

REPORT OF 2018 COORDINATORS' DAY



This was held at Berkhamsted Civic Centre on Friday 19th October.

There were 75 members present, Coordinators, substitutes and assistants.

Tina Howard, Chairman, welcomed everyone and introduced the 8 Committee members present and also mentioned those unable to attend.

Alan Osborn, GLO, explained that the hall was set out with 9 tables of 8 people and a Committee member at each table. Rather than the old style of a "top table". We hoped that would enable a more relaxed atmosphere.

Harvey Collyer, Treasurer, asked firstly for the Groups to use Form 2 to send in their money and explained in detail each section especially that the ID and dates it covered should be on there. The financial year runs from April 1st to March 31st. He reminded us that the Coordinators' Handbook answered most questions that were raised and should be consulted.

A couple of years ago some Group payments were increased, they are always under review but in the meantime the Membership Fees and the Group fees will be unchanged for 2019-2020 as our accounts given at the AGM showed that we were in a good state. Our reserves should be about 50% of our membership fees (about £18000) mainly to cover the winding up of U3A Dacorum. All money paid in belongs to the U3A Dacorum not the individual group.

He told us that his time of office finished at the next AGM and then there would be a new Treasurer in place.

Mike Sapsard, Secretary, told us that our expenditure on new sound equipment was producing good results but apologised that the loop system in the Civic Centre was not working on the day. It had been previously tested and found to be OK.

He reported that his First Aid sessions had gone well. So far 3 sessions of 14 people had taken place and there were still 22 people on the list to be dealt with.

He referred to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which was aimed at large concerns but small charities such as our U3A had to conform too. We have a Contract with our members to keep our data safe. Members cannot withhold their name, address and email address and phone number as we need these to communicate. We need to keep records of subs paid and the membership number and Gift Aid contributions. Paper records should be kept for 7 years in a safe place.

All Coordinators were agents of the U3A and had a duty to protect the data they collected from members. On any occasion when they sent emails they should ensure they protected the privacy of members by using 'Blind Carbon Copies' (BCC).

Judy Baldwin, Membership Secretary asked first for a show of hands for Coordinators, substitutes and new attendees and because there were a good few of the latter apologised to others for the repetition of some points.

We have again about 1600 members, yearly losing about 200 and gaining 200.

Thanks were due to those Coordinators who helped at Renewal time by checking for new cards in May and encouraging lapsed members to pay up.

The Membership Secretary job involves supplying the database to the publisher of the Digest which is posted to every address. Also, the addresses for Third Age Matters (5 x a year) were supplied to the Third Age Trust (TAT). This was for those who wanted it and members could be easily removed from this list if they really didn't want it.

Gift Aid Forms and all the registers and forms are available today for those who do not want to download from the website.

I have the 2019 U3A Diaries for sale at £2.50p each.

My term of office would also finish at the 2019 AGM.

Laura Rouse, Vice Chair, Refreshment Organiser and Disability Officer

Laura said a few words about each of her roles. Emphasis was put on a plea for Groups to honour their rare request to serve refreshments for the Monthly Meetings this should be done even if the members do not normally come to such meetings. She visits halls to check on their Loop Systems.

Floor. The meeting was now open to discussion and questions.

St. Johns Hall This hall is a source of many queries. When booking it must be arranged that setting up time is accounted for and paid for. If booked from 10 to 12pm then set up and dismantle in that time. If more time is required then book it. Cancellation notice is very long for this hall so try not to cancel in such a manner that the hall has to be paid for. Do let Harvey know of any late or missed meetings in any halls, so he does not pay unnecessarily.

Remember Churches in particular might cancel a meeting for Church purposes again let Harvey know, so he doesn't pay for a meeting they have cancelled.

Bulk emailing Please try to use the "bcc" method so members email addresses are not visible to all recipients. The longer your list if you use the "cc" method the more you expose addresses to hackers. Go to the Computer Support Group meeting to get an explanation of this.

Group meetings Everyone should pay their due including visitors. There are no freebies! Remember to be Deaf Aware and see that people sit in an appropriate place and if in a hall that the loop system works. Be aware of those who do not drive, remember some members have to stop driving, and see if lifts can be arranged among the group members.

Digest Articles, poems and photographs are welcome. Dates are being avoided in the Diary but are necessary for groups that meet fortnightly.

If there is to be a break in the meeting schedule then put NM for no meeting with the date in the Digest.

Groups Grants are issued fairly and on a case by case basis. Groups are not allowed to hold group funds, because all income belongs to the U3A.

Groups pay themselves for what they use. E.g. Play Reading and Book Groups pay their own library fees.

Meetings should be planned, organised, and costed if an outside speaker is used. It is understood that only an estimate of attendees can be made. Requests should be made on this basis to the GLO and usually they are met. If you do it properly an unusual loss could then be carried by the U3A. Be

careful if a speaker is unknown, Jenny Thirlwell who books Monthly Meeting speakers will not book a speaker unless she has another U3A's recommendation.

Collaboration with other local U3A groups can be effected by researching their websites and trying to liaise with similar groups for suggestions.

Loneliness. The County Council is looking into loneliness. Tina Howard is giving talks about the U3A to the new Wellbeing Groups which are starting in Care Homes. We were also reminded that there is a 60+ 'Coffee in the Park' in Gadebridge Park Centre on Friday mornings at 10-12pm. Rotary also have a Thursday morning 60+ coffee session in the same place.

Paid Tutors Pilates and other such groups need qualified teachers. However, they usually do not want to run our groups as they are not cost effective enough for them. The Circle Dance Group pays separately for a professional caller. Financially and in the ethos of the U3A, it is better to look for non U3A groups if an external tutor or instructor is needed. CAD could be consulted.

Ethnic diversity In spite of much research by the U3A itself this is an ongoing problem. It seems that however welcome, minority groups have other things that they prefer to do. Time may alter this as younger generations age. However, our Table Tennis group says they are a racially mixed group, and we have many members of European origin.

Hall bookings Gill Fountain has the list of available halls and the ones with WiFi and loop systems. She should be consulted if Groups want to change venue or a House Group wants to move to a Hall.

It was pointed out that St. Mary's in the High street has a newly refitted hall available and it is near good parking.

Barn Dance Tickets were now being sold for the Barn Dance in November. Laura Rouse was in charge and emails would be sent out.

John Waller on behalf of the Military history Group wanted to publicly express their thanks for all that the Committee does.

Club Reporter we used to regularly report on the Monthly Meeting in the Club Section of the Gazette. This had a phone contact and brought in some people. We would like a volunteer to resume this reporting. We do not have large scale advertising as we cannot supply enough groups if too many people join at one time. Word of mouth is our main recruiting method, and libraries and other centres do know of us.

The meeting closed at 12.15 pm and then a delightful lunch was enjoyed by all.