

AUGHTON & ORMSKIRK UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Minutes of the 4th Annual General Meeting Held on Thursday 3 May 2007 in Christ Church, Aughton, starting at 11.45.

Chairman: Geoff Maitland

Present: 184 members: 204 Forms of Proxy had been received authorising the Chairman to vote for each Resolution.

- 1) **Minutes of 3rd Annual General Meeting held May 2006**, having previously been approved by the Committee, were summarised by the Secretary, and agreed as a correct record.
- 2) There were no matters arising from the Minutes
- 3) **Report by Secretary** (also on behalf of the Membership Secretary) - Ted Morrell reported on membership figure, Number 1776 being the next issue but said that new recruits were now slowing. We are pleased to have helped Up Holland, Mawdesley & Maghull set up but have lost some members to them. A&O U3A, a registered Charity is one of the biggest U3As in the North and now has over 70 Groups and social activities. Ted thanked everyone involved for giving their time and expertise. Our continued membership of the Third Age Trust gives general advice and news as well as insurance cover, study material U3A News and Sources. Our Committee of 15 has been placed on a sound footing with phased retirements to ensure continuity. The Trustee activity is now more formal. Horizons is busy but only about 250 of our members take regular advantage of it. Our largest gathering of the year had been the Christmas Party Lunch at Floral Hall, Southport when 454 attended.
- 4) **Report by Treasurer** (also on behalf of the Finance Committee) - Jeff Roberts presented the results of another year of growth with turnover in excess of £100,000. A Reserve of £10,000 allows subscriptions to be retained at £10. He explained several items on the income and expenditure account summary, including the items included in "Other Income" (commission from Discovery Travel, Gift Aid, bank interest and sundries) and "Accruals" (work commissioned but not yet carried out). "Restricted" funds refer to monies retained for special purposes, including supporting grant applications and work connected with Sustainable Development. Jeff paid tribute to the banking team and the members of the Finance Committee. He made a plea for all tax paying members to complete the Gift Aid form (the contribution from which will go down due to the reduction in the basic rate of income tax being reduced from 22p to 20p in the £). This year it had been agreed that U3A need an independent financial examiner and accordingly Alexander Myerson of Ormskirk have been appointed auditors.
 - i) **Resolution 1** – That the Report and Accounts be adopted – it was proposed by Willem Weichers, seconded by Roy Baxendale and unanimously agreed.
 - ii) **Resolution 2** – That the subscriptions for 2007-08 remain at £10 – it was proposed by Vera Snelson, seconded by Alan Worthington and unanimously agreed.
 - iii) **Resolution 3** – That Alexander Myerson be appointed the auditor for the forthcoming year – it was proposed by Walter Yates, seconded by Alex McMinn and unanimously agreed.
- 5) **Report on Sustainable Development, External Relations and E-learning** – Alex McMinn presented two papers he had provided for every attendee and spoke briefly on the need for increased administration and planning.
- 6) **Report by the Social Sub Committee** – Christine Procter (also on behalf of Joint Chairman Wendy Wilkinson) outlined the activities during the year, expressed thanks to everyone involved in the four successful, pleasant, social occasions, particularly the Christmas Party when over 300 members attended, and outlined future plans (Barbeque, Race Night and 2007 Christmas Lunch). She asked for more ideas for events and requested that all Groups advise her of their own activities to avoid duplication of dates.
- 7) **Report on Welfare** – Dorothy Harrison explained how she and her team became aware of anyone sick or bereaved and sent cards and good wishes from U3A. She believed that most welfare is carried out within Groups but asked that news and information is passed to her also.
- 8) **Report by Publicity Sub Committee** – Stan Bryan explained the changes to the newsletter as the year had progressed, now a 12 page full-colour quarterly. He thanked all those involved with the publication and distribution, including everyone who came to collect their copy with lists for friends and neighbours. The web site has had 8,000 hits and there are 278 Google references to U3A. He requested that Group Leaders offer more frequent and detailed information to the Web Master, Margaret Wiechers, who was praised for her accurate and prompt updating of the site. Advertising meetings and attending events was also part of the Publicity remit and again Stan thanked all those involved. In standing down from the main Committee and also as Chairman of Publicity, Stan assured members that he would remain on the Committee and would continue to manage the "distribution" morning.
- 9) **Report by Groups Support Sub Committee** – Carole Gray gave a first overview of the results of recent Groups Survey. Most members average two meetings per month with over half meeting at the Scout & Guide HQ. 18 new Groups had been formed since last AGM. She outlined the tasks of the Sub Committee and offered support to Group Leaders. Thanks were expressed to everyone who had been involved.
- 10) **Report by Travel Sub Committee** – Bill Watkinson (on behalf of Joint Chairman Norman Williamson) explained how the Travel Sub Committee had been formed from an open meeting called to address various

concerns about travel arrangements and costs, particularly the “Single Supplement”. Meetings had been held with Discovery Travel and research carried out into other Group Travel organisations to identify different types of travel and pricing structures. A questionnaire of 90 members at Horizons had results in overwhelming support for four and seven day holidays, staying half board and travelling by coach, or coach and air. A further open meeting will be held to advise members of the choices of holiday for 2008. Group Leaders were requested to advise their own travel plans to avoid duplication of venues and dates.

- 11) **Resolution 4 - Elections to the Committee** – a maximum of 15 members may serve on the Committee and this year Stan Bryan, Alex McMinn, Sheila McCormack and Wendy Wilkinson are standing down and not offering themselves for re-election. (Re-election in a year’s time is possible). The Chairman thanked them very warmly for their service to U3A. Formal nominations had been received for Carole Gray, Jim Robson and Norman Williamson. Their election was approved unanimously.
- 12) **Change to the Constitution – Section 16 (ii) Quorum** - The present Constitution stipulates that there shall be a Quorum of 20% of the total membership at General Meetings of our U3A. Now that membership has grown to over 1600, this number is unlikely to be achieved. The Committee had decided to ask those who could not attend in person to complete a Proxy Form allowing the Chairman to vote in favour of the four Resolutions at today’s meeting. 183 members had attended in person and 204 Proxy Forms had been completed and returned. This made a total number of votes of 387, well over the 20% figure.
 - i) **Resolution 5** – It was approved unanimously that the Constitution be changed to read “There shall be a quorum when at least 100 members of The U3A are present at any General Meeting.”
 - ii) Further changes to the Constitution had been drafted but due notice of these had not yet been given to all members. These will be formally set out in next Newsletter to be published on 31 May along with changes to the Trustees. It was agreed that the short Special General Meeting will be held on Thursday 7 July.
- 13) **Chairman’s Report** - Geoff Maitland spoke briefly about his first year as Chairman and of the achievements made in that period. He was pleased that the petition started within the U3A had resulted in 19,000 signatures and was helping pressure on local NHS Trust re adult emergency cover. He said that to close membership would be to deny opportunity to those not yet involved and praised the achievements of every aspect of U3A as a thriving self-help organisation. He stressed the benefits of becoming involved and guaranteed that everyone gets more out than they put in. He expressed the intention that the main Committee would adopt a more strategic role with the Sub Committees gaining strength from delegated authority and responsibility. He thanked everyone involved in the Committee, Sub-Committees and Groups and Horizons for all their time and hard work.
- 14) **Open Forum** – Contributions and questions were invited from the floor
 - (i) A member asked why the meeting had started before 1045, the advertised time. The Chairman explained that the notices were not part of the AGM but regretted that some members may have missed a few minutes.
 - (ii) Ted Bignall asked about the temperature in Christ Church. The Secretary agreed to request that the Church was warm enough for our future events.
 - (iii) Ian Lyster asked about the costs and surpluses of the Christmas Lunch. The Secretary explained how the charges and income were derived. He also asked if the speaker on “The Mystery of Magnets” had been paid expenses as the talk was largely a sales pitch. The Secretary said he had not received either a fee or expenses.
 - (iv) Mrs Heselgrave raised several points about the “External Relations” report and suggested that some input from and feed-back to members would be welcomed. The Chairman agreed to refer this point to Alex McMinn and suggested that there was room for more members of the External Relations Sub Committee.
 - (v) Ray Sim queried the legality of the use of Proxy Forms in making up numbers to vote for the Change to the Constitution. The Secretary responded that he had taken informal legal advice from two sources, which had suggested that the action was acceptable.

There was no further business and the Chairman closed the meeting at 1155 hours.