



Surrey U3A Network

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 27th October 2011

at Christ Church Centre, New Malden.

Present Tom Appleton, Elmbridge U3A, Network Chairman
Arthur Browne, Horley U3A, Network Education and Development Contact
Ian Funnell, Fetcham U3A, Chairman of the Study Day Sub-Committee
John Kennedy, Ashtead U3A, Network Treasurer
Fifteen U3As were represented:

Ashtead	Ray Cane
Banstead	Roger Stamp
Bookham	Peter Hudson, Pippa Carter
Dorking	Doreen Raine, Sheila Sharp
Elmbridge	Jim Walker
Epsom & Ewell	Maureen Young, Daphne Lewis
Fetcham	Brian Dodds
Horley	Ann Hart
Horsley	Ian Evershed, Peter Tallon
Kingston	Elinor Parker, Eva Garland
Leatherhead	Evelyn Clayden, Sally Smith
Merton	Judith Williams
Reigate & Redhill	Geraldine Horne, Sally Baker, Elizabeth Gurteen
Spelthorne	Joe Weetch
Spelthorne K2	Pauline Hope, Joan Gardam

Welcome from the Chairman of the Host U3A

Elinor Parker of Kingston U3A, in place of Sylvia Oates who was unable to attend, welcomed everybody to the meeting.

Opening of the Meeting

Tom Appleton, Chairman of the Network, opened the meeting by asking all members present to introduce themselves.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Susan Fielding, Network Secretary, Sheila Hill, Study Day Booking Secretary, Sylvia Oates, Chairman, Kingston U3A, and Yann Trevou and Alison Gaitonde, Network Representatives on the South East U3A Forum committee. Caterham U3A and Sutton U3A apologised for not sending representatives.

Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th March 2011

The minutes were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

Matters arising from the Minutes

6 c) Epsom & Ewell U3A had contacted National Office and were told that insurance cover was provided for members holding interest group events in their homes, which satisfied their concerns.

Treasurer's Report

The eight study days for the year to 30th June 2011 had resulted in a surplus of £1712. However, the Menuhin Hall has increased their fee by £95 for each day and the committee has raised the speaker's fee by £50 from February 2012. These two items would increase costs by about £1200 in a full year. Depending on attendances the result for the current year could be a deficit. This is not a great concern as there are ample funds for the time being and in the longer term if the fee charged to members were raised it should not cause a large reduction in attendance.

The first three study days of the current financial year are likely to result in a small surplus. Booking has not yet started for those in 2012.

In answer to Evelyn Clayden's query John said the administration expenditure comprised postage, copying, travel expenses and other small incidental costs. They were split evenly between the study days as most could not be allocated to a particular day. Publicity was allocated in much the same way.

Network Education and Development Contact's Report

The report had been circulated and Arthur Browne amplified some aspects. He then spoke on other matters.

The Third Age Trust has been tightening up on the procedure for starting new U3As. There have been problems with U3As starting and getting into financial trouble. This had not occurred in Surrey where there had been several successful starts. The starter pack was being split into an initial phase which set up the organisation properly and once that was done then the second help pack would be given.

There had been a first regional meeting arranged by Colin Mitchell, South East Region Trustee: nothing formal had been set up but there had been a useful exchange of ideas.

There was a discussion on the difficulty of getting representatives to attend the National Conference. Several members had been and found it very interesting and the workshops were particularly useful. Each U3A should consider sponsoring a representative so that the cost to the person was small. Similar difficulty is experienced in getting representatives to local activities such as Conference, Summer School, seminars at Tonbridge and OU workshops.

Sally Baker, Reigate & Redhill U3A, said that she had been to the National Conference this year and found it very useful and had come back with a lot of ideas.

Anne Hart, Horley and District U3A, suggested that a personal invitation letter to the Chairman of each U3A would be much more enticing than an e-mail. [This is already the case.]

Elinor Parker, Kingston U3A, had also been to the National Conference this year and had got a lot of help from it.

Ray Cane, Ashted U3A, said that he found the South East U3A Forum events were very useful.

Chairman of the Study Day Sub-Committee's Report

Ian Funnell said that the 2012 programme was complete and work was proceeding on 2013. He thanked Susan Jones, Caterham U3A, for the very good work she had done on the Network and South East U3A Forum websites and congratulated her on the take up of Site Builder which has been used by over 200 U3As to create their websites. Currently around 700 out of 820 U3As have

websites or webpages on the national website. He asked that anyone who has an idea or recommendation for a study day lets him know.

Individual Reports

Representatives were asked if they wished to add anything to their reports

Dorking U3A: Has got some good ideas from the conference for managing change in their committee.

Horley & Horsley U3As: Both are finding difficulty in filling their committees.

Kingston U3A: Has 860 members and the committee is well filled. Their orchestra would welcome participants from other U3As

Merton U3A: Has 720 members. Apologies for not producing a report.

Reigate & Redhill U3A: Has 600 members and a waiting list.

Spelthorne U3A: Is putting effort into publicising the Network study days.

There was general agreement that when starting groups a committee member should arrange a place and time for the potential group to meet and after introductions leave them to confer. A group leader usually emerges and the group starts itself. At this stage it is best to use the term Group Co-ordinator rather than Group Leader.

Annual General Meeting

There being no other nominations Tom Appleton, Chairman, Susan Fielding, Secretary and John Kennedy, Treasurer were declared elected. Tom pointed out that this would be his third year as Chairman and he would be standing down next October.

The other Network Committee members elected were Arthur Browne, EDC, Ian Funnell, Chairman of the Study Day Sub-Committee, Sheila Hill, Booking Secretary, Yann Trevou and Alison Gaitonde.

Elizabth Gurteen asked that the AGM be more formally announced in future, rather than just being an item on the agenda, so that there was a better opportunity for nominations to the committee. This was agreed.

It was also noted that there had been difficulty with the e-mail distribution of reports and some U3As had not received some of the reports. Tom apologised and said that every effort would be made to prevent that recurring: docx files would be avoided or converted to rtf/doc/pdf formats for easier printing. John Kennedy described how a download from the Microsoft website could be used to convert docx to doc format.

GLR Music Forum

Tom reported that as part of the London Region U3A Don Moore was attempting to establish a music network, circulating information about U3A musical activity in the London area. Any U3A in London or the surrounding area interested in receiving information should contact him at don.moore@blueyonder.co.uk.

Arts and Crafts Festival and a Sports Festival

These had been suggested for Olympic Year but only four replies had been received to the questionnaire and thus the Network would not proceed with these ideas. The Network had put aside £1000 of its funds to sponsor any U3A or group of U3As that would like to proceed with a festival on such lines. Interested parties should contact Tom.

Ian Funnell said that Fetcham U3A had been challenged at croquet by Epsom & Ewell U3A and had had an excellent day. Horsley U3A had been challenged at bowls. There was discussion about extending and increasing the number extent of joint events in croquet, bowls and even archery in Olympic Year.

Geraldine Horne, Reigate & Redhill U3A said that she had been involved in a Women's Institute Arts and Crafts Festival at Loseley House some time ago. They would look into staging such an event at Gatton Manor.

Welfare and Wellbeing

There was general discussion of the paper provided by Tom Appleton on the subject and a number of ideas put forward.

Horsley U3A has MOTO groups for Members On Their Own: these are just social and do not study any particular subject. They fulfil the Social Welfare part of the U3A objectives.

Worries about members falling ill on trips or failing to return to the coach were discussed. Spelthorne U3A are pursuing the idea of medical cards which members give to the group leader to inform them of any special conditions and of having details of next of kin.

It was stated that a large proportion, perhaps as many as one third, of members do not participate in any groups. Bookham U3A analysed their records and found that some members were in groups but not recorded as in a group, many just attended monthly meetings but that left about 10% who do nothing. They had written to all of these to try to determine what they wanted from their membership. Horsley U3A had conducted a similar exercise and found the numbers not involved were quite small.

There was general agreement that group leaders should be aware of members being absent and potentially ill and make appropriate enquiries. However the remit is just for Social Welfare and they should not act as Social Services; no-one had any ambitions in that area.

Discussion Subject for Next Meeting

Ideas put forward were:

Managing change

Sharing travel groups

Groups getting older

Any Other Business

There had been a Banstead Woods Country Open Day. Banstead U3A had a stall at the event and recruited several new members.

Scott Willcox is a U3A member with a jazz orchestra. He wished to stage an event for U3As. Members asked if it was suitable for a monthly meeting or if they could arrange a workshop at which people could try their skills. Tom and Ian agreed to follow this up.

Ian asked whether the Kingston U3A orchestra would be willing to give a concert for Network members at a venue in the centre of the Network.

There is to be a Music Study Day in London on Saturday 3rd March 2012. Tom had an entry form and offered it, or a copy, to anybody interested. The form was circulated with the meeting papers.

Ray Cane, Ashted U3A, asked why the result of the election for our trustee had not been more widely circulated. The result was confirmed as Pam Jones 85 votes and Stella Porter 48 votes.

Next Meetings

Thursday 22nd March 2012 organised by Leatherhead U3A.

Thursday 25th October 2012 organised by Merton U3A.

The meeting closed at 4.15 p.m.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting _____

Date _____