

**PADDOCK WOOD U3A ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> AGM held via Zoom on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

**Present – Committee Comprising:**

Michele Sinclair	<i>Chair</i>	Colin Beavington	<i>Vice Chair</i>	Wendy Wollen	<i>Secretary</i>
John Spoor	<i>Treasurer</i>	Cheryl Linnegar	<i>StudyDaysCo</i>	Ron Trevillion	<i>Webmaster</i>
Dawn Kirk	<i>WelcomeTeam</i>				

**Apologies:**

Jeff Bewsey	<i>Membership Sec</i>	Ray Crowle	<i>Speakers'Co.</i>	Fred Lemont	<i>Publicity/Marketing</i>
Bob Wilding	<i>Int.Groups Co</i>	Jenny Carney	<i>Welfare Team</i>		

**1. Minutes of AGM held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

Accepted and seconded as correct by Joyce Cahill and Trevor Carney.

**2. Chair's Report**

**Introduction** – MS started off by explaining how the zoom meeting would be recorded and explained how polling should be carried out. However, due to technical shortcomings – totally out of MS control, neither was possible despite her careful preplanning. Notwithstanding, an alternative method was subsequently implemented and was deemed successful.

**Main Chair's Report:**

“Well, what to say about this year! We started off so well with so much going on – new members, new groups and new ideas. However, we have had to struggle with the restrictions imposed upon us by the Covid-19 virus, but I'm happy to say that our U3A has not stopped. Throughout this difficult period, we've had new members join, 5 new interest groups have started, and we've all learnt how to use new technology! The majority of our groups have continued meeting, albeit in a different form, and now with the new rules and garden meetings deemed too chilly, we'll have to find more ways around the restrictions, but hopefully Zoom Meetings will offer a substitute until the risk of catching the virus has passed. The Committee has been having regular Zoom meetings throughout and everything has been going on as usual in the background. I would like to thank all the Committee Members for all the effort that each one has gone to, to make sure that things carry on in these difficult circumstances.

The members who volunteered to assist others during the lockdown with getting medication, groceries and so on, deserve a round of applause; Craft Group 3, plus some others, who made so many face masks for us with so much money raised for Hospice in the Weald, also deserve a round of applause. One member knitted 50 pairs of boobs for mastectomy patients and 75 heart shaped cushions for cancer patients ,and at least two others were extremely busy making various pieces of Personal Protective Equipment for

NHS personnel. Lockdown posed some difficult problems for us all, and I hope that some of you have read my weekly emails and perhaps found something useful or of interest within them – if you'd rather not continue to receive them, then do please let me know.

Zoom has been a learning curve for us all, but what a useful piece of software – we're running more training sessions on it, so if you would like to attend either a beginners or a host session, then please let me know – it really is very easy to use. Our monthly meetings are up and running again and the seminar programme will recommence in January so that you can attend in the comfort of your own home.

What has been apparent through this lockdown is that there are many retired people in and around Paddock Wood who would greatly benefit from joining us. Our annual January Open Day meeting will be completely different next year, and so we need different ways to tell and show people what we are and what we achieve – more of that later in the year, but if you know of neighbours and friends who would enjoy being part of our groups, then please persuade them to join us.

Looking to the future, with the restrictions on the number of people who can gather together indoors, we don't think that our programme of events will return to normal for quite some time. Therefore, we need to radically re-think the way that we run our groups and brainstorming sessions are in order. How can your group continue its pursuits? It just needs some ingenuity to come up with new ideas and plans - no negativity please; we all know the difficulties and so we need to solve them, now. Can you screen share with a Zoom chessboard? You can knit in front of the computer as well as chat to each other via Zoom – just think of it as a video phone – and it's free! This year has been surreal, but it has at least caused us all to exercise our brains to get around the restrictions”.

### **3. Changes to the Constitution**

The pandemic has forced us to consider making changes to the Constitution so that in the event of an emergency, we can function efficiently.

The wording that we would like to add to our Constitution, is as follows:

*Under special and unusual circumstances, if it is impossible to hold a Special Meeting or Annual General Meeting in person, which requires members to vote, a virtual meeting may be convened, providing the required notice is given to members, with the sole aim of displaying good governance. Postal voting will be possible upon application to the Secretary. Voting will be done electronically by using the polling system. The process will be explained at the time to participating members, should the need for this procedure arise. If a member loses connectivity he/she can return a postal vote because the vote will relate to documents previously circulated and will not be solely reliant on any discussion on the day. In exceptional circumstances, the Executive Committee may decide to postpone the AGM for a period of up to but not exceeding 12 months.*

The changes were proposed by Peter Dick and seconded by John Flashman. There was a unanimous vote by members so the changes were carried.

#### 4. Changes to Subscriptions

Considering the disruption to our usual meetings since the beginning of April, the Committee think it only right to give a rebate on this year's subscriptions by lowering the subscriptions for the coming year. Our fixed costs still have to be paid and they are all increasing in the coming year; a large proportion of our income will still have to be sent to the Third Age Trust for capitation, the Beacon Management System and TAM magazine. Our outgoings are obviously less as we have no hall or church hire to pay. Naturally, we hope that all members will renew next year and persuade lots of friends and neighbours to join, but we can only produce our best estimate for income for the next year.

The Committee propose that the subscription for the coming year 2021 should be reduced to £12 for single membership and £20 per couple (the difference is one copy of TAM magazine).

These changes have been proposed by Andy Wickham and seconded by Trevor Carney. The changes were voted in unanimously by members.

#### 5. Membership Secretary's Report

Apologies from Jeff Bewsey, however, his report was as follows:

- We currently have 565 members, with 3 new members joining during lockdown.
- Technology has enabled us to keep in contact with everyone with personal deliveries of news to those not on-line.
- Our joint concerted effort to keep in touch and support each other has been astounding.
- Not one member has asked for a refund of subscriptions.
- We urge members to maintain the vibrancy of PW U3A by renewing their membership in January 2021.

#### 6. Treasurer's Report

##### Paddock Wood U3A

##### Summary Income & Expenditure Account 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 -30<sup>th</sup> June 2020

- It was confirmed that the Accounts had been examined by an independent examiner and found to be an accurate record.
- It was explained that the accounts sheet represented a snap shot of the PW U3A Accounts up until the end of our financial year – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
- **Income** was shown as monies from running the U3A **£9,630.12** plus Social Events income for theatre trips, study days, Quattro and Seminars of **£13,080.35**. Therefore the **TOTAL INCOME** was shown as **£22,710.47**.

***Note:** At this stage it was realised that technology had failed meaning that the Summary Accounts sheet was not being viewed/shared by our members. However, the Chair – Michele Sinclair, reminded the members that the sheet was already in their possession having been issued ahead of time with the official notice of the AGM and Questions that had been posed. As the members had already had an opportunity of examining it a vote was taken, and the Summary Accounts were unanimously passed.*

## 7. Previously Notified Questions

**Question (A)** proposed by Colin Mark and seconded by Brenda Mark

*“I propose that a proper sound check using that day’s speaker be run prior to any meeting with a speaker (guest or member). This would entail the speaker reading a standard short piece and a committee member taking a show of hands to gauge if the majority of the audience is satisfied with the sound level”.*

Before voting the Chair indicated that we always do a technical sound check, and since the one occasion when we had a speaker who did not use a microphone, we have always insisted that mikes be used. Seats are reserved at the front for those who are hard of hearing and/or have restricted mobility – or any other concerns.

Prior to actual voting, further comments were requested.

The proposal was carried unanimously.

**Question (B)** proposed by Colin Mark and seconded by Brenda Mark.

*“I propose that the length of the talk at the monthly meeting be limited to 35 minutes (max) (with a buzzer sounding after 30 minutes to inform the Speaker that it is time to wind up) with questions to the Speaker being in addition to the 35 minutes – but with a limit of no more than 10 minutes.”*

Before voting, the Chair indicated that the Committee is of the opinion that we should keep to the hour for the talk. We are concerned that some booked speakers will cancel if their allotted time is reduced. Members were then asked to vote,

The proposal was not carried.

**Question (C)** proposed by Colin Mark and seconded by Brenda Mark.

This point relates to Question (B) and limiting the Speaker to 35 minutes.

*“If a Speaker is that interesting, then couldn’t they be invited back for another a talk or for them to lead a Seminar?”*

As Question (B) was not carried and it was stated that Speakers are already asked back if they were interesting, then Question (C) was not carried as it was no longer relevant.

## 8. Election of Committee Members

The Chair indicated the following changes:

- Cheryl Linnegar is stepping down as Study Days’ Coordinator.

Jan Wheddon has been proposed by Keith Sinclair and seconded by Sue Thompson. Members voted unanimously for Jan Wheddon.

- Bob Wilding has asked to step-down as Interest Groups Coordinator, but as a replacement has yet to be found, he has kindly agreed to stay in post until someone can be found. (Anyone interested in finding out more about this post is encouraged to contact a committee member).
- Committee Members continuing to serve are:  
Michele Sinclair, Colin Beavington, John Spoor, Wendy Wollen, Jeff Bewsey, Fred Lemont, Ray Crowle, Jenny Carney, Ron Trevillion, Dawn Kirk.  
Proposed by Jeremy Thompson and seconded by Anni Wickham with the proposal unanimously carried/approved by members.

The Chair indicated the conclusion of the business of the AGM and the meeting closed at 3.40pm.

The Chair concluded by thanking everyone for their time by saying:

*"I look forward to bumping into you in Waitrose, or Zooming and/or chatting with you on the phone, and, until such time as we can meet normally again may I be the very first to wish you all a very Merry Christmas....."*

**Signed:**

**Chair** .....

**Date:** .....