



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Surrey U3A Network

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 26 October 2010 at 2.00 pm at The Albert Rooms, Albert Road, Horley

Present: Tom Appleton, Elmbridge U3A, Network Chairman
Arthur Browne, Network Education & Development Contact
Ian Funnell, Surrey Representative of the South East U3A Forum and Chair of the Study
Day Sub-Committee
Colin Mitchell, South East Regional Trustee
John Kennedy, Treasurer
Sheila Hill, Assistant Treasurer and Booking Secretary for Study Days
Anne Brown, Elmbridge U3A, Network Secretary

The following U3As were represented:

Ashted, Banstead, Bookham and District, Dorking and District, Elmbridge,
Fetcham and District, Horley and District, Horsley, Kingston, Leatherhead and District,
Merton, Reigate and Redhill, Spelthorne, Spelthorne K2 and Sutton

Action

1 Welcome from Chairman of host U3A

Priscilla Munday, Chairman of Horley U3A, welcomed everybody.

2 Opening of meeting

Tom Appleton, Chairman of the Surrey U3A Network, opened the meeting by welcoming Sutton. He asked members present to introduce themselves.

3 Apologies

Apologies were received from Rosemary Thomas, Farnham U3A (observer by invitation) and Caterham and Epsom and Ewell U3As.

4 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2010

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

5 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

6 Treasurer's report

a) John stated that the accounts had been circulated for the year ended June 2010. The accounts had been presented and accepted at the last steering committee. They were subsequently circulated at the meeting and all present were in favour they be adopted

Proposed by Spelthorne

Seconded by Bookham

b) He reported a small surplus of £240 from the Study Days. As far as this year is concerned the earlier Study Days were not well attended. As for the coming November event numbers have already reached 130. Deficits were attributed to poor attendance. He said that music Study Days entailed the hire of the piano and its tuning which added to the outlay.

c) John has trawled the websites of our Network groups and urged all to ensure they give a link to the Study Days.

d) Ian reported that he was circulating some notes based on two recent meetings open to all South East Region U3As addressed by Lin Jonas and Terry Hardie. From these it was established that all U3As are stand alone and autonomous in their financial dealings which he saw as sensible advice.

7 Report by Arthur Browne

- a) Arthur said he would like to have offers for discussion group leaders for the Conference.
- b) He reported that the Tonbridge meeting was attended by 60 people. It was a very informative meeting with two-way discussions.
- c) At the AGM in Cirencester, Ian Searle referred to gaps between 'active members' – those who make things happen - and 'ordinary members' - those who turn up for monthly meetings, the majority of whom are not interested in what the Third Age Trust are doing. It was questioned what was the percentage of active against non active members. Here Ian stressed that all members of U3As are valued.
- d) Arthur reported that with regard to under representation of the SE Region on the NEC, no solution had yet been found.
- e) Arthur stated that in future the AGM will be located centrally with a more accessible venue for all: next year's AGM and National Conference will take place at the East Midlands Conference Centre at Nottingham University from 16-19 September 2011.
- f) At the AGM it was decided against relocating the National Office. He said it was an eye opener that people were unaware of what happens at national office and how the system works.
- g) Discussion ensued on whether U3A groups should register with the Charity Commission. A show of hands established that 1/3 of the groups present were registered and Ian confirmed that the majority of U3As were registered. However, he stated that in order to receive Gift Aid it was becoming more difficult if one were not registered.
- h) Arthur mentioned the forthcoming workshop set up for active/prospective Group Leaders. He enquired of groups present what further workshops they would like organised. Art history and IT were considered good ideas.
- i) Arthur reiterated his role in helping U3As with organisational matters. He has noticed how U3As are expanding in membership with resultant problems. He felt waiting lists to join were not a good idea.

8 Report by Ian Funnell

- a) Ian corrected his role with the South East Forum – he is the Surrey Representative.
- b) He advised that details and application forms for summer schools and conferences can be found on their website - <http://u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/>.
- c) He alerted groups that Study Day dates for next year have now been sent out and dates and details for 2012 are in draft form. He reminded groups that details of Study Days are posted on the Surrey U3A Network website – www.u3asites.org.uk/surreyu3anetwork.

9 Report by Colin Mitchell

- a) Colin reported that the SE Forum were happy to be ½ a Regional Association and the National Chairman and Terry Hardie were comfortable with the idea. However, the sticking point is with Thames Valley, SW Surrey, Hampshire and the IoW but Colin is working on them. For the interim there are two demi Regional Associations with the existing South East Forum being one of them.
- b) Reporting on the AGM resolution it came across to him there exists an obvious North/South divide. He mentioned the resentment in the South East having only one Trustee on the NEC. He said Ian Searle during his first year of office has visited all the Regions.
- c) Colin reminded the meeting that he is due to stand down as Trustee and urged all U3As to look around their members for a successor. He added that Terry Hardie will also be obliged to stand down – his tenure is for 5 years only and the Constitution does not allow him to continue for another term.
- d) Colin reminded those present of the survey form in which Ian Searle was seeking our views on the future of U3As and he urged members to complete and return this. Colin added that it will be analysed on a regional basis and he would be interested in looking at regional variations.

Colin

10 U3A reports

A collation of the reports had been sent out prior to the meeting. Tom asked groups for any updates they wished announce.

- a) Banstead expressed disappointment that their report on their 25th anniversary celebrations had not been included in the latest edition of U3A News.
- b) Dorking reported that they had completed the survey form at a recent committee meeting and it represented their group decision.
- c) Horley asked whether a list of outings (similar to our list of speakers) could be circulated.
- d) Horsley wished their report to be amended to read 400ish members!
- e) Merton now have 701 members.
- f) Kingston have 750 members; around 100 attend their monthly meetings; next year they will celebrate their 20th anniversary.

11 AGM

- a) No nominations for the posts of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary had been received.
Tom Appleton and John Kennedy were re-elected as Chairman and Treasurer respectively and this was approved unanimously.
- b) The Secretary has expressed a wish to stand down. There were no volunteers from the floor for this post. Ian said he would advertise for volunteers for this post at the Study Day meetings.
- c) It was noted that Sheila, John and Ian have one more year to serve.

Ian

12 Feedback from Cirencester AGM and consideration of proposals for AGM in 2011

- a) This had been reported in the recent AGM News.
- b) With regard to the undemocratic voting system at Edinburgh AGM last year, a motion proposed by Fetcham and seconded by Elmbridge, the outcome is that now all votes must be counted, declared and recorded on every occasion.
- c) The 'collective responsibility' of the U3A organisation was discussed: it is nationally recognised as providing an education for 3rd agers. However, we are all bound by joint decisions and conflict arises between those at the centre who are keen to make U3As grow and the U3As themselves.
- d) Colin announced that a National Lottery Grant had been applied for to provide paid staff for 12 months. It was felt that the capitation fee would not need to be increased in the foreseeable future as this would be covered by growth.

All

13 South East U3A Forum

- a) The chairman's report that had been circulated was noted.

14 Election of additional representative to SE U3A Forum

- a) There were no nominations forthcoming. Ian explained that the post involved organising conferences, seminars and the summer school at Chichester. They meet four times during the year.
- b) It was agreed that any interested person(s) should let Arthur, Ian or Alison know and perhaps be invited to a trial attendance.

15 Possible 2012 Network event

- a) The purpose of such an event was discussed. Arthur outlined the following objectives:
 - letting members within the U3A know what is going on;
 - publicising to education and local government services what U3A is about;
 - telling the public what we are about in the hope that they will pop in, though it was felt that only people living near the venue would do so.
- b) From group responses it was evident that members were not keen take part. Therefore, it was decided not to go ahead but to reconsider in a few years' time.

16 Notifications

- a) SE conference – Wednesday, 30 March 2011 at East Grinstead
- b) OU workshop – Friday, 29 October
- c) Use of South East Forum website (covering Kent, Surrey and Sussex U3A Networks) – see 8b) above.

17 Discussion topic – ‘Welcoming New Members’

The following ways of ‘Welcoming New Members’ were mentioned:

- a) Leatherhead – new members are identified with an asterisk on membership list and are introduced to members of the committee.
- b) Horley – somebody is allocated to look after a new member.
- c) Horsley - new members are listed and welcomed and asked their interests.
- d) Kingston – new members invited to a local pub for a coffee morning. At the monthly meeting new members are identified by wearing a yellow sticker.
- e) Spelthorne – they are taking positive steps and as an experiment they hold quarterly meetings to which new members are invited. This allows them to network amongst themselves and recognise friendly faces.
- f) Merton – new members are invited to a lunch. They are split into groups and committee members talk to them.
- g) Colin (Wokingham) – for the last 5 years they have been successfully holding 4 new members meetings a year, at which they are asked their interests.
- h) Elmbridge have started 6-monthly meetings for new members, at which they form groups. There is also a team of 4 ladies who ring new members 3-4 months after joining.
- i) Reigate and Redhill – they hold 2 registration days for new members to which Group Leaders attend.

18 Topic for next meeting

To be decided.

19 Any other business

- a) Horsley asked to what extent in U3As do we offer a welfare role. It was stated that the Third Age Trust advise us not to accept responsibility. All members should look after themselves. If mobility is a problem a carer should accompany.
 - i) Bookham suggested that we take this as a topic for the next meeting;
 - ii) Banstead coped with minor disabilities – hearing loops, large notices, wheelchair access. But they do need to address blindness;
 - iii) Reigate – have a welfare role – if members cannot attend meetings they investigate the problems;
 - iv) Kingston make contact with frail members and are aware of those experiencing loneliness.
- b) Ian tabled a document re insurance from Epsom. It was agreed that Colin/Ian/Arthur would respond directly to Epsom.

Tom

Colin/
Ian/
Arthur

20 Date of next meeting

- a) Horsley Village Hall, Thursday, 24 March. It was confirmed that they are responsible for paying for the hire of the hall.
- b) Ian has suggested that further such meetings should take place on the third (*amendment – this should read fourth*) Thursday of the month so as not to clash with groups’ monthly meetings. Thus, the meeting thereafter will be held on Thursday, 27 October with Kingston hosting it.

Colin bade farewell as this was the last Surrey Network he would be attending.

Tom thanked Anne for her role as secretary.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm

Signed as a correct record of the meeting _____ Date _____