

MINUTES OF THE FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF BEESTON U3A
HELD ON THURSDAY MAY 5TH 2016 AT BEESTON METHODIST CHURCH

1 Apologies: Christine Guest, Nadya Lancaster, Jane Swan, Ron Jones, Jose Gibson, Elizabeth Matthews.

There were 137 members attending.

2 The Chairman Sue Blackley welcomed members to the meeting and a presentation was made to Karen, office administrator of Beeston Methodist Church as a thank you for all the help and support she has given us during the past year.

3 Minutes of the AGM 2015

These were taken as read and Sue Morrison proposed and Anne Allery seconded the approval of the minutes, nem com.

4 Chairman's Report given by Sue Blackley.

Sue started by pointing out the milestone we have reached as this is our 5th year which we will be celebrating by having a special tea on 20th May which will be attended by the original steering committee as our guests. In the past year we had achieved over 600 members and it would not be unreasonable to suppose we could have a membership of over 700 by the time of the next AGM. The past year has been very successful on many counts. We have 46 interest groups with more in the pipeline and second groups being set up for table tennis, Latin, book group and wine tasting. We also have Singing for Fun which already have 47 people signed up. Sue reminded the members that none of this would be possible without the fantastic group leaders who work tirelessly and she noted that some group have moved towards shared leadership and a good example of this is the reformed History group. Several new groups had been established this year and these include, Murder Book Group, Lets Right Shakespeare and Come Painting although this group hasn't lasted.

During the past year the committee has been working from a Beeston U3A action plan which was put together last June. One of the main development points identified was to try to establish links with local educational establishments for mutual support. Several members requested a computer group and Steve Austin has established a link with Central College. Students are willing to provide one to one tuition on laptops, phones, iPads etc. We are also trying to establish links with the University of Nottingham but as this is a much bigger organization

progress is slow. A big thank you to Steve Austin and Richard Eddleston who are working on this.

In January we had a successful Group Leader's meeting which was followed in March by a very success Groups Fair. Group Leaders put in time and effort and thought very creatively about how they could promote their groups. Much of the original organisation was done by Marie Potts so a big thank you to her. As a consequence we got over 30 new members and many existing members signed up for new groups. We intend to repeat this every year. Several groups have made requests for financial support to buy equipment/subscriptions etc. We welcome these requests and the committee are keen to support them whenever possible.

All groups are very active and a number of visits have been enjoyed such as Art History's outing to The Jewellery Quarter and many Art Gallery visits which include The Nottingham Contemporary, Southwell, Djanogly Gallery and Lincoln. Some members of the Wine Appreciation Group joined up with members of the Nottingham Wine tasting group and visited the Burgundy region and in June several members will be going on a similar trip to Italy. Art History group leader Helen is organising a trip to Florence next year. The Theatre Visit group is very popular and the Garden Visits group enjoyed a three day trip to Norfolk.

Once again Lucy Beardsley has organised a number of excellent outings. These include Highclere, Bletchley Park, Birmingham Tattoo, Tour of the Globe Theatre, Elgar's birthplace and Spetchley Gardens. Lucy also continues to find excellent monthly speakers such as Charles Hanson the auctioneer whose talk was particularly memorable and so was Dorothy O'Brien who touched our hearts when she spoke about her close connections with a remote village in Nepal which was destroyed in the earthquake. A collection taken at the end of the talk raised an amazing £458 for the village. Several other events have been well supported and enjoyed by members. In September we held a Macmillan coffee afternoon raising over £600 and a quiz evening in November. We celebrated Christmas with entertainment proved by the ukulele and play reading groups, a choir from Chilwell School and festive refreshments. We have a Fine Wine Tasting evening planned for October.

At Christmas we also held a thank you coffee morning at The White Lion for all our volunteers without whose help the Open Meetings would not run as smoothly as they do.

Members of the committee have represented you at regional and national meetings/conferences. We try to keep up to date with changes to policy and to pass this information on to you. The National Conference is in

Nottingham again this year and we hope some members and committee members will attend. Details are on the website.

It is important that we make you, the members, feel valued and to seek your opinions enabling us to strive to make Beeston U3A even better. We have introduced a comments/suggestions box at open meetings. In January, we also sent out a questionnaire asking for your views and although the response wasn't huge it was interesting. Comments we received in answer to the question "What do we do well?" We have a good and dedicated Committee, we provide interesting monthly meetings with a variety of excellent speakers on a variety of topics in a good and easily accessible venue. We communicate with members via emails, newsletters and rolling notices. Most deservedly there was a lot of praise for Marie's excellent newsletter. You are friendly and welcoming to both new and existing members and we provide good opportunities for single members to be included in all activities. We have a large number of diverse groups with knowledgeable Group Leaders and we continue to support the formation of new groups and the maintenance of existing groups.

We asked for suggestions for new groups and some of those suggestion are already bearing fruit. Finally, the question of being on the committee was muted. There was not much response to this question. Sue pointed out that without a committee, there will be no U3A. At this point Sue gave special thanks to Malcolm Brookbanks for his excellent work as our treasurer. He is very astute and helpful committee member and has tightened our financial procedures.

Another development for our U3A was to enable some of you to engage in a Shared Learning Project. This event was held on April 28th and was well attended. Mandy Topp the regional representative for the shared learning projects and John Down from Grantham U3A were guests. Gill Morral and Caroline Penn also gave presentations and suggested ideas one of which was the history of The Grange which is the old police station which will definitely go ahead.

Future developments are to continue to extend the number of interest groups and to continue to work to establish links with University of Nottingham. To support members in researching shared learning projects, to provide a range of additional evening social events including those suggested by members. Continue to keep up to date with the U3A and to develop understanding of the U3A Beacon system which will eventually allow electronic registration.

Sue thanked all the committee members for their dedication and hard work and lastly thanked the members for their interest, enthusiasm and support and hoped that they continued to enjoy Beeston U3A and that we continue to go from strength to strength.

5 To Receive and Adopt the Statement of Accounts 2015-16

Treasurer Malcolm Brookbanks introduced the Statement of Accounts and explained them particularly the imbalance due to the financial loss on the Swimming Group. Despite the fact that we had reduced the membership fee this year because of the increase in membership we still had a lot of money so the new reduced membership fee of £15 will continue into 2016/17.

Mike Johnson proposed and Haydn Boothroyd seconded the adoption of the accounts. The proposal was carried nem com.

6 To Appoint an Independent Examiner of Accounts for 2016/17.

Peter Frost had decided not to continue as the independent auditor however Eric Burdett has volunteered and this was proposed by Piers Krause and seconded by Eleanor Hickie.

7 Change to the Constitution.

Malcolm Brookbanks explained that it felt that 2 years wasn't long enough for the chairman to be in place and that it should be extended to 4 years and once that was over the chair could be voted into a different position on the committee if they wished. This was proposed by Jane Wild and seconded by Bryan Sutcliffe.

8 Election of Vacant Committee posts for 2016-18

Lucy Beardsley for position of Speaker Seeker and Outings Organiser, proposed by Helen Stewart and seconded by Jill Boothroyd.

Margot Gale as vice-chair, proposed by Helen Hubert and seconded by Jan Riley.

Steve Austin as Publicity Officer, proposed by Mike Johnson and seconded by Margaret Johnson.

Elizabeth Le Marchant Brock as Minute Secretary, proposed by Eileen Parr and seconded by Tim Thomas.

Janis Patterson as Events Organiser, proposed by Jose Gibson and seconded by Jean Evans.

Marie Potts as Communications Officer, Anne Allery and seconded by Mike Allery.

These were proposed by Mike Johnson and seconded by Hazel Brooke

9 Other Notified Business – none.

10 The meeting was closed at 11.05am.

Signed.....Dated.....

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