

AUGHTON & ORMSKIRK UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Minutes of the 5th Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 8 May, 2008 in Christ Church, Aughton, starting at 1045

Chairman: Ted Morrell who welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.
Present: 135 members

Apologies were tendered on behalf of Roger & Alma Abel, John & Janice Appleton, Andrew Beeston, Stan & Marjorie Bryan, Norah Forshaw, Gaynor Hughes, Mervyn King, Colin & Barbara Redwood, Jim Robson, Jackie Roscoe, Peter Sewell, George & Ruth Slawinski, Stephen Talbot, Dennis & Jenny Walton, Eunice Woof, Alan & Anne Worthington.

Minutes of the 2007 Annual General Meeting were considered and agreed unanimously. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Secretary's Report – Sue Watkinson reported on membership numbers and trends, the Executive Committee members, the work and support of the Third Age Trust, and the changes to the Constitution.

Resolution 1 - In accordance with advice received from the Charities Commission, the Objects Clause must now revert to that agreed in the Constitution of 2003, namely

Clause 3(i) to advance the education of the public and in particular the education of older people no longer in full time gainful employment in Aughton, Ormskirk and West Lancashire and its surrounding locality.

Clause 3(ii) to provide facilities for leisure time and recreational activities with the object of improving the conditions of life for the above persons in the interests of their social welfare.

It was proposed by Beth Blamires, seconded by David Lloyd and AGREED unanimously that the Constitution should be amended in accordance with the above wording within the Objects Clause.

Treasurer's Report – Jeff Roberts reported on the income and expenditure accounts (6 accounts in total) for 2007-08 (not audited) showing turnover up by 34% on the previous year to £134,000. A working surplus of nearly £4,000 was achieved but this will be reduced by depreciation in the value of our assets. Several major items of equipment have been purchased during the year and some grant monies received. However, given several items of increasing expenditure and the reduction in income from holiday commission, it was necessary to recommend an increase in subscription, the first for three years, to £12.50 for 2008-09. Copies of the audited accounts for 2006-07 have been submitted to the Charities Commissioners and are available for inspection.

Resolution 2 – It was proposed by Ann Haskell, seconded by Carole Gray and AGREED unanimously that the audited accounts for 2006-07 be adopted.

Resolution 3 – It was proposed by Alex McMinn, seconded by Bill Watkinson and AGREED unanimously that the auditors, Alexander Myerson & Co., of Ormskirk, be re-appointed.

Resolution 4 – It was proposed by Doreen McGiveron, seconded by Bill Watkinson and AGREED unanimously that the 2008-09 subscription be raised to £12.50.

Finance Committee – Jeff Roberts presented a short report explaining the membership and role of the Committee. Total outside funding achieved amounts to £23,000 with a further Lottery application planned for this year. He raised awareness of the importance of Groups retaining a sense of belonging to U3A and of the necessity to monitor their finances. A cash book would be issued to each Group Leader with a request to record all transactions. The book will be available for audit if required. A separate Bank Account has been opened to deal with Groups' financial transactions. He concluded by thanking Ken Unwin and Ted Bignall for their work on Thursday mornings and to all members of the Finance Committee for their support.

External Relations – Jeff Roberts reported on the numbers of outside bodies on which A&O U3A has representation and detailed the neighbouring U3As that have been established with the help of Aughton & Ormskirk. He thanked Alex McMinn for his pioneering role within both District, County and on the National scene and mentioned that our member, May Blake from Parbold, had become the Older Person's Champion for West Lancashire District Council.

Publicity Committee – Sue Watkinson presented the report. The membership and role of the Committee were outlined and details given of Newsletter production and distribution, attendance at outside events, publicity gained through the local media and the web site. She thanked everyone involved and highlighted the success of the September newsletter in the National Competition.

Groups Support Committee – Sue Watkinson reported on the work of the Committee, reminding members of its purpose and membership. She mentioned the Group Leaders' Handbook, now updated fully, the email contact system with all Group Leaders and the individual contact now established with a member of the Committee. Leaders had been encouraged to improve their web site entry and to deal with first aid emergencies. New groups and the Shared Learning Project were outlined. The E-learning centre was mentioned and members urged to take advantage of the free one-to-one computer instruction or access to distance learning.

Social Committee – Ted Morrell reported on the events run for members by the Social Committee. These had been a BBQ at Haskayne on 30 June, a Race Night at Village Hall on 29th September, the Christmas Lunch at The Adelphi, Liverpool on 12 December and a Barn Dance at the Civic Hall on 22 February. These had produced a small profit. He added that it is a little disappointing that only around 15% of members support such events.

Travel Committee – Ted Morrell reported the success of recent holidays, in particular the New Year trip to Alsace, and outlined the plans for 2008. He confirmed that commission would no longer be paid to U3A but would reduce the cost of those taking advantage of the holidays. Two holidays have already been cancelled but three will take place during 2008 (and early 2009), with several individual Group holidays also being organised. For 2009 only two holidays are planned, a near continent one by coach and a farther destination one by air plus a New Year break if there is sufficient interest. The recently established “Holiday Group” will encourage small groups of members to plan their own holidays.

Elections to the Executive Committee

Dorothy Harrison and Ted Morrell retire this year by rotation. Ted Morrell offers himself for re-election. Nominations have been received for Beth Blamires, David Blanchflower and Chris Jones (there are 3 vacancies). The Secretary asked whether there were any further nominations from the floor and, on receiving none, invited the meeting to appoint the nominees en bloc and to re-appoint Ted Morrell. It was proposed by Alex McMinn, seconded by Bill Watkinson and unanimously AGREED that the three nominees and Ted Morrell should serve on the Executive Committee.

Chairman’s Report

Ted Morrell began by thanking the large army of U3A volunteers who, although unpaid, contribute over 4000 hours per month and enjoy so doing. These efforts enable us to offer an increasing choice of Groups and Events aimed at ensuring most tastes are catered for.

The new E-learning centre, led by Willem Wiechers, offers 40,000 courses was warmly recommended.

Particular thanks were given to Dorothy Harrison who, although retiring from the Executive Committee, will continue to increase the welfare activities with lifts to meetings, DVDs of meetings and a “buddy” scheme to support the home-bound. He asked whether other members would like to help. He congratulated the Newsletter team, including Bill Evans, on their efforts and on their success in the National Competition.

The special 5th Birthday celebration week will be held from 27 October-1 November and suggestions for activities would be most welcome. The monthly meeting and “Speaker” programme had produced some fine lectures with variety of content to appeal to all members. Alex McMinn continues to encourage, support and urge us upwards and onwards (see the blue paper “Report of the Trustees –Retrospect and Prospect”). Special thanks were given to Jeff Roberts, who will now retire as Treasurer but take on the role of Vice-Chairman. Chris Jones was introduced to the meeting as the Honorary Treasurer elect. He concluded by saying our U3A is a friendly, synergetic, value for money, welcoming organisation but invited ideas for constant renewal and re-invention.

Open Forum

Alan Starkie said that he had found the name “University of the Third Age” off-putting and asked whether another name could be discussed. The Chairman explained the origin of the name, that locally use “U3A” and that we await outcome of national consideration of the issue.

Beth Blamires thanked the Executive Committee, both those resigning and those incoming, for all their efforts that made the year enjoyable and successful.

Date and venue of 2009 Annual General Meeting – It was suggested that another venue should be used, e.g. the Civic Hall in Ormskirk, also that a speaker should be included. There was some support for this proposal and it was AGREED that the 2009 AGM be held on Thursday 7th May.

There was no further business and the Chairman closed the meeting at 1200.

Chairman
May 2009