

NEWARK & DISTRICT U3A

Minutes of the Committee Meeting on Monday, 28th November 2011 at Crossing Cottage, Collingham at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Bob Leitch (Chairman); Sue Boreham (Vice-Chair); Duncan Boreham (Treasurer); Tony Marriott (Membership Secretary & Groups Co-ordinator); Diane Illingworth; David Blake; Geoffrey Foulds (Secretary)

1 & 2. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed members. There were no apologies as Reg Robinson had informed that he would be attending.

3. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AS A CORRECT RECORD

Minutes had been circulated to all members. The Secretary pointed out that the time of closure of the last Meeting was incorrect on some copies. The file copy was accurate. Duncan queried the accuracy of Item 4(7) and questioned the Chairman on whether his comments about the U3A being more interested in finance than the welfare and organisation of Groups had been recorded correctly. BL confirmed that he could not recall using the word 'welfare' but the thoughts expressed were correct then and now. With this unresolved, and no proposer or seconder, the Chairman signed the Minutes as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Despite the approval of the Minutes, the following queries were raised concerning their accuracy:-

11(b) SB had no recollection of Reg Goodall's offer to help with the Book Swap facility. The Secretary showed the Meeting his notes from the Meeting and SB confirmed she would check with Mr Goodall.
8 It was pointed out that Sonya Sinclair's request for funding to provide festive catering for her December meeting related to the Dance Group and not Mah Jong. SB also referred to the comments made by RR and the Secretary about the risk of financial policies placing restrictions on the activities of Groups. It was agreed to postpone discussion until later in the Agenda.

Other matters arising from the Minutes:-

4 (6) TM confirmed that Jan Pavey had completed her application for Membership.
8 BL informed the Meeting that the Geology Group had held an inaugural meeting and interest assessed.

The Treasurer expressed a wish to discuss the responses made to a letter he had sent to Barbara Hatton regarding the increase in hire fees at Newark Bowls Club. The Chairman ruled that this should be dealt with at the appropriate point in the Agenda.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

a) The Secretary had received details of the Summer Schools from the Third Age Trust. The two venues were the same as last year - Telford and Cirencester. It was agreed to post information about dates, venues and the subjects offered on the web-site and in the Newsletter. Further information could then be

supplied to those interested.

b) Information about an optional 'All risks insurance for equipment' had been received from TAT. Duncan pointed out that, because our equipment is kept in members' homes, insurance cover is provided through private home insurance policies. The cost for the optional scheme would be in the region of £ 80 per year with a £ 50 excess clause. It was agreed not to pursue.

c) An information leaflet from the Royal Institution to an afternoon of lectures in London had been received. It will be placed on display.

d) The Secretary was still in possession of a leaflet from the Gardening Groups' Advisor. BL said he would pass it on to Barbara Hatton.

6. MEMBERSHIP

TM informed the Meeting that the membership figure currently stands at 226. In recent weeks applications have been arriving at the rate of one a day. The Meeting expressed its delight at the progress. The presentation to Robert Boddy, our 200th member, had not taken place at the last Monthly Meeting. Fortunately, the Chairman has persuaded the Advertiser and the recipient to attend the December Meeting when, hopefully, the milestone will be duly celebrated.

7. FINANCE

Duncan distributed financial statements to all members and explained that there was little change and steady progress according to the plan.. He drew attention to the effect of the Showcase promotional events by quoting membership applications for the period after September for the last four years. In 2008 and 2009, the numbers were 14 and 12 respectively; for the two years when the promotional events have been staged, the numbers are 23 (2010) and 44 (2011).

Subscriptions have, therefore, increased considerably, as have door fees, to offset the rise in room hire and speakers' fees.

Despite the apparent equality of income and expenditure for Study Groups, GF asked if figures were available for each individual Group. He felt that there may be some disparity between how Groups managed their financial affairs. Duncan did not have the figures to hand but would produce them at a later date.

8. GROUP LEADERS' GUIDELINES AND THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF GROUPS

This item was dominated by a 30 minute exchange of views, based on a letter sent to Barbara Hatton about changes to hire charges at Newark Bowls Club and subsequent exchanges between David and the Chairman. To avoid misquoting any individual and in spite of copious notes taken at the Meeting, these Minutes will record only the relevant outcomes.

a) The parties agreed to differ over their interpretations of the Treasurer's role in advising Group Leaders.

b) The Treasurer offered to resign if it was felt he was not performing his duties satisfactorily.

c) BL and David praised Duncan for his skill and dedication, described him as a perfect Treasurer and did not wish to see him resign.

Duncan continued to stress the importance of the Committee, as Trustees, having the ultimate responsibility of deciding how Groups should be financially managed, while others insisted that the views of Group Leaders and their members should be taken into account. The Group Leaders' Meeting would take place on the 12th January 2012 at the Bowls Club at 10.00 a.m.

Duncan then produced documents on 'Conflicts of Interest,' which he asked to be put on the Agenda of the next Meeting for discussion, and 'Guidelines for Non Members' Attendance at U3A meetings and events,' which he wanted posting on the web-site.

9. DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

Reg Robinson joined the Meeting at this juncture.

Barbara Hatton will organise the afternoon which will include:

Two quizzes; readings by the Creative Writing Group members; a recital by the Recorder Playing Group; festive catering (mulled wine and mince pies)

DI used the opportunity to ask about dates for other social meetings so that she could plan Speakers for the coming year. Speakers were organised until February 2012; it was hoped to invite the M.P. for Newark to speak at the April Meeting. It was suggested that social meetings be held every three months i.e.: March,

which was originally the date of the A.G.M., June and September.

Duncan hoped that the interest in social meetings would not lead to disappointment for those who wished to hear speakers. It was also confirmed that we would restrict Speakers to 45 minute presentations.

10. MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

The Secretary pointed out that this matter had been mooted for the past three or four years and should be resolved one way or the other. RR informed the Meeting that he had tried but lack of information from Group Leaders and other sources was a stumbling block. He suggested that induction meetings for new members might be useful to introduce them to the Committee, Group Leaders and provide information. It was felt that the web-site had perhaps removed the need for a handbook.

It was proposed GF, seconded BL that we no longer pursue the compilation of a Members' Handbook. Agreed unanimously.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) GF asked if the tree being entered in the Parish Church Christmas Tree Festival was an official U3A entry; he had not been asked for any publicity material and felt that the tree should carry information and publicity about the U3A. As the tree had been paid for by the U3A Duncan maintained it was official. GF will supply material on the day the trees are decorated.

b) GF asked how many Group Registers had been submitted as per request. TM confirmed 5, with 3 on the way. RR suggested that the registers might reveal Groups that needed to be split into smaller units. GF felt that should be left to the Leaders.

c) David asked if the Art Group's subscription of £25 to the resource facility would be met by the U3A. **GF proposed that the subscription be paid by the U3A; seconded BL and agreed unanimously.**

d) DI had information from a new member that film equipment was available from the Palace Theatre. BL had been told that the theatre was getting rid of its equipment because of changes to its financial management.

12. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 19th January 2012 at 2.00 p.m. at Crossing Cottage, Westbrook Lane, Collingham.

The Members thanked Sue and Duncan for their hospitality and the Meeting closed at 4.20 p.m.

