

PADDOCK WOOD U3A ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Minutes of the 10th AGM held at St. Andrew's Church, Paddock Wood
on Thursday 14th October 2021

Present – Committee Comprising:

Michele Sinclair	<i>Chair</i>	Colin Beavington	<i>ViceChair</i>	Wendy Wollen	<i>Secretary</i>
Jeff Bewsey	<i>MembSec</i>	Fred Lemont	<i>Public/Mark</i>	Ray Crowle	<i>SpeakCoord</i>
Ron Trevillion	<i>Webmaster</i>	Bob Wilding	<i>IntGpCoord</i>	Jenny Carney	<i>Welfare</i>
Jan Wheddon	<i>StudyDays</i>	Dawn Kirk	<i>Welcome Team</i>		

Apologies: John Spoor – *Treasurer*

1. Minutes of AGM held on Thursday 8th October 2020

Accepted and Seconded by Linda Reid and Jan Wheddon.

2. Chair's Report

“How do I report on this last year?! Well, we did OK as we're still here, live and in person so that is really positive! I think that a few things stood out for most of us – firstly that we really found out how important family, friends and other human beings are to our well-being; second, that we are all now a lot more tech savvy than we were, and third, by golly we are now experts at doing puzzles!

Learning to zoom was a life saver for many of us and allowed the majority of our groups to meet virtually throughout the lockdown. Of course some groups could not meet via zoom and were mothballed for the duration, but I'm delighted to say that virtually all those mothballed groups are now back up and running again!

WhatsApp and FaceTime also helped many people, especially last Christmas when it was cancelled – it's not the same wishing family a Merry Christmas virtually, but better than not seeing them at all.

A number of our members took the plunge and went on-line for the first time, and we all had to be so very careful of the scammers out there trying to steal our money.

I have had many kind messages about the weekly email that I sent around and thank you all – I am so pleased, first that someone actually read them, and second, that the contents were of some use.

The Committee met throughout lockdown via Zoom to keep everything going and I'd like to sincerely thank all of our Committee Members for their help, support, time and effort over the last year and more. Without such enthusiastic people, our U3A wouldn't be as successful as it is. I would like thank John Spoor for all his work as Treasurer over the past 6 years; he has given above and beyond to make sure that we are on the straight and narrow financial track. Unfortunately John is unwell and unable to be with us today and we wish him well and a speedy recovery. Bob Wilding is also stepping down and I thank him for his enthusiasm and for supporting so many groups during his term of office. Bob has stayed on an extra year to get us through lockdown, so thank you Bob for doing that. We will miss you on the Committee.

Since our incredible Relaunch Event in August, we have had new groups start up and many new members, which says a lot about how friendly, active and vibrant our U3A is. Whilst enjoying ourselves on the day, we also raised over £700 for Cancer Research.

We are now one of the most popular U3As in the area, attracting members from all our surrounding villages, as we have so much to offer. Our members are interested in all sorts of activities and keen to learn new things too, so if you have an idea for a new group then please let any Committee member know and we will see if other members are of a like mind.

Looking ahead, our Christmas meeting will be themed “*All Things Spanish*”, and I will be contacting you shortly to twist your arm into performing! *Ole!* Next Year we celebrate our 10th Anniversary, so that is something to look forward to.

We will go back to our normal calendar of events in 2022 so will have our Open Day as usual at our January meeting; I look forward to seeing you all at these events.”

3. Membership Secretary’s Report – presented by Jeff Bewsey

“Since the start of lockdown, and due to Covid restrictions, it has been a challenging time for not only our Paddock Wood U3A, but for others across the country. However, due to the sterling efforts of our Chair, Michele Sinclair in producing regular newsletters to the membership, many Interest Group Leaders organising zoom meetings to keep members in touch and to our Welfare Team headed by Jenny Carney providing us with help and advice where necessary, we have come through this difficult period largely unscathed.

We did lose some 40 members who didn’t renew their membership at the beginning of this year 2021 but this was far less than we might have anticipated. This loss however, has been offset by the addition of a bumper number of new members who have joined recently, due to two factors – the highly successful Relaunch Event in August, and the introduction of an online application form accessed via our website. We now have **572** members, the highest recorded in the history of the Paddock Wood U3A.

I would like to express thank all our members for their continued support and enthusiasm during what has been a very difficult time for us all.”

4. Presentation of Accounts for Approval

The Treasurer, John Spoor, was absent due to illness, therefore copies of the Year End Accounts were made available to the membership audience and an overview was provided by the ViceChair, Colin Beavington. Only one question was presented during the meeting regarding the continuing need for a Zoom Licence. It was agreed that this would not be required unless covid restrictions were to be re-implemented preventing us meeting face-to-face.

Approval for the Accounts was proposed by Jenny Carney, and seconded by Josie Ridger. All were in favour.

5. Subscriptions

A review of subscriptions was put to the membership, explaining that these had been reduced during lockdown to a level that enabled sufficient income to maintain our reduced outgoings including the Zoom License and Zoom Speakers. However, now that we have reverted to face-to-face meetings the subscriptions need to reflect our resumed activities and costs. It was proposed that the subscriptions for 2022 revert to the pre-lockdown rates of £16 for a single member and £30 for a couple – the difference reflecting the fact that couples only receive one copy of the Third Age Matters magazine. It was stated that our subscriptions were still the lowest in the area and the membership audience agreed. Approval for the change of subscriptions was proposed by Jeremy Thompson and seconded by Barrie Ednie. All were in favour.

6. **Previously notified questions** – none had been received.

7. Election of the New Committee

The Chair stated that there were two vacant positions on the Committee, that of Treasurer and Interest Groups' Coordinator. The positions were briefly described to the membership audience but no offers were forthcoming. The position of Treasurer was/is deemed the most important insofar as the Charity Commission rules state that we cannot continue without a Treasurer – so the search continues. Without an Interest Groups' Coordinator it will give rise to concerns about the development of new Interest Groups however, in the interim period the Committee will work together to ensure that existing and any new groups are supported.

The Chair continued by saying that whilst two members had stepped down, the residual committee have agreed to stand again. Linda Reid proposed to re-elect the existing Committee and this was seconded by Clive Cook. All were in favour.

The Committee for the coming year is:

Chair	Michele Sinclair
Vice Chair	Colin Beavington
Treasurer	<i>vacant position</i>
Secretary	Wendy Wollen
Membership Secretary	Jeff Bewsey
Speakers' Coordinator	Ray Crowle
Publicity/Marketing	Fred Lemont
Interest Groups' Coord	<i>vacant position</i>
Webmaster	Ron Trevillion
Welfare Team Coord	Jenny Carney
Study Days' Coord	Jan Wheddon
Welcome Team	Dawn Kirk

There being no further business the AGM was closed.

Signed:

Dated: