardens by pre-arrangement to a maximum of three people at any one time. As well as a look round the garden, plants, produce and cards are on sale with proceeds to the charity we support: St Peter and St James' Hospice. There is no rush and people are welcome to sit and relax, chat, paint, have their own picnic etc whilst enjoying lovely surroundings.

**Knit One, Chat One:** Prior to lockdown our meetings continued to be well attended, industrious and as convivial as always. Although we have not been able to hold meetings due to the lockdown, we have continued to keep in touch via emails and telephone. Each year since 2017 we have donated our tea-money to St. Peter & St. James Hospice and I am delighted to report that despite reduced meetings we were able to do so again this year. We now look forward to when we can meet up again but until then we will keep knitting, stitching and of course chatting to each other.

**Out & About:** Prior to March we had several successful meetings for coffee, both here and in Lewes. We also had some lovely trips to Lordington Lavender fields, a backstage trip to the Theatre Royal in Brighton, a trip to Standen House, a trip to the Grange Art Gallery in Rottingdean and a visit to the Uckfield Christmas Tree Festival. We also had our popular and enjoyable Christmas lunch at The King's Head in Horsebridge. All events were well attended and great fun. Once possible and safe to do so, we will contact members and resume our meetings.

**Photography:** Ringmer U3A Photography Group is still well supported with several new members joining during the last year. During lockdown we have still managed to stay in touch electronically. We have had monthly photographic subjects and members have had their photographs published on the Ringmer U3A website. We have held

“Zoom” meetings and the convenor is now trying to organise small group outings with cameras on condition we can satisfy the risk assessments. We have also engaged in some Photographic subject learning by email.

**Short Walks:** This group met twice a month up until lockdown. Numbers walking were typically four or five but have not continued since lockdown. A new group convenor is sought for this easily managed group.

**Spanish Conversation:** A very friendly and enjoyable group with informative discussions and even a bit of singing in Spanish! The use of a ‘WhatsApp Group’ has allowed the group to keep in touch since the lockdown.

**What the Papers Say:** Very active with lots of discussion over the year, continuing by email after the lockdown. Hoping to start meeting in gardens soon.

**More info on the web:** You can find out more about the above groups and also about Spanish, Creative Crafters, French, Majong, Newsround and Walking at Ringmer U3A website (<https://u3asites.org.uk/ringmer/home> ).

Tim Polwart  
July 2020

## **Report on Sussex U3A Network**

The “Sussex Myths and Spirit” event at Sussex University in July was very well attended and showed the U3A at its best with exhibitions and demonstrations from 14 local groups. Prior to the lockdown, most study days, including March, had been fully booked while previously the September day had been cancelled due to lack of support. Following this, it was decided to delay the first study day to October as many people were still on holiday in September.

SUN hold four meetings per year to highlight any national changes and to encourage local U3As to join together to share resources. It has a very comprehensive website which is always updated to show the latest guidance from the Third Age Trust with links to both National and local events.

Unfortunately, due to the Corona virus, this year’s Summer School had to be cancelled and the 150 students who had already booked their places with 12 different Tutors were disappointed, but a date has already been arranged for 2021.

Jill Collins

July 2020