

Minutes of the REDDITCH u3a AGM, held at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, 21st May 2024 at The Bridge Community Hall, Headless Cross.

1. **Present:** Members of Redditch u3a.

Apologies were received from: Doug Richards, Susan and Dan Jarvis, Peter Dewell, Rosemarie Davies, Bill Macham, Maggie Bucknall, Judith Andrews, Christine Butterworth, Linda Magner, Olive Higgs, Pat Bushaway, John and Sheelagh Cartmell, June Ferrier and Dilys Price.

2. The **minutes of the 2023 AGM** had previously been sent to the membership. A vote was taken to accept them as a true record of that meeting.

Proposed: Malcolm Hall Seconded: Murray Taylor The vote was carried unanimously.

3. **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report 2023 – 2024

We've now completed my second year as Chairman and I am pleased with some positive developments in the period.

First to mention but not in any order of priority, is our joining the Cotswold Link. It always disappointed me that u3a's in each town have operated independently of each other, and membership of one hasn't meant members can attend others, although here in Redditch we have offered an associate membership scheme, giving a subscription reduction for members of other towns. With the Cotswold Link, all our members can attend one interest group at another link u3a without paying an additional membership. This includes all other u3a's in Worcestershire, including Bromsgrove and Droitwich. It also means that their members can attend one of ours which adds to the viability and diversity of the groups. In Art Appreciation we have had an Evesham member (who lives in Alcester) attending, and she has already given two fascinating presentations. She actually has a degree in the subject.

Moving to Music, a joint venture I started last year with Alcester u3a, is also going well, which is another occasion where members from both u3a's cordially interact. The next session is tomorrow at 2.00pm, Please talk to me later if you would like to come.

Our Kingfisher Centre promotion resulted in a good number of enquiries and some new members. Kingfisher Shopping Centre very kindly gave us a small shop unit for six weeks or so before Christmas for a window display, and then a bigger unit for a manned promotion over a weekend at the end of January. The shop unit was very cold however, and I am thinking of doing it again this summer, when it will be warmer! I intend to discuss it with the new committee.

More interest groups are always welcome, and we need members to come forward with suggestions and if possible, coordinate them.

Annie Howard started a Poetry group last year which is growing in popularity. The Computer Help Desk is kept very busy and has helped many members with IT problems. The Textiles group makes visits to exhibitions locally. There is now a waiting list for a 2nd book group which we hope to start in the autumn. I know of efforts to start a Walking Cricket group and I went cycling recently with other e-bikers and believe that there is the potential to get a group off the ground there.

Murray in his role as Events Organiser is taking our first coach trip to Gloucester on 13th June and I sincerely hope that this is the start of a regular feature of Redditch u3a. There are lots of interesting places we could go to and I am sure Murray would appreciate your suggestions for those.

Judith Andrews stepped in to take on the role of publishing our monthly newsletter and in doing so, made some useful suggestions as to how it could be extended. She has asked for feedback on the content and frequency of the newsletter so do pass your thoughts on to any of the committee here today. I must at this point, express my grateful thanks to Sue Smith who did a sterling job in producing the newsletter over a number of years including a critical time during the Covid lockdowns.

One other development to mention is the STARS scheme where the committee have obtained invaluable help and support in routine functions, which help to make management so much easier. We invite anyone else who'd like to help without having a committee involvement, to come forward for it.

Another development in the year is that we have opted to join the u3a's Beacon computer system which I firmly believe will simplify the membership and accounts management for the committee. We are also moving to a new website platform so you might notice some changes in its format in due course.

In closing I must express my grateful thanks to:

- Ros Williams, our Membership Secretary, and David Pattenden, as they retire from the committee: both have been long standing members. With Ros's retirement, we are going to approach the Membership Secretary role differently; it will be a team effort and we'll keep you informed on this. David has been a big help since before I joined in managing technical issues in our various meeting venues.
- Margaret Toole for organising our year's programme of speakers.
- All other fellow committee members
- STARS supporters
- Interest Group Leaders
- Judith for producing the Newsletter
- All those that helped with the Shop Unit in Kingfisher
- All those who volunteer to help with teas and coffees etc.
- All you, the membership, for your support of the committee and all our u3a activities.

Malcolm Hall, Chairman

5. Treasurer's Report 2023 - 2024

We are in a good position financially at the end of the accounting year 2023-24.

Our income has increased because we increased the annual subscription from £12.50 to £13 in order to cover anticipated rises in costs. Of this money, £4 is paid per member to the National Body in order to cover items such as insurance, administration, websites, national events etc.

We have also held far more meetings which have been at the Bridge Church Community Hall in Headless Cross. The meetings have consisted of a 'Main Meeting', usually with a speaker, and a second more informal meeting involving games, computing advice, sewing and chat. The income from these meetings has increased because of more members attending and the number of meetings has doubled!!

The total income from all sources has increased from £3190 to £4711.

Conversely, our expenses have also increased. Inevitably, the costs for the Bridge have increased, because we hold two meetings a month and the rent has increased, but this is still a much lower cost than the Oasis Centre in Redditch Town Centre. Some interest groups pay for hire of premises such as Webheath Village Hall and these costs have also increased. The other large increase is in refreshments costs - but we are holding more meetings with more people!!

The consolidated accounts show a profit of £765 compared with a small loss last year.

An independent financial advisor, James Knowles, has received and approved the accounts for 2023/4. I would like to thank James for this. I will now register the accounts with the Charity Commission.

In 2024-25 there is likely to be an increase in our expenses. The cost of the hire of various halls has increased, we may pay more in speakers, when we move to the Beacon database this will involve a cost of £1 per member and the cost of the magazines may increase. We do, however, have money to cover these probable costs.

The Committee has consequently agreed to hold the membership subscription of £15 for 2025/6.

I recommend that James Knowles is asked to approve the accounts in 2024/5.

I would like to thank Ros Williams for all of her help with money over an extended period of time and especially in helping me over the last four years. The role of Treasurer is time-consuming and at times difficult. There are hundreds of transactions to record. Ros has been a great support to me personally, and of course to us all. Thank you, Ros.

To sum up:

- We are in a good position.
- There are no issues or concerns regarding the accounts at the moment.

I have very much enjoyed being your Treasurer for the last four years but I am ready for someone else to take over!! Thank you.

Anne Lacey, Treasurer

Proposals:

- A vote was taken to accept the accounts.

Proposed: Anne Lacey Seconded: Sue Gee The accounts were accepted by unanimous vote.

- A vote was taken to agree that James Knowles be appointed to approve the accounts for 2024/5.

Proposed: Anne Lacey Seconded: Sue Smith This was agreed by unanimous vote.

Details of the proposal to move the start of the membership year to 1st July were explained by Sue Gee, Vice-Chair, as stated in the full proposal sent previously to the membership.

- A vote was taken to amend the Constitution to move the start of the membership year to 1st July, 2025.

Proposed: Sue Gee Seconded: Anne Lacey The proposal was approved by unanimous vote.

6. Nomination of Officers and Committee members for 2023/4. The following nominations were approved by unanimous votes.

Chair: Malcolm Hall, proposed by Sylvia Edwards and seconded by Sue Gee

Vice Chair: Sue Gee, proposed by Murray Taylor and seconded by Sylvia Edwards

Secretary: Sylvia Edwards, proposed by Sue Gee and seconded by Steve Prosser

Treasurer: Anne Lacey, proposed by Sue Gee and seconded by Murray Taylor

Other Committee members:

Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Jill Barrett	Sylvia Edwards	Murray Taylor
Steve Prosser	Malcolm Hall	Sue Gee
Sue Smith	Malcolm Hall	Sue Gee
Murray Taylor	Steve Prosser	Jill Barrett
Margaret Toole	David Pattenden	Jill Barrett

7. A.O.B.

Rob Rowberry wished to record his personal appreciation of Steve Prosser for his support and his skills in preparing presentations for Music in our Time.

The meeting closed at 2.30pm and was followed by some light entertainment presented by Norman Bailey.

Sylvia Edwards, Secretary, May 2024.