

Charnwood u3a Committee

Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 11th May 2022

Present: Mike Hood (MH) (Chair), Phil Bass (PB), Bev Gillman (BG), Margaret Kelvey (MK), Helen Reid (HR), Garry Rigby (GR), Bob Pyatt (BP), Sue Ronald (SR), Tony Westaway (TW) Pam Upton (PU) (Minutes).

Apologies were received from Geetha Bala and Bob Pyatt

Graham Cooper (GC) attended from 11am.

Mike welcomed Ian Procter-Blain to the meeting.

1	<p>Minutes of the last meeting on 13th April 2022</p> <p>Correction to item 3e: Change ‘Garry would print new member cards’ to Garry would print new member cards in a different colour’.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed and signed.</p>	
2	<p>Matters arising (Items not covered by the agenda)</p> <p>3a.1: Since discovering that the price increase for the TAM magazine was only 15p, Mike had not contacted the Third Age Trust.</p> <p>3c.1: The form for group leaders to input group details was not yet live on the website.</p> <p>3e: Mike had spoken to Sue Young, who confirmed that her team does guide new members through the procedures at monthly meetings.</p> <p>3f.2: Unity Bank have the necessary paperwork for the corporate charge cards and the application was now proceeding.</p> <p>4.1: The role descriptions were now in the Committee area of the website. Tony was trialling a new facility and asked Committee members to review the section under Committee Role Descriptions.</p> <p>5. Mike confirmed that Loughborough u3a would be closing at the end of the year. He would email their Chair to confirm that they would need to transfer at least £1500 to cover the cost of free membership for Lu3a members from January to October 2023. Mike looked forward to welcoming new groups into Cu3a.</p> <p>8: Pam asked that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion be included on the agenda next time.</p> <p>9: Sue Cotton, the Lu3a Treasurer, was happy to audit the Cu3a accounts this year on a mutual basis. Mike confirmed that Sue was a Cu3a member, but that she was permitted to do our auditing under TAT regulations.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>MH</p>

<p>3. Reports</p> <p>a. Secretary (PU)</p> <p><u>1. Third Age Trust</u></p> <p>a. The Cu3a Annual Return was submitted to TAT on April 14th.</p> <p>b. Notification was received of the TAT Annual General Meeting on 6th October 2022. This will be a hybrid meeting, time and venue to be confirmed. U3as are requested to submit proposed resolutions by 20th June. Nominations for the Board of Directors are required by 17th June. The Regional Trustee for the East Midlands (currently Jean Hogg) is open for election. Mike would contact Helen Davison to see if she wished to be nominated.</p> <p>c. (i) A mailing on April 14th informed u3as that they could offer concessions on their membership, for example to Ukrainian refugees or people experiencing financial hardship. No fee would be payable to the Trust unless the member were still a member on 31st March 2023. There was a view that the primary focus should be on people experiencing financial hardship, who could show benefit receipts as evidence, though Committee acknowledged that not everyone in hardship claimed benefits. Mike suggested that we could offer a reduced price, excluding the TAM magazine and Tony offered to find out which benefit(s) might be the best source(s) of evidence.</p> <p>(ii) The mailing also included a message from the TAT Treasurer: “The Trust Board approved the budget for the financial year 2022-3. This includes expenditure of just over £2 million. Apart from continuing with all our normal operating services, with coming out of the pandemic period, we expect to be able to progress on many developments that have been on hold for the last two years.”</p> <p>(iv) Mike had noticed that an advertisement in Third Age Matters was offering a 10% discount on Riviera Holidays, to be refunded to their u3a. He would check the details.</p> <p><u>2. Network News</u></p> <p>The April newsletter included details of an upcoming EDI Zoom Coffee Morning on 25th May, which Pam would be attending and on which she would report at the next Committee meeting.</p> <p>b. Beacon Administrator (PB)</p> <p>1. Phil’s report detailed a number of recent issues with the system, some of which had been resolved.</p> <p><u>2. Alternatives to Beacon</u></p> <p>Phil made three points about Simple Membership, relating to the software, the service and the risk.</p> <p>i. Beacon and Simple Membership provided a similar set of membership management functions, though SM had the advantage of being less intimidating for those unfamiliar with technology. Unlike Beacon, SM is also a website builder and therefore would include automatic access to a website.</p> <p>ii. In addition to the failure of the promised upgrade, the Beacon system had experienced a number of minor failures in recent months, which Phil felt pointed to a lack of competence in the team. In contrast, he had received unsolicited reports of good service from u3as using Simple Membership. There were around ten u3as using SM at present, none of which had moved from Beacon. He explained how member details would be transferred: Cu3a would</p>		<p>MH</p> <p>TW</p> <p>MH</p>
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<p>supply the information, which SM would upload into the system. A trial system was available. Phil assured Committee that there would not be an issue with data protection.</p> <p>iii. The main risk appears that Simple Membership is currently run by one person. Like Beacon, SM has a User Group. However, it was pointed out that if the number of u3as signing up to SM increased significantly, the level of support might suffer.</p> <p>In answer to a question about SM’s website design programme, Phil assured Committee members that it does allow for password controlled areas, which are controlled at the level of the individual item on the web page. Phil and Tony to discuss.</p> <p>Tony expressed concern about the creation of what would be a new website, since the existing Cu3a website could not simply be transferred. Mike’s view was that that task would need to be undertaken by Tony’s successor as Web Manager and Phil offered to fulfil the role if necessary. Phil was asked to look at starting to build a website that would work with Simple Membership. Garry felt that although SM had a number of advantages, generally Beacon did work for him. He agreed to provide a list of concerns.</p> <p>Another issue might be the training of group leaders. Mike suggested that Committee members might first try out the SM system themselves. Phil would contact SM to explain our situation and request an additional trial.</p> <p>c. Groups Coordinator (BG)</p> <p>In addition to information about specific groups, Bev’s report gave details of the Group Leaders meeting on April 27th. She hoped to contact GLs who had neither apologised nor attended to enquire the reason. Issues discussed during the meeting were the safety of members and GLs responsibilities in this area. She assured GLs that they are covered by TAT’s insurance and would forward details to them.</p> <p>Sue confirmed that the Current Affairs group was now up and running.</p> <p>d. Membership (GR)</p> <p>Garry reported that the current membership stood at 950, including two new members.</p> <p>e. New Members Liaison (MK)</p> <p>Of the five members joining recently, Margaret had contacted three by phone and will contact others by email. Those she had contacted were already in groups and happy to have joined. She had given details of monthly meetings and asked them to make contact when they arrived. She felt it would be helpful for the welcoming team to have name badges and for visitors to be offered a ‘Visitor’ sticker.</p> <p>f. Treasurer (BP)</p> <p>1. The Treasurer’s report, which included the payment of the Capitation charge and Beacon fee for the year, was accepted in Bob’s absence. The report noted that the budget forecast currently appeared generous; Mike observed that that meant we should have a financial ‘cushion’ going forward.</p> <p>2. Committee members who attended the Group Leaders meeting agreed that for £7.50 a head, the team at Emmanuel had provided an excellent buffet.</p>	<p>PB/TW</p> <p>GR</p> <p>PB</p> <p>BG</p>
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	<p>g. Web Manager (TW)</p> <p>1. Updates to the website included the agenda and minutes of the Group Leaders meeting. The trips calendar had also been updated, although GLs did not seem to be using it.</p> <p>2. Tony reported that the copyright issue was now officially closed, though noting that he had not in fact accessed the material from either of the two sources in question.</p> <p>3. The role descriptions were now in the password controlled Committee area of the website. A link was attached to Tony's report and Committee members were asked to review the facility.</p> <p>3. Krystal had updated our SSL encryption to ensure the security of the website for the next three months.</p> <p>3. General Statistics: Tony observed that website usage was declining slightly, but that over 800 visitors a month was still very positive. While News and Views was still the most popular download, Tony highlighted the fact that the Beacon Cookbook was downloaded 24 times in April and 48 times in the first two days of May!</p>	ALL
4.	<p>Programme Secretary</p> <p>Issues relating to the management of the Programme Secretary Role were discussed. It was proposed that current arrangements continue until November, when the situation would be reviewed.</p> <p>For his part, the Deputy Programme Secretary assured Committee that he would endeavour to ensure continuity in the management of the Speaker Programme until the end of the year. After that, though he could not undertake the full role, he would be prepared to act as 'stand-in' on an occasional basis if needed.</p>	
5.	<p>Committee Meeting Venue</p> <p>Having decided to return to monthly face to face meetings, Committee needed to decide on future venues. John Storer House had already pencilled us in for upcoming Wednesday morning meetings in the Forest Room. The current alternative was Greenfields Sports and Social Club, which had ample parking but no facility for refreshments. Members were uncertain of the comparative costs. Given the possibility of noise interference in the summer months, it was decided to go ahead with the June meeting at JSH and defer a final decision till then. Pam would check how much notice JSH would need should we decide to move to Greenfields.</p>	PU
6.	<p>Monthly meeting 'blending' technology</p> <p>1. Committee members were informed that Andrew Ricks managed the sound system within Emmanuel Church, while Garry managed external links. Garry was happy to organise the technology, but wondered if it was necessary, given that only two people had requested a Zoom link for the upcoming meeting. Mike felt that technical issues in previous meetings might have deterred members and that we should trial YouTube as an alternative to Zoom. A piece would be included in News and Views explaining the new system and encouraging members to participate if they couldn't attend in person. Garry agreed to further explore the YouTube option.</p> <p>2. Committee agreed to cancel the Zoom licence, due for renewal in July, after the June Committee meeting.</p>	GR GR

7.	Monthly Meetings (Covid) Risk Assessments Postponed till next meeting	
8.	New Member card holders/lanyards Committee members agreed that lanyards be ordered for new members.	
9.	Role Deputies Postponed till next time.	
10.	2022 Celebrations Since Charnwood Borough Council had asked us not to hold an event for Picnic in the Park, it was proposed that we plan an event in the summer to celebrate Cu3a's 25 th Anniversary. Mike and Bev to discuss possible dates.	MH/BG
11.	A.O.B. 1. <u>Online Application Forms</u> Tony outlined two options: a. an online form similar to the Trips form and b. a pdf form to be filled in online, sent to laptop, then sent to Garry as an attachment. Tony and Garry to discuss and report to the next Committee meeting. 2. <u>Group presentations at monthly meetings</u> The Making Music group had offered to perform during refreshments at the June meeting. The Committee approved unanimously.	TW/GR
12.	Date and Time of next meeting: Wednesday June 8th , 10.am, at John Storer House. The meeting closed at 12.15.	