

## **Totnes and District u3a**

Annual General Meeting at St John's Church Bridgetown

Thursday 25th April 2024 at 10.15am

### **Minutes**

#### **1. Apologies for Absence.**

Tony Cooper, Webmaster. A number of members also gave their apologies.

#### **2. Minutes of the AGM held on 27th April 2023.**

The minutes were agreed and signed off by the Chairman.

#### **3. u3a Chairman's Report.**

The last year has proved to be a successful one for our u3a with a continued growth in the number of members and in the range of activities. As well as continuation of many of our long term activities that remain popular there have been several new activities introduced.

Our annual coach trip to Knightshayes proved very popular and we had the benefit of a dry sunny day to enjoy the formal gardens, interesting house and wide ranging estate. Thanks to Jacquetta and Rosemary for the organisation.

The other regular annual summer event is our summer tea party and last year we tried something different with a change of venue to the Totnes Boating Association and with organising our own refreshments. This also proved a great success with the advantage of having the whole of the lovely TBA facility to ourselves with comfortable chairs and tables inside and also picnic tables on the jetty outside with views across the River Dart on a glorious sunny summer's afternoon. Our thanks go to Roy and Maureen who organised the sandwiches and cakes, and to Liz and her helpers who provided the endless cups of tea. But we also need to thank Richard, who thought we might run out of cake so baked a delicious home-made one in the morning. We hope to be able to return to the same venue for this year's summer tea party.

We have continued to enjoy a range of interesting speakers at our monthly

meetings at St Johns thanks to Caz. Caz has worked hard at booking and arranging our speakers for a number of years and is also giving a talk herself today after the AGM. Caz has decided to stand down from the role of arranging speakers after this year, so we are looking for someone willing to take this on. The committee would also like to hear from any members who have suggestions for speakers or subjects.

Our Christmas show proved a great success under the charismatic leadership of the choirmaster Jeremy Doyle, who unfortunately has now moved away from the area. However the choir has a new enthusiastic choirmaster so we are looking forward to a show again in December.

The committee meet about every six weeks and are always seeking new ideas for our u3a. Roger who joined the committee year ago came up with an idea to offer short courses on different subjects to complement the large range of groups that continue to meet regularly. Roger and three other committee members decided to give this a try and the four short courses they ran on genealogy, astronomy, dying well and using an iPad all generated considerable interest and enthusiasm. We hope these three to four week courses might inspire other members to consider running ones on different subjects. If you have an idea and would like some help in taking your idea forward please talk to a committee member.

This year we are planning another coach trip and there is an opportunity for you to express your preference on a few ideas we have which include the tropical gardens at Abbotsbury, Trebah gardens in Cornwall, Cotehele house and gardens, Powderham castle and Killerton house and gardens. Please see Rosemary to let us know your preference or let her know if you have any other ideas. We are also considering more local trips and you will have seen an email from Rosemary asking for interest in a trip to Plymouth Theatre Royal to see a musical 'The Artist'

It has been great to see the continued interest in the many groups which are at the heart of our u3a activities with growth in membership of existing groups and the formation of many new groups. These new groups have included such varied topics as a portrait group and creative writing for those who want to exercise their

artistic talents, a German conversation group for those who want to exercise their language skills, a longer walks group for those wanting to exercise their legs and a second lunch club- for those who just want to enjoy food and good company. If you have an idea for a new group contact Jacquetta who will give you some guidance and help in getting it off the ground. Thank you to all the group leaders who run the groups for the benefit of other members.

It is easy to forget that all these activities only happen because members volunteer to help. I have the benefit of an excellent hard working committee who I would like to thank for all the work they have done over the past year. We also have many members who regularly help but are not on the committee and these include Tim Marsh who edits the newsletter, Caz Donovan who has organised the speakers for many years, Shelley and Sue who check you in and greet members at the Thursday meetings. I also want to give a special thank you to Liz and her helpers who provide endless cups of tea and coffee not only at the monthly meetings but also at the summer and Christmas parties.

This year Carolyn Nash is standing down as membership secretary- a role she has carried out for four years - many thanks Carolyn. We have already had an offer from Carol Tabb to take over if she is elected today. We are however still looking for more volunteers to help both on the committee and in other ways. Both Richard, our treasurer and myself will have to stand down next year so it would be good to get some new committee members who can shadow us in anticipation of taking over the roles in due course.

There are also other roles not on the committee where we could do with some help. These include someone to help organise the speakers. It would be really helpful to have someone willing to help set up and operate the projector and microphone system for our monthly meetings and also someone willing to learn and take on the role of administering Beacon, our membership database system. If you are willing to help in any way, whether it be as a committee member, one of the other roles I have mentioned or simply on an occasional basis please contact me or any member of the committee.

#### **4. u3a Treasurers report for the year ended 31st December 2024:**

The overall position of the Totnes U3A remains sound.

A hard copy of the financial accounts and auditors report available on request.

My thanks to Val Kirkin for doing such an excellent and helpful audit of the accounts.

Expenditure has increased as one would expect in the current economic climate but members will recall from the last AGM that the committee have decided to spend down the surplus to a point where the reserves are approximately six months running costs. (This is the recommendation of the central U3A office.) the practical outcome of this decision is that the subscription rates will again be unaltered for the next year.

Accounts for the year ended December 2023

The accounts couldn't be shown on the overhead projector but a few hard copies were available for members to see at the meeting.

The account balance is currently £5,310.

Subscriptions remain at £17 per member, £30.50 for joint membership and Members of another u3a with full membership of another u3a, who also wish to join Totnes u3a can take up Associate membership for £8.50.

Currently there are 262 Full members and 12 Associate members.

#### **5. Retirement of Executive Committee Members.**

Carolyn Nash

#### **6. Election of Officers Nominations received to date:**

Carol Tabb

#### **7. Carol Tabb was elected as Membership secretary.**

8. Bob Dow was voted in to serve a further year as Chairman.

9. There was no other business and the meeting closed at 10.40

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Full address of Totnes u3a website is <http://u3asites.org.uk/totnes/welcome>

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