

MINUTES of the Street & Glastonbury u3a AGM held in Glastonbury Town Hall on 4th May 2023 at 10.00 am.

41 members attended.

1. Apologies: Gill Donkin, Pat Mead, Robin Winch, Viv Burt, Peter Found, Steve Cousins
2. Minutes of the previous AGM held on 28th April 2022 were agreed to be correct. Proposed by Malcolm Allen and Seconded by Helen Hickman then signed by Susan Thurgood.
3. Chair's Report (Sue Thurgood): -

The AGM has been a chance for me to look back on my first year as Chair. The u3a year of September 2022 started with more freedom after Covid, but many were being cautious – yet there was a desire to get back to normality. Then in September we had the death of the Queen. I can remember watching her Coronation on a small black and white screen, the television having been specially purchased for the event. Now we are approaching the Coronation of King Charles the Third. The best thing about our u3a is the friendship and friendly interaction. As the classes roll through from September until March it is good to have a time in the week to enjoy with others, either an activity or further learning, or discussion and fun together. What for me is the value that there is no pressure. No one to give you work to do or question what you have learned or what you have remembered from the previous fortnight. The activity sessions are fun, whether its walking, cycling, table tennis, music and language, I could name many more. Thanks to all who contribute either as a leader or a member. Our slogan learn, laugh, live is something to be enjoyed and celebrated. Part of the autumn and spring as far as the committee was concerned was occupied discussing the proposal for escalating cost from the Third Age Trust. We engaged in some Zoom meetings with other u3a's all over the country. This issue is ongoing and not resolved yet. The cost of the Trust magazine is increasing as is the cost of postage. Also, the increasing cost of our venues has escalated enormously and will need to be addressed in the future. It is important that we all continue to tell others about our u3a enjoyment and experience. This year we have been able to enjoy the Christmas Party and three coffee mornings, in addition to the group activities and we should continue to spread the word and tell others about what we do, to encourage new people and newly retired to sign up and enjoy the wide range of classes on offer. I wish to pay tribute to Wilton Wills who has led the English History and Opera Groups for many years, who now feels it is time to finish. It is hoped we can continue the history group in some other way. Whether you are a newcomer or seasoned veteran – we look forward to another u3a year ahead. We are always pleased to hear your comments, ideas, problems, using our splendid website. Especially comments

about things you really enjoyed are welcome. The year has gone well and I thank everyone and the committee for their support.

4. Financial Report: -

The accounts for the financial year 2021/22 were published with the March Newsletter and also posted on the website.

Report given by Andy Pickford in the absence of the Treasurer. Since the pandemic and the lockdowns, our member numbers have dropped by about 20%. Obviously, this has had a knock-on effect in members joining groups, and nearly all groups that use a venue that we hire are running at a loss. Venue hire fees have increased and are likely to increase further in years ahead. We have sufficient funds to cover these losses for this year and next year if this downturn in numbers continues. Unless we increase Group membership there will come a time when we will need to consider increasing Group Fees. **Third Age Matters (TAM)**. The Third Age Trust has increased the cost of the magazine this year to £3.60 per member that receives it. In the past we have paid for TAM from our funds, however we think it is now time for those Members who opt to have this magazine from head office to be charged at cost, £3.60. This will need to be added to the £12 membership fee. The Committee has therefore decided that there will be no increase in Membership or Group fees in September 2023. However, we do urge everyone to spread the word about what we offer with a view to increasing overall membership.

If asked, u3a stands for **Uniting 3rd Agers!**

The Chair raised a vote of thanks to Andy Pickford for the building of our new Website.

5. Group Liaison's Report (Linda Wilson):

Overall 2022/2023 has been a successful and positive year. Feedback tells me that enthusiasm remains high and members continue to enjoy the varied programme of groups on offer. We were sorry to say goodbye to the Scrabble Group, but thank Vivienne Fairbrother for her group leadership over the past years. Good news at the beginning of the year when Stephen Wright resurrected Racquetball and Martin Kennard Mah Jong. Our thanks also to Helen Hickman for taking on leading the Film Group and Mo Pickford for Painting for Pleasure, following on from Jill Webb – all much appreciated. British History has been a popular group thanks to Wilton Wills for his excellent leadership over many years, Brenda Webber has stepped up ensuring continuity. A big thank you to all leaders for their continued commitment and hard work and to those who have carried on during the summer months.

The first meeting of our new Cycling Group has taken place thanks to Charlie Beaton and we're trusting that there will be lots of interest in our new Philosophy Group lead by Richard Golding starting in September. So, looking to the future we hope to see you all on Enrolment Day. Please keep visiting the website for up to date news on groups and developments and look out for the new September programme in the July Newsletter.

6. Election of Officers and Committee Members:

We have two Retirements from the Committee, Paul Vernoum as Membership secretary and Cynthia Rayes from Venue Manager. Congratulations and small presents were presented by Sue Thurgood.

The remaining Committee members were re-elected as a block vote, being:-

Chair: Sue Thurgood

Secretary: Martin Kennard

Vice Chair: Malcolm Allen

Treasurer: Gill Donkin

Groups Co-ordinator: Linda Wilson

Newsletter Editor: Andy Pickford

They were Proposed by Val Sandford

Seconded by Elaine Robertson; the vote was unanimous.

New Members' Secretary: John Roberts Proposed by Cynthia Rayes.

Seconded by Sue Thurgood

The vote was unanimous.

Venue Manager: Position Vacant

Event's Organiser: Position Vacant

7. Discussion and proposals for Group Fees: -

The reasons for this discussion had been outlined in item 4 Financial Report.

Julie Hillman had analysed the stability of our reserves and concluded that we should be able to support potential losses for some time. The response from the Committee was that they intended to hold fees into next year, but that the current venue increases were not yet reflected in the accounts. Hopefully by the next AGM the increases will have settled down and the membership will have regained its current levels enabling a more finite position to be forecast.

Currently, all groups using venues are operating at a loss. Elaine Robertson asked if we should change bank accounts to avoid the charges being levied with the removal of HSBC's charity status. The Committee had reviewed this and although other banks offered charity accounts, they were not available to new customers. It is also a considerable administrative exercise to change business accounts.

Malcolm Allen stated that we needed to re-establish membership levels and that we all should push to increase numbers. We currently advertised in doctor's surgeries and some hairdressers. If any member knew of outlets to leave pamphlets please contact him as he has an ample supply.

8. Any Other Business:

The website had provided a link to raise questions under AOB, but none had been received.

9. Susan Thurgood finished by thanking everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.51am.