

RINGMER U3A

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 16th May 2018 at 2.30pm in the Symons Hall

There were approximately 33 members present.

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from 12 members.

(2) Minutes of the last meeting held on 10th May 2017

The members approved the Minutes, a summary of which had been distributed by E-Bulletin and previously approved by the Committee on 11th June 2017.

(3) Matters Arising None

(4) Chairman and Trustees' Report

Ian Loughborough presented his report for the year 2017/18 (attached).

(5) Proposed Changes to Constitution – Ian Loughborough

(i) Proposal to amend our object clause to read: *the advancement of education, and in particular the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work, by all means including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development, in Ringmer and its surrounding locality.*

The above amendment was explained and discussed. Its acceptance was proposed by Valerie King, seconded by Julia Middleton and carried by the meeting.

(ii) Proposal to increase the maximum size of the Executive Committee from 10 to 12 to reflect our increase in membership.

After discussion this proposal was proposed by Sylvia Coleman, seconded by Carole Blakiston and carried by the meeting.

(iii) Proposal to increase the time that members can serve on the committee to 4 years in any role and a maximum of 7 years in total.

After discussion the proposal was proposed by Lynne Booth, seconded by John Elphick and carried by the meeting.

(6) Treasurer's Report – Sue Hall

Sue Hall presented the accounts for the year to 31st March 2018, which have been checked and agreed by our Independent Examiner. She then gave her report (attached).

(7) Financial Proposals for 2018/19 – Sue Hall

(i) Proposal to keep our annual fee to £8 (half year £5; associate £4). This was proposed by Julia Middleton, seconded by Val Tollervey and passed by the meeting.

(ii) Proposal for Sue Tibbenham to be the Independent Examiner of Ringmer U3A accounts for 2018/19. This was proposed by Wendy Morgan, seconded by Sylvia Coleman and passed by the meeting.

(8) Interest Groups – Sylvia Coleman

Sylvia Coleman, our Interest Groups Co-ordinator presented her report (attached). Keith Moore encouraged group conveners to share information with him and Martin Whitlock for possible inclusion on our website. He also confirmed that when enrolment for the coming year takes place in August the new data protection rules will be complied with.

Ian Loughborough expressed his thanks to both Elsie Bowler for all the time that she has given running the Poetry Circle and Janet Beirne for her work over the years.

(9) Sussex U3A Network (SUN) representative's report – Jill Collins

In Jill's absence her report (attached) was read by Ian Loughborough, who encouraged members to think about taking part in the various projects organized by the Network, especially the Chichester Summer School taking place in June each year.

(10) Election of the Executive Committee

Ian expressed his thanks to both Lynne Booth and Wendy Morgan for their hard work on the committee. Wendy, who joined in 2012 as New Groups Co-ordinator, has seen the number of groups increase from 12 when she took on the role, to 22 currently. Thanks were also expressed to Neil Morgan who had kindly given a talk on ceramics. Both Lynne and Wendy have contributed a great deal to the discussions on the committee and they will be greatly missed.

The following committee members are happy to continue: Ian Loughborough, Sue Hall, Sylvia Coleman, Stephan Van Dulken, Jill Collins and Ken Boot-Handford. These were re-elected en bloc having been proposed by Julia Middleton and seconded by Keith Moore.

During the past year Kay Fitzgerald was co-opted onto the committee as Honorary Secretary. Her appointment to the committee for the coming year was proposed by Teresa Keen, seconded by Lynne Booth and carried by the meeting.

(11) Any Other Business

Ian Loughborough and Sue Hall explained that this would be their last year in their posts and asked members to consider joining the committee.

The meeting closed at 3.17pm.

Ian Loughborough, Chairman

Kay Fitzgerald, Hon. Secretary

Chairman's Report 2017/18

I am pleased to report that this has been another successful year. We now have 22 interest groups and 185 members. You will hear more about our groups from Sylvia. Interest groups form the core of any U3A, but many U3As also hold general meetings or gatherings so that members get a chance to meet members from other groups. Occasionally we have held a lunch which has always been very successful. I still live in the hope that we can arrange a regular general meeting with a speaker, say 3 times a year.

Your committee have had a busy year. We reviewed our written constitution in the light of advice from National U3A. You will hear more on this later. We have continued to improve our Governance Procedures and Practices, which detail our day-to-day management arrangements. We now have a new website thanks to much hard work by Martin Whitlock and Keith Moore. My thanks to them for making this possible. The website will be developed over the years to fully meet our needs. This year we welcomed two new members to our committee. Jill Collins joined as SUN Representative and Kay Fitzgerald recently joined as Secretary. My thanks to all the committee for their efforts during the year. I will say more later about Wendy and Lynne who are both leaving the committee.

National U3A have become much more active in recent months. They have held several workshops entitled "Keeping it legal". Many changes are happening nationally that impact on the way we run our U3As. Jill Collins represented us at one of the workshops. The most significant change is the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). We have received advice on this from National Office and are taking appropriate action.

Your committee have decided to use U3A Beacon which is a secure, efficient and effective means of managing our day-to-day business functions. Initially we will only use it for all aspects of membership, including group membership. In the longer term we might use it for finance as well. This should make it much easier for Committee Members and Convenors to communicate with members. Appropriate training will be given and we plan to have it operational by August 2018.

Finally, my annual plea for new committee members. Last year I said that it would be my last year as Chairman. Because of all the changes I am prepared to continue for another year if that is the wish. However, I cannot continue after that. Committee membership is a most rewarding job and I thoroughly commend it to you. We do need more members to step forward and join the committee if we are to continue as an independent U3A.

Ian Loughborough
Chairman

Interest Groups Report

This is the first time that group reports have been given in this way so I can only give an overall report from information received. At the present time there are 22 Groups, although unfortunately two groups are without convenors: Janet Beirne, Convenor of the Readers Circle and, as you are all aware from the Newsletter, Elsie Bowler, Convenor of the Poetry Circle, have decided to step down. However, it is hoped that convenors will be found and these two groups will continue.

The groups cover a wide range of subjects taking in learning, leisure and social activities meeting the needs of a wide range of members. I do not intend to go through each group individually but will highlight changes and any interesting projects that groups have undertaken. The Ambling Group has re-emerged as the short walk group. Unfortunately some misleading/conflicting information was given in the last newsletter concerning the days that the group meets, which could have contributed toward the slow start. In the table it should read that the group meets every second Monday; this error will be rectified in the next newsletter. Walking is an ideal way to exercise and socialise at the same time and I understand the walks are not too long, so let's hope numbers pick up now that the summer is with us. For the more adventurous there is always Lynne Booth's Walking Group covering longer distances. The Astronomy Group continues to meet September to April and to discuss a variety of topics. During May there is planned a late night session studying Jupiter and in August the group will study Saturn and meteorites. In September the group plans to visit Herstmonceux for their annual Astronomy Festival.

Language groups are popular, well supported and full; the French Beginners Group has now become Intermediate French so therefore there isn't an active French beginners group at present. Last Year, The Photography Group produced a 2018 calendar of photos of Ringmer, taken by group members, which was a great success; it is hoped to produce another this year but not of Ringmer. Family History continues to flourish with an increasing membership; as well as some interesting presentations, members have undertaken two projects devised by Bob Cairns, which has energised us all into getting on with our family trees.

What the Papers Say, although a small group, continues to promote Interesting debate and discussion.

The Theatre Group continues to run with members selecting the plays. After a forced fallow period due to health issues the group is looking forward to resuming activities and will be arranging a Planning Meeting shortly to establish an Autumn/Winter programme. With grateful thanks to Lesley Atkinson, more than twenty of us are booked to see the latest "Behind The Curtain" evening of Glyndebourne Touring Opera. We are also proposing to see The Play That Goes Wrong at the Theatre Royal and the funny and moving First World War play, Wipers Times, at Devonshire Park. Other productions will be discussed and added to the diary shortly. We would welcome more people to the group as the more members we have, the greater the chance of achieving sufficient numbers to make outings worthwhile.

The newest group that has generated great interest is the computer group. The first meeting was in January and so far two workshops have been held, helping members with issues around Apple, Microsoft and Android. A presentation on a topic, which is of particular concern to everyone is cyber safety and staying safe online. A talk was given by Chris White, the Police Cyber Security Officer, on the pitfalls that can occur and especially online

crime, all too prevalent in this day and age. It was an eye opener and gave us all something to think about.

The number of groups has increased over the years, along with an ever-growing membership, and groups tend to be membered centred, with members deciding the type of activity that they would like to focus on. Groups all appear to be coping well and are generally well supported, although one or two could do with additional members. Information on the status of groups and the dates they run is published in the Newsletter.

Sylvia Coleman

Sussex U3A Network (SUN) report

Every U3A in Sussex has a SUN representative who attends meetings to learn of any new developments and to exchange ideas and learn from each other.

Study Days

In the last year SUN has provided a variety of study days with subjects ranging from Historic Sussex Industries to Musical Memories from Four Great Composers, with several members from Ringmer enjoying these high quality, reasonably priced Saturday events. More study days will be available later in the year.

Shared Learning Project (SLP) Sussex Myths and Legends

SUN is encouraging U3A groups to take part in a Sussex-wide project which will finalise with a presentation at Brighton University in the summer of 2019. Sussex has a rich tapestry of legends, mixing history with myths and I will help any group in Ringmer interested in taking part.

The South East U3A Forum incorporates U3As in Kent, Surrey and Sussex

The Annual Conference was held in East Grinstead on 16th May and had a wide variety of speakers including our regional Trustee Bob Duckmanton and the Chairman of U3A Plus, who outlined the need to widen access to U3A activities to those with age-related difficulties and disabilities.

Summer School

This year the Summer School will be held from 18 to 21 June 2018 at Chichester University, with numerous different topics and full board accommodation.

Jill Collins

RINGMER U3A

Treasurer's Report to AGM 16th May 2018

Sue Tibbenham, our Independent Examiner of Accounts, has checked and agreed the Statement of Accounts before you for the year April 2017 – March 2018 and the signed statement is on file.

Our main income is our Annual Subscriptions which are received each August. However, every year our major annual expenditures are in the following April & May, namely the National Capitation fees & Direct Mail charge. Our financial year ends on 31st March and hence the figures presented at that time do not show the payment of our major outgoings due later in the year.

Therefore since the Statement of Accounts was signed off payments have been made regarding our annual National Capitation fees (£679.00) and Direct Mail charge (£368.82).

This still leaves a healthy balance in our bank account and one that will serve as a contingency in the event of our major outgoings being increased next spring.

I would, therefore, like to propose that our annual subscription fee for 2018-2019 remains at £8.00 and for new members joining us after 31st December 2018, the half year subscription remains at £5.00. I also propose that the fees for affiliated members from other U3A Groups, such as Lewes, remain at half our annual subscription, namely £4.00.

The Third Age National Trust this year has made available a computer programme called "Beacon" to aid and support U3A groups in terms of membership and also financial records. The cost of the programme is a very reasonable 50p per member.

It promises to be a useful tool for our group. As a committee we have agreed to use the programme for 2018-2019 with regard to the membership records. The committee will be considering the possible adoption of the system for our financial records in the following year.

I have decided to stand down from the committee at next year's AGM as by then I will have completed 8 years as Treasurer. It is, I think, an appropriate time to stand down so the new Treasurer can launch the financial aspect of the "Beacon" programme if it is adopted and this old dog will not have to learn any new tricks! However, I will be more than happy to give any support if needed to the new appointee.

Finally, I would like to propose that Sue Tibbenham is elected as our Independent Examiner of Accounts for the year April 2018 to March 2019.

Sue Hall

May 2018

RINGMER U3A

Accounts for period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Members Subscriptions	1487.00	Affiliation Fees	626.50
Group Room hire receipts	495.37	Branch Hire of Rooms	46.75
Diaries	77.50	Group Room Hire	524.02
Group Outings		Diaries	77.50
TNA & Kew Gardens	839.00	Group Outings	
		TNA & Kew Gardens	804.55
		Direct Mail	307.65
		Photocopying	34.60
		Miscellaneous	147.67
	£2,898.87		£2,569.24

	£
Balance at 31.3.17	2,212.22
+ Income	2,898.87
	5,111.09
— Expenditure	2,569.24
	£ 2,541.85
Assets	
Cash at Bank 31.3.18	£2,552.87
- Liabilities	
Unpresented cheque	11.02
	£2,541.85

Examiner's report: It is my opinion that the above Statement of Accounts gives a true and fair view of the income, expenditure and assets as at 31 March 2018.

Signed *Sue Hall*
 Sue Hall
 Treasurer
 Date: 18th April 2018

Signed *Susan Tibbenham*
 Sue Tibbenham
 Examiner
 Date: 18 April 2018