

**Basingstoke – Old Basing u3a
Committee Meeting
Thursday 11th March 2021
Via Zoom**

Attending: Rod Marshall, Marie White, Margaret Hayes, Sue Seamour, Janet & Richard Field, Linda Wain and Liz Horner

1. Apologies for absence: Ian Stimpson and Madeline Hussey
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes 21st January 2021 – The Minutes were approved and will be signed at a later date.
3. Open Actions – Linda has been in contact with the Samaritans and they will be meeting up over Zoom in the next couple of weeks. They will be coming when we have our AGM and Linda asked if they should do their presentation before or after the meeting. It was agreed that it should be before the meeting but Rod said to make sure that they stick to their 30/40 minutes allotted time as we will have to start the AGM.
4. Marketing Sub-Committee Update – Rod highlighted Item 5 which Madeline offered to fund but Rod said that we now have the £75 grant from National Office and this should be used. The National u3a Day will be on 2nd June 2021. Madeline has suggested that a re-launch party would be good, giving non-members a chance to see what the u3a is all about and this would help to promote the u3a (see paragraph 11). Linda requested once again for photographs and write-ups from the Groups.
5. Group Convenors Meeting/Group Activities Update – Margaret reported that the meeting went well.

Line Dancing – This will be starting in May. The numbers will be restricted so Margaret said we shouldn't add this to the Newsletter, as there is already a waiting list.

Creative Writing – This Group has now reached its maximum number of 10 participants. Any other members interested will have to go on to a waiting list, or a second group is started.

Linda said in the New Members letter it states to contact Group Convenors about joining a Group.

Short Mat Bowls – Ian can no longer run this Group. Rod said he would highlight the need for a new Group Leader in the next newsletter.

Sue said that if we split Groups, we will have to consider the cost of venues to accommodate this.

Meditation Group – Richard said that this is a closed Group. They now meet on Zoom but usually meet in someone's house in groups of 10.

Margaret is starting a couple of Zoom meetings most days which at the moment isn't a problem, but once lockdown is over she will not be available to do this. Alistair Craig and Barbara Robson may be able to open a meeting on a Friday morning. Sue asked what the Zoom rules are about giving out passwords. Janet checked months ago and as long as we show it is a u3a member and only once then it is okay.

6. Monthly Meeting Webinars – Linda reported that Henry VIII was brilliant and we may book the same person again next year to appear as another character.

Overton u3a has a meeting booked a week after our meeting in April and Linda wondered how the Committee felt about us piggy-backing their meeting as they have done with us three times previously – and it would save us money. The theme will be Cascade Gardens. Richard pointed out that we would have to be careful as we have a contract with Zoom which is renewable monthly. There was a discussion about some Groups being unable to join the Overton meeting, but Linda pointed out that it starts at 11 a.m. It was decided to offer two webinars for April, ours on 14th April at 2 p.m. which will be Roy Norton on TV Production, and the other on 21st April at 11 a.m. - Cascade Gardens with Overton. Sue asked how much the speaker for our talk would be and Linda confirmed it would be £100.

Our two meetings after that will be the Life of Grace Kelly on 12th May and Pop of the Box on 9th June.

7. Membership Renewals – It was initially thought that the total number to date was 702, and Linda felt that in September our membership number would be about 728. Numbers were also mentioned for the non-renewals and lapsed categories, but doubts were expressed about these numbers on Beacon which Liz will look at. Sue said that 621 members have paid £15 and this must mean approximately 100 members haven't paid. Liz pointed out that this will be due at least in part to Covid: members are unsure what we are offering and some may be reluctant to commit until they know where we stand. Margaret had an email from Tim Walker-Arnott who wants to renew but says that he hasn't had any information. Linda will send this out to him.
8. Treasurer's Report – Rod has recovered our money from PayPal. Sue has now stopped our query with the Financial Ombudsman and our PayPal account has been closed. We have £37,546 in our bank accounts and Sue is pleased that the membership is just above the budgeted number but stressed that we really need around 750 members for 2021/22. AmazonSmile donations have brought in £15. 27 and The Third Age Trust grant is £75. Sue said the Croquet is paid per head and 66 payments had been invoiced but 4 or 5 members had not paid their u3a membership fees. Margaret will ask the Group Convenor to chase this up. Sue said that anyone who hasn't paid their fees could not be allowed to join or remain in a Group. Sue asked if Group Conveners checked whether people attending their groups were paid-up u3a

members. Margaret said they did but there is no correlation between membership and Group lists within Beacon, but she is not sending emails out to members marked in red in the group listing. If members are removed from the main list then they should be removed from the Groups lists as well. Linda said that you can search under “Lapsed” to help find these members.

Sue has had a letter from Hook Village Hall about the cost of storage going up to £2 a month from £1.50. She asked if we are still using it. Richard said that from what he has seen, the cupboard needs sorted out as there are lots of bits and pieces in there. Margaret said we may be able to use a cupboard at Christ Church but will have to reduce the amount we are going to store. She herself has a couple of items at home which will eventually need to be stored. Linda and Richard will arrange to clear the storage cupboard at Hook when lockdown lifts.

Sue understands that she should sign hire agreements and that Janet holds the copies we have at present. Margaret said that it doesn't matter who signs them as long as it is a Committee Member. Janet confirmed that all documents held are now on Wix. Margaret said that agreements are usually renewed annually. Sue will check on Wix to see what we have got and what we need. We don't appear to have a copy of the contract for Christ Church -Sue will chase this up.

9. Beacon Issues – There is a list of members who haven't paid. Liz is keeping an eye on what is going on with Beacon. E-mails that have to be seen as read are still a problem if sending out more than 20. Liz has spoken to Joyce and asked her to limit the number she sends to batches of 10. Margaret pointed out that “Creative Writing” is not on Beacon. She will let Liz know the details.

Rod had to leave the meeting and Margaret took over as Chair.

10. Recruiting Committee Members – It was discussed as to the best way to show the benefits of being a Committee Member in the Newsletter. All agreed that a picture was a good idea and the cartoon picture was chosen as the best option. Marie pointed out that people are more likely to read one page with bullet points. Richard said we have to stress the benefits for Members who do volunteer. Janet suggested “thought bubbles” saying what we actually get out of being on the Committee, maybe by using sayings.
11. Group Provision (as Lockdown eases) – Richard said a lot of members who are attending the webinars did not attend the monthly meetings in Elizabeth Hall and vice versa, and we now have the opportunity to maybe change to having meetings every other month on Zoom. We could also consider keeping some Groups on Zoom. Marie pointed out that we have to think of the social side for some members and also the fact some of our older members would not use computers. Janet remarked that this is a golden opportunity to reassess and make changes where necessary and a lot of members from feedback that she has heard are happier keeping up with Zoom meetings. In the long run it could save us money on venues.

12. Dropbox to Wix Conversion – Richard reported that this has been completed. Each section needs the password to enter but you can access the documents without a password. Richard said that any documents can be added, just send them to him.
13. AOB – Linda reported back on attending the first network meeting for Memberships Secretaries¹. The drop in membership across the u3as attending varied from 3% - 30%. Two u3a Membership Secretaries had assistants to help them and Linda wondered if it would be a possibility for her to have one! Other tips were given of various experiences.

Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 29th April 2021 @ 9. 30 a.m.

Actions

Linda – Send out information to Tim Walker-Arnott

Margaret – Ask the Croquet GL to chase member for fees

Linda & Richard – To go through Hook storage after lockdown

Sue – To check where we are with contracts

Margaret – Let Liz know details of “Creative Writing” for Beacon

Minutes taken by – Brenda Austin

¹ The following notes were circulated by Linda separately from the committee meeting.

Membership Secs Network meeting - 2.2.21 - 13 different u3as attended across Hampshire and Surrey. The loss of members during last year varied from 3-30% and nil if no renewal fee was requested. Those with no renewal fees coming in were concerned that that they would still have to pay the admin fee to National Office on the numbers as at April, when theirs were still at 100%. Two u3as had two to manage new members and renewals, one still using cheques only and collecting from a PO Box.

Top tips: keep membership numbers year on year, keep membership cards on mobile, Google forms used for questionnaires, Camberley use Izettle but have to pay 1.5% commission, I offered the Mirthy talks and then I gained the info on the extra £40 to cover up to 500 delegates attending own zoom meetings, mail chimp used, walking groups deliver newsletters to those not on email. Our u3a was certainly as progressive as most. We are planning to meet up every 6 months.