



MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 7th JANUARY 2020
AT 23 BULLFINCH LANE, RIVERHEAD

In attendance: Richard Clout, Alan Heyes, Delma Moore, Pene Stambollouian (Sec), Magda Sweetland (Chairman), Harry Reeves, Sharon Willmore, Wendy Willsher

Apologies: Lesley Allum-Jolly, Gill Walker, Christine Walls, and Janet Willcox

1. Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 5th November 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 were no matters arising not included in the agenda at this meeting.

2. Monthly Meetings

Harry said that his main concern is to ensure good visibility for visual presentations at upcoming meetings. Members will be advised to sit where is best to see the screen in order to minimise disappointment. The January talk on **Modern Slavery** is expected to be tough but informative; February's meeting on **Riverhill Gardens** will certainly be well presented and entertaining. Harry says he has been offering £100 to speakers; several do not require payment but suggest a charity donation as an alternative. Paying more for speakers will not necessarily buy greater quality. At the moment Harry does not see any need to increase the budget.

He feels the new venue has presented fewer problems than expected, and the Committee concurred that the meetings to date have gone well. Attendance has not fallen, parking has not been difficult. Magda said we would nevertheless return to the Community Centre as soon as building works were completed. This is still expected to be at the end of 2020.

3. Finance and Accounts

Richard presented a statement on Receipt and Payments for the year to date, and there were no queries on the figures. He confirmed he would be producing an annual budget for Committee approval before the year-end, and asked members to indicate any increases in expenditure they anticipated in the next financial year. Magda said she did not feel the TAT magazine was good value for money, but it is sent automatically to all members (one per household).

Richard raised again TAT's concern over individual funds which are managed by group contacts, and asked that both the Science and the Computer groups submitted financial statements to him before the year-end. The Treasurer and Chairmen would arrange to meet the relevant account handlers.

4. Communications

Alan confirmed that the draft of January's Newsletter was already with Magda. He highlighted a new Vacancy page will be added to the website. The London Studies booklet is also nearly ready for publishing and he hopes to get this completed by the end of the month. Decisions on how to distribute it more widely, and how much to charge for it, are still to be made.

Care is taken not to send too many emails direct to the membership but to use the website and the newsletters for notifications instead.

Members are still saying they have difficulties with signing in and accessing all areas of the Knole website. Alan stressed that it is only the Members section which contain the minutes, accounts, etc that has restricted access. Rose and Carol have agreed to offer a help desk at a Monthly Meeting to answer queries.

5. Social Events

Wendy reported that 51 tickets had been sold for the lunch on 6th January, and 47 for the 7th. Feedback on Monday's event had been good and a review will be held with the venue in due course. It was suggested that tea and coffee might be included in the offer in subsequent years.

The coffee mornings continue to be a success with some of the groups using the occasion to hold planning meetings. New members were recommended to attend.

Providing refreshments for the Monthly Meetings was also going well, although it was unfortunate the crockery still had to be taken home to be washed. The public café is no longer operating in the crypt. The space for the catering tables is sufficient for the monthly meetings, but will of course need to be relocated for the annual Open Afternoon.

6. Science Group

In Christine's absence, Alan reported that the 2nd January Science Quiz had been a great success and the Science Group hope to hold another one later in the year. It had been ably led by Peter Dixon. With the move to Holmesdale for their meetings, Alan proposed that he discuss with the Club the possibility of purchasing an on-site defibrillator, and asked whether it would be acceptable to offer to make a Knole contribution to its purchase. This was agreed as a number of Knole groups make use of the Club building. It was suggested that a training session for Knole members might also be arranged on its use and basic first aid.

7. Report on Study Groups

Delma was pleased to report that we now have 80 groups. The newest group is a second **Knitting for Living** group. She had attended a South East meeting in November and had learnt that other U3As do record the number of participants in each of their groups through the Beacon system. There followed a discussion on how best to collect and collate formation of group numbers from the Group Contacts, mindful of the need to limit group contacts' responsibilities and also the size of some groups (eg the gardening group has around 40 members!). It was agreed that Delma should wait until the associate membership scheme was developed, before introducing any new arrangements which may prove difficult to sustain.

8. Report on New Study Groups

Sharon outlined the range of new groups under consideration or in the pipeline (including **Money Matters, Play Reading, Creative Writing**), but stressed that she needed sufficient interest before launching new groups. She has been working alongside the **London Walks 3** group and is pleased that this group is now going forward. She understands a third table tennis group is about to start. She and/or Delma need to be kept up to date with continuing vacancies so that they can be highlighted in the Newsletter and at Monthly Meetings.

9. Review of Administrative Procedures

Magda circulated a list of available times for Committee members to meet with her to discuss their individual roles, to establish the workload was acceptable, and how to alleviate it if not. She re-iterated her concern about members being burdened with tasks, and hoped to build a skill bank amongst the wider membership to assist with the running of Knole U3A. It was important to develop working teams in several areas, and possibly consider having a representative attend an Executive meeting once or twice a year.

She will be shortly meeting with the Sevenoaks, Westerham and Edenbridge U3As to continue discussions on developing the arrangements for enabling associate membership. Once established, she hoped this might open the way to joint seminars and a wider range of shared study groups.

10. A.O.B

Pene referred again to the proposed National U3A Day to be held on 3rd June this year. It was agreed not to take any further action at this stage, but to discuss the event with our neighbouring U3As in due course.

Members were reminded that the AGM would be held on 22nd June 2020. The draft accounts for 2019/2020 will need to be considered at the May meeting.

12. Dates for 2020 Meetings

3rd March, 5th May (FYI, the Spring Bank Holiday has been moved from 4th May to 8th May 2020)