

The minutes of the Tetbury and District U3A Steering Committee (In attendance, Alan Green and Marion Clements, U3A National)

11th November 2019 2:00 pm

1. Apologies for absence

Douglas Looman, Gill Parsons, Caroline Langston

2. Report on New Groups

A query has been raised as to whether membership of Tetbury and District U3A can be transferred from Malmesbury U3A. As agreed previously, this is not possible, though, with the agreement of the group leader, two free initial visits are permitted.

ACTION: Pat to respond.

Art Therapy and Singing for Health are on hold.

The website now shows 11 potential groups awaiting leaders.

John (Rees) is keen to start a music appreciation group.

ACTION: Pat to pass on names of those interested to John.

Peter, who leads the cinema group is in poor health.

ACTION: Pat to send a card.

There is interest in setting up a Members Out Together group. This could incorporate the cinema group, while Peter is out of action.

ACTION: Pat to put a proposal together.

We have received a memo from Cirencester U3A Science and Technology Group volunteering to help re-organise our group or to circulate details of the Cirencester group. There was some discussion of whether this could be related to the Cotswold Link.

The Cotswold Link is an informal group of Cotswold U3A's, which both hold informal get togethers to share ideas and in some cases have a policy of free admission to one other member U3A. This is not a binding policy and Tetbury and District U3A could join the Cotswold Link and still charge for membership of their U3A irrespective of someone's membership of another U3A. Membership of the Cotswold Link costs £12 per year.

ACTION: Jeremy to follow up the Cotswold Link.

ACTION: Pat and Gail to reply to Cirencester Science and Technology Group to say that we are looking into how best to proceed.

It was agreed that an email to all members about new groups was a good way of publicising the groups.

ACTION: Pat and Gail to send an email.

The German Group is low on numbers, so is waiting until after the newsletter has gone out to decide whether there are enough members to start the group. If not, it will go on hold.

The Piano Group is struggling for numbers and is on hold.

The Spanish Group is up and running.

There have been some issues about the second creative writing group which has folded. This may be as a result of differing views from the two group leaders. It may be possible to restart this group under a different name.

3. Christmas

Anita will chase re sandwiches. Other goodies are appreciated !

ACTION: Committee members who have not replied respond to Anita indicating their choice.

ACTION: Pat to send out the invitations.

4. Christmas Memory Tree

ACTION: Gail to complete the entry form and source a tree and lights and make decorations. Pat and Gail to decorate the tree.

Thanks to Pat for her work on this , which is an opportunity both for publicity and to be involved in a community event. The decorations will feature photographs of group activities. National publications will form part of the display.

The carol service at St Saviours Church, where the trees will be on display is on 7th December at 5:30 , followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

5. Getting Feedback

It was agreed that this is most effective through talking to individuals. Pat has prepared a feedback form, which could be completed online and sent out as an email to all members.

ACTION: Anita to publicise at the November monthly meeting .

6. Membership Status

The Privacy and Complaints Policies were formally adopted by the steering committee.

ACTION: Carmel to send Lawrence copies to upload to the website.

It was agreed that in accordance with the Privacy Policy , Tetbury and District U3A will not advertise non U3A events. We will not share members' email addresses or photographs without their explicit consent (including with other members).

ACTION: Lawrence to give more training on the use of the anti-spam footer.

national office, why Tetbury and District U3A does not appear on the map that people use to locate their nearest U3A.

7. Current Status: (Beacon and Website)

Lawrence has circulated updated guidance about the use of attachments on Beacon.

ACTION: Lawrence to provide training as needed.

Lawrence has circulated details of the usage of our website. There have been 120 clicks (67 from desk tops, 32 from tablets and 21 from mobiles). Two clicks were

from outside the UK , one from France and one from the USA. There have also been 569 searches.

8. Newsletter Status

The newsletter has gone out. The Piano update was missed and will go out as the only group report in the December newsletter.

There was a general discussion about encouraging contributions from those groups who have not contributed to the newsletter to date.

9. Arrangements for 20th November

All is in hand. Anita will announce the speaker and make a few closing remarks as last time.

10. Finance: Current status, name changes, signatories

As previously agreed, our first AGM will be in April. Our current membership year runs from 1st August to 31st July. This causes some cashflow difficulties as it is out of alignment with the national financial year and in particular with the timing of the payment made to national. Alan explained that there has been a change in national policy and that staged payments will not be permitted in 2021/22. Alan also confirmed that the guidance to new U3A's about the timing of their payments to National was being updated to make it clearer.

There was a general discussion about the finances of Tetbury and District U3A. It was confirmed that membership is ahead of forecast at 212 members. Attendance at monthly meetings is about 50-60 members. The use of the Goods Shed was discussed as a major source of expenditure. It was agreed that it is the only suitable venue in Tetbury and that we do get a discounted rate as a local charity.

It was established that the annual payments to National are as follows

£3.50 per member as a national subscription

£1.00 per member for Beacon

£2.90 per member who requests a copy of Third Age Matters to cover the cost of postage for the five annual issues.

It is not clear whether we have been charged for Beacon or Third Age Matters.

ACTION: Jeremy to check with Douglas

It was agreed that we have been successful in keeping costs down and will continue to do so but need to explore options to resolve the timing issue , which could include raising the subscription payments and / or opening monthly meetings up to non – members and charging. This would have the advantage of meaning that the Goods Shed would publicise the meetings

ACTION : Jeremy to set up a small subgroup to revisit the cashflow.

Alan has arranged for support for Douglas to help progress the registration with HMRC.

The name change is now complete (The final details were completed post meeting) but there has been no progress on the signatories.

There was a discussion about using Beacon for finance.

ACTION: Alan to ask the Bishop Cleeve treasurer to talk to Douglas about the use of Beacon for finance.

11. Speaker bookings status

All have been arranged.

12. Opportunities for Publicity

We attended a coffee morning in Avening. Twelve membership forms were given out.

Gill is planning another coffee morning, which will be in Cherrington.

ACTION: Gail and Gill to request support from other committee members if needed.

13. Succession Planning

It was agreed that we should change our committee in stages and that between a third and a quarter of the current committee would step down at the AGM.

It was also agreed that we need to prepare for this and to ensure that we have current cover by training others to take on key roles.

ACTION: We will start to talk to members about joining the committee at the January meeting.

ACTION: Carmel and Jeremy to write a piece for the January newsletter.

Following the January input, we will continue to work on making sure that there are new committee members in February and March.

14. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

There are still some issues about group leaders not keeping the website up to date.

It was clarified that information about groups needs to go to Lawrence to put on the website rather than on Beacon as Beacon is not visible to members and does not automatically update the website.

15. Review of Progress

Covered under items 10 and 13. The next review will be in February 2020.

ACTION: Carmel to invite Alan and Marion to the February meeting.

16. Any Other Business.

Gail has been approached by a Malmesbury U3A member enquiring about a reduced membership fee for Tetbury and District U3A as she had been told by a national official that she did not have to pay for insurance twice. Gail has responded saying that our policy requires all members to pay the full fee. It was reiterated that issue about payment are a local decision.

17. Next Steering Committee Date

January 13th 2020 at 2:45 pm.