

PADDOCK WOOD U3A ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 11th AGM held at St. Andrew's Church, Paddock Wood on Thursday 13th October 2022

Present – Committee Comprising:

Michele Sinclair	<i>Chair</i>	Colin Beavington	<i>Vice Chair</i>	Anne Trevillion	<i>Treasurer</i>
Wendy Wollen	<i>Secretary</i>	Jeff Bewsey	<i>MembSec</i>	Ray Crowle	<i>Speaker'Co</i>
Dawn Kirk	<i>Welc Team</i>	Jenny Carney	<i>Welfare</i>	Michael Smith	<i>Co-opted</i>

Apologies: Fred Lemont/*Publicity & Marketing*; Jan Wheddon/*Int.GroupsCo*;
Ron Trevillion/*Webmaster*; Barry Ednie/*Co-opted*

1. Minutes of AGM held on Thursday 14th October 2021

Accepted and Seconded by Jenny Carney and Michael Smith respectively.

2. Chair's Report

"Well, we made our way through Covid and survived, and we have a record number of members. We have an absolutely thriving Speaker and Seminar Programme; thank you to Ray Crowle, Simone Prince and Peter Stallwood for putting together such interesting programmes for us. We launched our Super Seminars this year to spend more time looking at a topic in depth, and they have proved hugely popular; thank you to Colin Beavington for putting these together. Study Days are as vibrant as ever and next year's programme looks really interesting – thank you to Pat Stallwood but also to Jan Wheddon for holding the fort for so long. Thank you also to all members who stepped forward to arrange such pleasant and informative days for us all. Quattro is thriving and the 4 events which the team organise each year are such good fun – a big, big thank you to all the members of that team. The Committee give their time and effort unstintingly and I thank them all for their support and help not only this last year but all through the difficult Covid period. With their help and encouragement, we've come through and are stronger than ever! Thank you also to all the unsung heroes who roll up their sleeves and help when needed – all those who help set up the rooms, volunteer to help with refreshments, help clear away – all those members who see a job that needs doing and just go and do it. Without your support we would be in trouble. Lastly thank you to all our members because without you and your participation we wouldn't have a U3A.

Looking back on the past year it has been so much easier without the awful lockdowns; being able to meet in our groups as normal was such a pleasure; not having to wear a mask all the time was such a relief, however, catching Covid wasn't so good.

Some of our long serving Committee Members are stepping down today:

- **Ron Trevillion** – is stepping down after 11 years on the Committee. Ron was our first Membership Secretary and was with us at the very beginning and really does deserve a rest. He is generously continuing to act as Webmaster and putting together the handbook. Many thanks Ron for all your commitment over the years; it won't be the same on the Committee without you. You will be missed.
- **Fred Lemont** – is stepping down after 11 years and if it wasn't for Fred, then we wouldn't have a Paddock Wood U3A at all. Fred was one of the main driving forces behind setting us up and was also our first Chairman. He set the tone of our U3A for its friendliness, dynamism and "can do" attitude. He has also generously said that he will continue to produce our Monthly Newsletter which I am delighted about as we wouldn't want to lose Fred's input and enthusiasm. I thank Fred for everything that he has done to make our U3A such a success and we go forward along the lines that he set us up with. Fred cannot be with us this afternoon as he is on vacation in Italy.
- **Colin Beavington** – Vice Chair, has served our U3A diligently and with lots of hard work and effort over the last 7 years. He has been Membership Secretary and then Vice Chair. Thank you Colin for your invaluable contribution and everything that you have done to ensure that our U3A flourishes and for your commitment and attention to detail.
- **Ray Crowle** – Speakers' Coordinator. Ray has put together some excellent speakers for us over the last 6 years and I thank him on behalf of us all, for all his efforts so that we have enjoyed the fruits of his labours so to speak. He books our speakers a year or two in advance to make sure that we can get the best, and my goodness, you will be a hard act to follow Ray.

We go from strength to strength – new members, new Interest Groups, new ideas – all of which keep us vibrant and energized, but to paraphrase President Kennedy who said, "Do not ask what your U3A can do for you but what you can do for your U3A". If you enjoy everything that we have to offer, then what could you do to contribute something for the benefit of all of us? It doesn't have to be a huge commitment, and we are all in teams helping each other. We need new ideas, and I am counting on you to come forward to give whatever time that you have to drive us onward.

Looking forward to the coming year, we have some terrific Study Days planned, very interesting Seminars and Speakers lined up, new groups being launched and a thoroughly stimulating time ahead. I look forward to seeing you at our events and groups.

Thank you."

MS then called upon Jeff Bewsey/Membership Secretary to give a short report.

3. Jeff Bewsey – Membership Secretary:

“I’m pleased to report that membership has gone from strength to strength in the last 12 months. Since 1st February 2022 we have signed-up 55 new members, which I think reflects the popularity of this branch of the U3A. Our current membership is 591, the largest it’s ever been, a healthy number considering that we are a relatively small community compared to the larger towns that surround us.

We are constantly looking to increase our membership further and I’d like to think that you yourselves can help by spreading the word amongst your friends and neighbours. Please feel free to take a copy of our handbook, available here today to give to anybody who may show an interest in any of the numerous activity groups, the number of which is expanding healthily along with the membership.

Thank you very much.”

Michele Sinclair/Chair then thanked Jeff and introduced Anne Trevillion/ Treasurer who she went on to say has done a magnificent job of pulling all our finances together into a very professional presentation.

4. Anne Trevillion – Treasurer

The Treasurer presented the accounts on a set of slides and briefly explained the income and expenditure over the year. She provided a breakdown of the finances for the Theatre Trips, Study Days and Quattro events as well as listing the equipment bought over the year and items funded for Interest Groups. The accounts show that our finances are in a healthy state, with a surplus of nearly £6,000 for 2021-2022, which means that we can keep our subscriptions at the current level. The full accounts, with a more detailed explanation, are available on the Paddock Wood U3A website.

Michele Sinclair/Chair then thanked Anne for explaining the main details so concisely.

5. Appointment of an Independent Examiner for 2023 accounts:

Michele Sinclair then advised that **Jeremy Thompson** who examined our 2022 accounts had kindly agreed to do so again in 2023. His appointment was then proposed/seconded by:

Proposer: Peter Stallwood

Secunder: Vera Rees

6. Previously notified questions: There were none.

7. Election of New Committee:

Prior to moving on to the election of the committee MS pointed out that a number of existing committee members had reached or even exceeded the time permitted by our Constitution for them to be part of the committee. MS went on to say that she had approached the Third Age Trust to request and had obtained a further one year extension to give us more time to recruit new committee members. She then went on to put two resolutions to the AGM:

1st Resolution:

That those members of the current committee who have served more years than our Constitution permits, may stand for a further one year to enable new committee members to be appointed.

Proposer: Peter Williams

Seconder: Doug Coker

A show of hands indicated unanimous agreement.

2nd Resolution:

MS indicated that our Constitution permits us to have 2 co-opted members on the Committee, but it was considered that we needed more to allow “shadowing” of roles. Therefore MS continued with the 2nd resolution:

That we extend the number of members permitted on the Committee, for one year only, to allow “shadowing” of roles.

Proposer: Reuben Lewis

Seconder: Trevor Carney

A show of hands indicated unanimous agreement.

Current Members willing to stand:

As the resolutions were approved, MS identified those members of the committee willing to stand for re-election for the coming year, as:

Michele Sinclair	-	Chair	
Jan Wheddon	-	Vice Chair & Interest Groups' Coordinator	
Anne Trevillion	-	Treasurer	
Wendy Wollen	-	Secretary	
Jeff Bewsey	-	Membership Secretary	<i>(continued on next page)</i>

Jenny Carney - Welfare Officer
Dawn Kirk - Welcome Team Leader.

MS went on to ask for a proposer and seconder:

Proposer: Carol Croker
Secunder: Allen Thomas

A show of hands indicated unanimous agreement.

Co-opted Committee Members:

MS went on to say that she was delighted that our two co-opted committee members had agreed to stand for election:

Barry Ednie and Michael Smith – however, BE was not at the AGM as he was on holiday in Australia.

MS asked for a proposer and seconder:

Barry Ednie: **Proposer:** Helen Crowle
 Secunder: Vera Rees

Michael Smith: **Proposer:** Carol Flisher
 Secunder: Trisha Bewsey

A show of hands indicated unanimous agreement.

New Committee Members:

MS expressed her thanks, but pointed out that we now have vacancies on the Committee for the Speakers' Coordinator and other committee members. She went on to say that it really is imperative that the general membership step forward to shadow any of these roles, or at least just attend the Committee meetings to see what goes on and how simple it all is. She pointed out that at the 2023 AGM the following committee members would **have** to step down:.

Michele Sinclair - Chair
Wendy Wollen - Secretary
Dawn Kirk - Welcome Team Leader
Jenny Carney - Welfare Officer

MS reiterated that without replacements for these roles, that our U3A would find itself in real trouble and she heartily recommended that members please come forward to “learn the ropes” as it were. She paraphrased Lord Kitchener by saying **“Your U3A needs you!”**

8. Honorary President

MS identified the final item on the Agenda as the election of a new role, that of Honorary President. She said at the start of the meeting that Fred Lemont was the driving force behind our U3A but was stepping down as he has served well over his time on the Committee. She went on to recommend him for election as our (first) Honorary President saying that he would have the ability to attend meetings as and when required and would be a continuing valuable source of advice to the Committee.

She went on to say that this wasn’t a “role for life”, and the President like the rest of the Committee would need to be re-elected each year at the AGM. She continued by asking for a proposer and seconder:

Proposer: Colin Beavington
Seconder: Ray Moon.

A show of hands indicated unanimous agreement.

There being no further business the AGM closed at 3.25pm. with MS inviting the audience to adjourn for a well-needed cup of tea and an opportunity for committee members to persuade members to come and see what happens at the committee meetings.

Signed:

Dated: