

Minutes of the 37th Welwyn Hatfield U3a AGM

Wednesday 13th March 2024,

at Breaks Manor, Hatfield

Apologies for Absence: Suzanne & John Brown, Christine & Colin Slade, Malcolm & Mary Lines, Hazel Bell.

2. Minutes of 36th AGM - Agreed

3. Matters arising

Steve – Gave a big thanks to Sue Talbot for looking after the accounts and to Hazel Bell who compiled the newsletter for all the work they have both done. A replacement is needed for Joan Scales - groups co-coordinator, whom Joan will be happy to support.

The latest from TAT is that they are setting up an advisory council of U3a's from across the country. There is also a Chairs' forum who meet on a monthly basis

Attendance = 112

4. Chair's report for the AGM

The year started well with a full programme of speakers already in place for our weekly meetings, and covering all three terms. The variety of speakers we are able to secure continues to offer both informative and entertaining subjects, and we have regular attendances at these meetings of between 85 and 120 members.

Our 56 study groups at the start of the year, were increased by a further two as new members introduced new subjects, Board Games and British Sign Language. The study groups continue to be very well subscribed, but we were still able to offer places to those wishing to join a new group during the course of the year.

In addition to our normal ongoing events, we also held two evening dances with a live band and fish and chip supper, and our annual Garden Party which featured entertainment from our Ukulele Group as well as a quiz. We also held our now annual Open Day, attended by the Mayor, which allows potential new members to see what we offer, followed by our new members meeting to ensure our new members are fully aware of, and able to fully participate in all the activities on offer. The year ended with our usual Christmas events, although this year we replaced our Christmas Party, with our first ever Pantomime, written and performed by members of our u3a which was a great success with over 100 members attending. This was followed by our Annual Christmas Lunch at a local venue, attended by 92 members.

Our membership at the end of 2023 was 838 members which has remained very consistent throughout the year. There have been a few changes to our committee this year with a new Deputy Chair and new Secretary being appointed at the AGM. Part way through the year our Treasurer also had to step down due to ill health, but we were very fortunate to find a very good new Treasurer

from our membership. The change of Treasurer necessitated a change in how our accounts are managed, so this year we have completely changed and upgraded our accounting system.

Our members are able to be kept fully informed of our activities via our website, printed activity programme, and termly Newsletter.

5. Treasurer's Report

When I took on the role of treasurer in July last year, my suggestion was that we went over to using a financial reporting package. This was because, following Covid, when the activity on the accounts increased almost exponentially, the existing system using Excel spreadsheets became untenable. The then treasurer, Sue Talbot, did an amazing job under difficult circumstances and I would like to add my personal thanks to the vote of thanks owed to her.

Using a new system meant that this year the accounts were prepared in a slightly different way to conform to Charity Commission guidelines. We have two current accounts, one for Study Group activities and the second for all other business. There is also a savings account, which is something the Charity Commission recommend having as a contingency fund in the event of any unforeseen circumstances. An example would be if one of the meeting venues became unusable and we needed to find an alternative, possibly more expensive, location.

In the past, the two current accounts were dealt with separately but the new system encompasses them both, recording all payments in and out, resulting in what looks like a huge increase in income and expenditure. If you look at the Financial Activities you will see what I mean. This is, in fact, about the same level it has been in the last couple of years since Covid - just reported in a different way.

In the financial year ended 31 December 2023 the overall income was £68012, comprising subscriptions from members into the Main Account and all the activity on the Group account –Study Group payments, trip payments etc. Also included in this total figure is rebate of Gift Aid for the past four years of £11941. The injection of Gift Aid meant that, when reviewed in September, it was deemed unnecessary to increase the suggested figure for subscriptions for 2024 and this remained at £20. Although it will be subject to further review later this year, it is hoped to keep the subscription for 2025 at the same level.

It was agreed by the Committee that some of the Gift Aid money should be applied to purchasing much needed replacement kit and approximately £3K has been spent to date. Gift Aid is claimed at 25% and for 2024 the subscriptions from those who have signed a Gift Aid form is approximately £10,000 so this should yield a further £2,500 this coming year. It is worth noting that without this Gift Aid claim we would have had to raise the subscription to cover the shortfall.

Peter Fox, our Membership Secretary has provided comprehensive membership data for the year to date. As Steve said in his report, we now have 846 members. There are still some members who haven't set up a Standing Order which means they forget to pay and Peter has the task of reminding them. I am sure this doesn't apply to anyone here! His full report will be attached to the minutes of this meeting and will be available on the website.

Finally, I would like to thank the committee for their support, particularly Steve, Marie, Ann and Jill. Also, due thanks are the Study Group Leaders for their diligence in collecting the Study Group payments and making my job easier.

Beryl Whyatt

6. Appointment of auditor/Adoption of the Report and Accounts

It was proposed that we appoint Dragonfly Financial Services as Independent Examiners

Proposed: Tess Abberley

Seconded: Pam Williams

Adoption of the Accounts

Proposed: Marie Scales

Seconded by Ann Davies

7. Election of Committee members/officers

7.1 Election and appointment of Chair

Pam Williams Proposed by **Jean Davies** Seconded by **Peter Fox**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

7.2 Proposal that Treasurer to continue in their term of Office

Beryl Whyatt Proposed by **Jill Longman** Seconded by **Ann Madell**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

7.3 Election and appointment of Deputy Chair

Marie Scales Proposed by **David Charlwood** Seconded by **Ann Davies**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

7.4 Proposal that Secretary to continue in their term of office

Adrienne Nix Proposed by **Beryl Whyatt** Seconded **Steve Hall**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

7.5 Committee Members

Appointment of 5 new members

Peter Fox proposed by **Anne Madell** Seconded by **Tony Tutton**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

John Gilbey Proposed by **Steve Hall** Seconded by **Doreen Hall**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

Rosy Holt Proposed by **Nicola Beynon** Seconded by **Joan Scales**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

Sue Field Proposed by **Jill Longman** Seconded by **Ann Davies**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

Roger Swaine Proposed by **Marie Scales** Seconded by **Peter Fox**

For	Against	Abstentions
112	0	0

8. Any Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11 a.m.

Additional Report from the Membership Secretary

Membership 2024

24 New members have joined this year including new 3 associate members.

11 Members left including 1 associate and 1 Honourable member who passed away.

Current Membership Nett figures;

846 Members including 35 Associates and 31 Honorary Members. *See notes below*

2024 membership payments

As usual, in March, we will now chase up the members who have not paid their membership fee by now excluding, for historical reasons, members whose Standing Orders pay regularly later in the year.

This includes approximately **10** members who paid last year by cheque, cash or specific bacs. These will be sent a specific email reminding them that they paid last year by these methods and asking them to pay this year's membership. We also ask them to set up a SO for future year.

Additionally, **36** members who normally make regular payment by SO by this time for which we have not received the 2024 payment. Typically, these are members who have left / moved away without formally advising us they have left.

2024 Attendance at Wednesday Meetings for Autumn Term:

Jan 10	WGC	History of Jewellery	132
Jan 17	HAT	The DeHavilland Comet	128
Jan 24	WGC	Tax, Care and Toy boys	126
Jan 31	HAT	Wildlife in Brazil	111
Feb 7	WGC	Shrove Tuesday	129
Feb 14	HAT	Th De Vinci code	123
Feb 21	WGC	Art and Photography exhibition	93
Feb 28	HAT	The defence of St. Albans	102
Mar 6	WGC	History of WWII airfields	