

Shepway and District U3A

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 10 May 2023 in the Tin Tabernacle

Present: Committee: Officers: Linda Fellows (Chair), John Hubbard (Vice Chair), Steve O'Neill (Secretary), Katherine Robinson (Treasurer)
Members: Roger Curd, Gehad Homsey, Christine Hughes, Eileen Presland, Tony Scofield, David Warren
Others: 45 other U3A members attending.
Apologies: Jacqui Bray (Committee member), and 10 U3A members

1. Welcome

Linda Fellows welcomed everyone to the AGM, and thanked everyone for coming.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 11 May 2022

The minutes of the 2022 AGM meeting were agreed as a correct record

3. Chairman's report

Looking back over her time as Chair of the U3A, Linda Fellows expressed her thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make our U3A a success – the group leaders, those who take on extra jobs as needed, and fellow committee members. She was stepping down as Chair with some sadness, but confident that the U3A would continue to meet the challenges ahead, as it had done in the past year, with for example rising costs, and rebuilding the membership after Covid.

4. Treasurer's report

Katherine Robinson's report for the year ending 31 March 2023 was approved, although it was noted that the accounts were still with the auditors. Total income was: £49,457. Total expenditure was: £48,788. This resulted in a surplus of £669. The end of year reserves amounted to £24,282.

Katherine discussed some key income headings. Subscriptions amounted to 52% of our income, in the sum of £25,722, course materials and fees £9841, income from events £6169, Gift Aid amounted to £4,311, and the film matinees brought in £1038. As regards expenditure, hall hire cost us £33,652 (69% of our expenditure), events £4052, our Third Age Trust membership fees £2,988; admin (including our accountant) £1799, direct mail £1,684, postage and printing for the newsletter £1,024. Katherine was thanked for her presentation and good work.

5. Membership report

Tony Scofield said that membership at 31 March was 775. This had since reduced to 708 because just under 10% of members had not yet renewed their subscriptions. This percentage was not unusual and renewals were still coming in. Nearly half of members were from Hythe. 69% were women, and 31% men. 95% were on email. The Linda thanked Tony for his report, and work during the year.

6. Election of Committee members

There were vacancies for the officer positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Business Secretary. Nominations had been received and seconded as follows:

Chair – John Hubbard – eligible for a 3 year tenure

Vice Chair – Tony Scofield – eligible for a 3 year tenure

Treasurer - Katherine Robinson – eligible for a 1 year tenure due to previous service in this role

Secretary – Steve O'Neill – eligible for a 1 year tenure due to previous service in this role

There were no other nominations for these officer roles.

There were also four ordinary committee member vacancies, two for 3 years, one for 2 years and one for 1 year.

Nominations had been received and seconded as follows:

Eileen Presland, David Warren, Linda Fellows, Jacqueline Mack

There were no other nominations for these posts.

As the number of nominations equaled the vacancies, all the candidates would automatically join the committee, but the AGM confirmed its unanimous endorsement of them with a show of hands. The four ordinary members would decide how long they would serve for at the next Committee.

Under the constitution, the Committee was able to coopt two additional members for up to a year. One individual had offered to join in this way. Any one else interested was welcome to talk to the Chairman.

7. New Chairman

John Hubbard took over the chairmanship of the meeting, and thanked Linda Fellows for all she had done over the last two years as Chair of the U3A. He stressed that our philosophy was that members ran the U3A for the members.

8. Groups report

John Hubbard reported that there was a total of 83 registered groups. Most were meeting in halls – mainly the Tin Tabernacle or the Light Railway– but a few were meeting in other venues because of their special requirements, others in members' homes, others on line, and others on location. There were 1980 registered places. Average group membership was nearly 24 members. John gave an analysis of the wide range of groups available, and thanked the group leaders for their commitment and hard work. He also thanked Gehad Homsey for handling the registration side of the groups.

9. Members meetings report

Roger Curd reported on the members meetings that had been held over the last year, and thanked the speakers involved. The current year's programme was in preparation.

10. Film Nights

John Hubbard reported on behalf of himself and Eileen Presland that the afternoon film matinees had been very successful since they were introduced. Each month had been fully booked. The last of the current season would be in June, after which there would be a break until October.

11. Events report

Linda Fellows reported on the various events that had been held throughout the year, and thanked Veronica King for organising the U3A tea in September, the members dinner in October, and the Christmas lunch at the Clifton Hotel. Thanks were also due to Pat Beatty, who in April, had organised a successful trip to Pashley Manor, and to Jeff Bonner for a swing band concert in the same month, which had raised money for the Turkey / Syria earthquake appeal.

12. AOB.

- John Hubbard mentioned that 2023 was the 15th anniversary of Shepway and District U3A. Ideas to celebrate this were being considered
- He also mentioned that the Committee was looking for more helpers –people who were prepared to undertake one off jobs. It was intended to maintain a list of names of those who could be called upon when needed. He encouraged people to register if they felt they could help in this way.
- RHDR. Some concerns were expressed about the changes at the Light Railway particularly as regards car parking, access, and catering. John offered to talk to individuals privately, but explained that we were very much in the hands of the railway, and the constraints under which they now had to work. The catering service should improve, and the heating was much better. The restricted car parking still allowed for disabled parking, deliveries, and dropping off.

13. Closure of the meeting

The meeting was closed, to be followed by refreshments and a discussion about the future

14 Discussion about the future

The meeting reconvened to share ideas for the future in a discussion led by John Hubbard:

- Coffee mornings were thought to be fine as they were, and other social get-togethers a good idea
- Events and trips – people would welcome more trips out, for example to the theatre or to garden shows. A list of possibles could be put in the newsletter to establish levels of interest
- There was a question as to whether we needed more venues in Folkestone, eg church halls
- Evening dinners – more of these would be welcome
- The Christmas lunch was always popular
- More leaders were needed for group subjects, eg architecture, and languages