



Minutes of the 34th Annual General Meeting of the Haywards Heath and District u3a.
held at HH Methodist Church on 4th October 2024 at 10am

Present:

Philip Metherell (PM)	Chairman
Paul Roberts (PR)	Hon. Secretary
Eric Bassett (EB)	Treasurer
Susanne Roberts (SR)	Membership Secretary
Anne Morrison (AM)	Venues Officer
Peter Caddy (PC)	Webmaster
Eric Whitaker (EW)	Membership Liaison Officer
Chris Roe (CR)	Beacon Administrator
Carole Andrews (CA)	Social Secretary

Plus **70** members present. There were also **59** proxy postal voters. Total **129** members eligible to vote. As the membership was **912** at the time of the AGM, a quorum would have been **92** which was easily surpassed.

1. Welcome and Introduction:

On behalf Chairman **Philip Metherell** and the other members of the Committee, Hon. Secretary **Paul Roberts** welcomed everyone present to the 34th Annual General Meeting of the Haywards Heath and District u3a.

2. Apologies:

David Gee - Groups Co-ordinator, **Amanda Trevitt** – HH u3a Ambassador & RUGS co-ordinator and 14 other apologies were received.

3. Tributes:

PR asked for a few moment's silence to remember the following members who had died during the year:

June Galgey	Ursula Moon	Roy Weller	Derek Barton
Susan Walder	Juliet Anstey	Pamela Grant	Brian Drew
Beryl Lane			

4. Approval of the Minutes of the 33rd AGM held on 12th October 2023.

PR said that the minutes had been available for perusal on our website for many months and called for a vote that the minutes be approved

Proposer: **Bridget Lane**

Seconder: **Graham Stanley**

The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

6. Chairman's Address:

Our total membership has remained stable over the year at around 910 members and the number of Interest Groups is currently 82. Both of these figures have bounced back since the Covid years. Our finances are in a healthy condition and our Treasurer will give further details shortly.

Looking back over my first year as Chairman some main points come to mind.

We started the year with an initiative to improve our records held on our Beacon membership system especially in regard to groups that meet in hired halls. With this knowledge we were able to improve the collection of hall hire fees so that the need for subsidy from central funds was reduced significantly. The improved records also allowed us to plan for the future with greater confidence of our income and expenditure.

The records are still in need of further updating as the membership of several groups (mainly those who meet in member's homes) is still missing. This would be useful in identifying groups which are full and we can advise new u3a members of this position.

The year has seen the demise of a few groups and the formation of some new ones. Some we have lost include Finance and Current Affairs, Art for All, Car and Driver, Travel and Theatregoers. On the upside we have a new Exploring London group, Ballroom Dancing and Bus Pass group. It is hoped that some more new groups will form over the coming year. It should be mentioned that many of the groups that folded over the past several years have done so because no-one was willing to take over as Group Leader when the incumbent steps down rather than it being due a shortage of group members. We do need more people to take on the role of Group Leader for existing and new groups.

There have been a number of social events which, in the main, have been well attended and we have heard interesting and amusing talks. The "Shakespeare's London", the "Knepp Weald to Waves" talks come to mind. Our Intra-group quiz was a big success but we did not exactly cover ourselves with glory in the Inter-u3a Quiz (with Burgess Hill and Hurst, Hassocks & Ditchling) where we were placed third. More study required this year so we can recapture our previous winning position!

Both the Xmas and Summer concerts were big successes with an impressive array of musical talent on show. In total we were able to collect about £700 which went to the “HH Foodbank” and “UK Harvest” charities.

Last September we held our last “Betty Murrell Day” as the bequest that she made has finally run out. The small residue of the fund will be used in January 2025 to put on a lunch event at HH Golf Club for Group Leaders and Convenors to thank them for their contribution to running of our essential Interest Groups.

Our website is currently under review and it is hoped that a new version will be released in the New Year. It has been proposed that rather than tinker with the existing 8 year-old site that we could take advantage of a TAT initiative which provides a template site that we can customise. There are many features of this template that improve the functionality and appearance of the website as well as having a lower administration cost.

Following a meeting of HH, BH and HH&D Chairmen and others, we agreed to have reciprocal arrangements for our members to visit some of their groups and talks and their members can visit ours. Details of how this works will be forthcoming later this month.

As regards the future of HH u3a, the overriding feature is “more of the same”. The feedback that we get from our members is mainly positive regarding what we currently offer. I suggest that we want more talks/events, more interest groups, more Group Leaders and Convenors and some prospective Committee members.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Committee for their support and for the diligent way our affairs are conducted. It has made my role much easier than it could have been. I would also like to thank the members of RUGS for their invaluable contribution to our events, we could not do it without them.

‘Applause’

7. Treasurer’s Report and Adoption of Accounts:

Treasurer **Eric Bassett** referred to the accounts for the year ending 31st July 2024 which had previously been promulgated and which are on our website.

Due in part to the recent membership renewal subscription fees being received, our finances were in a very healthy condition, however many Hall Hire fees had yet to be paid.

Eric thanked **Graham Stanley**, a former treasurer, for his interest, questions and advice.

PR proposed the motion that the ‘Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st July 2024 be passed as having been received and approved.

Proposer: **Royston White**

Seconder: **Julia Vokes**

The motion was approved unanimously

8. Election of Committee Members

PR introduced the committee members present by name and title (see above) and proposed the motion that the committee members be re-elected en-masse

Proposer: **Jean Marshal**

Secunder: **Deidre O'Brien**

The motion was carried unanimously.

9. Questions or Comments from the floor:

Nicholas Lake asked what committee was doing to raise awareness of u3a within the general community. **PM** replied that lack of members wasn't a problem, it's the lack of potential committee members and especially Group Leaders that was a problem.

Membership Secretary **SR** said that all new members had indicated that they heard of us via a friend who was already a member.

Bridget Lane added that WSDC were unaware of our existence. **PM** agreed that they were amazed to discover that, not only did we exist, but we had 1,000 members!

Mary Richards requested that **PR** should mention the Cuckfield Christmas Tree Festival and her idea of groups sending her photos relating to the group activities which would be used to decorate the HH u3a tree, which he did.

Edward Handley asked if we had had any response from potential members following the u3a advertisement on 'Boom' radio. **SR** reiterated that most, if not all, new members were introduced by a friend and she was unaware of anyone joining us as a result of that radio advertisement.

Helen Carter proposed a round of applause for the work that the committee did on behalf of the members. Applause followed.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 10.35 and was followed by a talk from **PM** titled 'The River Ouse – Sea to Source' which was well received and was followed by refreshments.

Signed.....Date.....

Philip Metherell

HHu3a Chairman