



**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2019  
AT 23 BULLFINCH LANE, RIVERHEAD**

**In attendance:** Lesley Allum-Jolly, Richard Clout, Alan Heyes, Delma Moore, Harry Reeves, Pene Stambollouian (Sec), Magda Sweetland (Chairman), Sharon Willmore, Gill Walker, Christine Walls, Janet Willcox.

**1. Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

The draft minutes of this meeting were circulated for approval by those who had attended the meeting, and once agreed by email, were placed on the website. Magda signed a hard copy of these minutes for the file. There was one matter arising regarding the sharing of the film licence discussed at the May meeting. It had been confirmed that the licence would cover an event shared with another local group, but the proposed event with the Halstead Luncheon Group will not now take place this summer.

Magda proposed and the Committee unanimously agreed to co-opt Gill Walker to the Committee.

**2. Social Events**

Janet circulated an update on the arrangements for the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary party on 16<sup>th</sup> July. She is confident that she will have enough help on the day and that the site will be cleared by 5.30. The Meet & Greet team will be asked to welcome guests and help to get ticket holders seated for the first sitting at 2.15. No further places are available. It was agreed to provide each of the two caretakers with a gratuity of £25.

Alan said that he was working on four posters to be mounted on square framed display boards (to be borrowed from Westerham U3A) at the event. One will be a photo montage and the other three will highlight all the other Knole's group activities. He handed around a first proof from the printers for comment, and some suggestions were made on the layout and sizing of the Knole U3A logo. These posters will be useful for ongoing marketing. It was agreed that Alan should buy three similar display boards at the cost of around £100 each for future use.

It was agreed that the proposed anniversary booklet should be distributed to all members with the \*July Newsletter and Handbook. This will allow more time to complete it. A one page programme leaflet will be produced for the event itself.

Mugs are being acquired ready for the Open Afternoon at St Nic's, and later meetings.

**3. Science Group/Accessibility/ Holiday**

Christine reported that a good programme of speakers has been drawn up for 2019/2020. One topic will be on the Future of Nuclear Technology. One of the speakers is a teacher of Maths at Sevenoaks School. It continues to be a challenge finding fresh speakers. In the past Science Group Committee members have drawn on their personal contacts to identify speakers, and also approached possible young scientists wishing to develop their CVs or to fulfil their job descriptions. The advantage of the latter is that their employers will generally cover the cost of their participation. Magda suggested we might draw on the speakers used by other U3A Science groups, as it is more practical to identify local speakers. The Kent Network may also be of some help in identifying speakers.

Alan had emailed a proposal to replace the Science Group's computer at the cost of £379 plus £119 for software. The Science group holds a fund of £800 - £900 which is used for speakers' fees and expenses, as well as hall hire. £2 is charged to attendees. This

purchase was agreed and that the cost should come out of general funds as all Knole U3A equipment is available to all groups. Lionel Parks has offered to buy the existing computer which is 7 years old for £50. An inventory of Knole's assets is on the website.

Christine said that 14 volunteer drivers have signed up to provide lifts to other members if needed, covering a wide area. To date no requests for lifts have been received.

Provisional plans are being developed for next year's holiday which will be to the Bristol/Bath area. The initial estimate of cost is higher than previously, at around £480 per person, for 4 nights/5 days. The cost will include guided tours of both Bath and Bristol, and of Wells, trips to three National Trust properties and a possible stop at the Swindon Steam Museum which also has the option of visiting a Shopping Outlet next door. There was some discussion on alternatives to National Trust properties and it was suggested that The Historic Houses Association might be a good source to consult.

#### **4. Report on Study Groups**

Delma referred to the note of the meeting held with Orpington U3A and highlighted some of the practical reasons why the sharing of groups would be difficult. Continuing contact will be maintained with Orpington regarding future co-operation.

Sadly the handicraft group has closed due to the lack of having a member able and willing to co-ordinate it.

A Group Contacts' meeting is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> September to finalise the arrangements for the Open Afternoon to be held for the first time in St Nic's in September. Delma handed round an initial plan showing the layout of 18 large tables, each of which is shared by three groups. There followed discussion on the layout and most efficient use of the space in the Church, bearing in mind the pillars and quantity of chairs to be taken in to account. Magda and Delma will be meeting with the warden to consider various options.

The Mahjong 2 group have requested funds to purchase a new set at £103.97 to augment the two personal sets used by the group. This was agreed as a start-up grant.

It was also agreed that Delma should be funded for an overnight stay in Alton, Hampshire so that she can represent Knole U3A at the South East Workshop on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

A meeting was held with Sevenoaks Group Co-ordinator and shared groups are now verified. A further meeting will be held in August with some members of the Sevenoaks committee in order to exchange further ideas.

#### **5. Report on New Study Groups**

Sharon said that there was little new to report at this stage of the year, as most new groups formed after the Open Afternoon and an influx of new members in the autumn. Nine new groups have been started since last September. Once notified, vacancies in any group will be listed in the Newsletter, and where a group becomes overfull, notice will be given in the Newsletter that an additional group is to be launched.

#### **6. New Members**

Lesley reported that 130 members are still due to renew. The number of members who had renewed at the AGM meeting had been helpful. However the subsequent introduction of online payments had caused complications, with some members making duplicate payments and now needing refunds. Anomalies have also been found on the database with some established members not being on the system. All these problems are being sorted out.

#### **7. Monthly Meetings**

Harry circulated the programme drawn up for 2019/2020, including the two meetings Stewart had already scheduled for October and November 2019. He has been able to negotiate fees or charity donations (usually £80) with the speakers, all well within the guideline of £120 per speaker. Harry expressed concern about not having sufficient back-

up in case speakers cancelled or failed to turn up; he was assured that no-shows of speakers is very rare. Two possible short notice speakers were suggested (Janet Clare and Stewart Robinson).

## **8. Report on Finances and Accounts**

Richard presented a statement of receipts and payments for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April - 30 June, highlighting the receipt of the Gift Aid for last year. He said that recent notices from National Office suggested that not all U3As were eligible for Gift Aid depending on the level of services provided to the members in return for their subscription fees. Magda suggested that Knole U3A's eligibility had been confirmed previously.

Richard asked if this simple statement for updating the Committee was sufficient, but also advised that he would present the year end accounts on an accrual basis. Pene commented that it was difficult for the Committee to fulfil its responsibility as charitable trustees if we did not play a part in agreeing a budget at the start of the financial year, and monitoring progress against this budget through the year. Discussing and agreeing requests for individual items of expenditure also need to be done in the context of the overall budget. Harry commented that the level of the reserve was something the Committee might want to review annually on a more strategic basis.

## **9. Communications**

Alan reported that all was in hand to finalise the July Newsletter and the 2019 – 2020 Handbook, by the end of this month. The printers will also be able to print and cut individual membership cards for mailing out at the same time. Members who have not renewed by the time of the general mailing will have to receive their copies from Lesley once paid up. It was agreed that the colour scheme this summer would be buttercup yellow.

Alan and Delma are continuing to work on the idea of producing one or more booklets to sell to Knole U3A and other U3As' members, which will offer recommendations of venues to visit based on the experience of ten years of group outings in London and the Home Counties.

## **10. General Administration**

Papers sent out by post by the National Office before the last meeting are still being circulated member by member. It was suggested and agreed that in future Magda would inform the Committee of hard copy papers received from the National Office and highlight any matters that need to be considered, either by individual post-holders or by all members. When considered necessary documents could be scanned and emailed out.

Magda mentioned that Weald Care Home has invited Knole U3A to make a presentation to staff and residents. Discussion followed on what our relationship with local community homes should be. Currently one Knole group holds its meetings, free of charge, at Rivermere in Chipstead. We do not have a policy on engaging with local homes; it was agreed that any approach should be considered on its merits.

**11. Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September at 10am, and bi-monthly thereafter on the first Tuesday of the month.

Postscript \* This booklet on the first 10 years of Knole may be delayed until September