



Saffron Walden

Registered Charity No. 290670

[www.saffronwaldenu3a.org.uk](http://www.saffronwaldenu3a.org.uk)

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 9TH SEPTEMBER 2024 AT SAFFRON WALDEN BAPTIST CHURCH**

The meeting, which began at 2:30pm, was conducted by Jim Dwyer, Chairman, who thanked those attending Saffron Walden u3a's AGM. In accordance with the Constitution the Committee will be standing down.

### **Present:**

The meeting was quorate.

### **Apologies for absence:**

Apologies were registered from Christine Greet and William Brown.

### **Minutes and Approval from the last AGM:**

The minutes of the 2023 AGM, which have been made available on our website were not read. No questions were raised from the membership.

Kate Atkinson proposed and Martin Hugall seconded that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2023 be adopted as a true record.

Agreed Nem.con.

The Chairman signed and dated the 2023 AGM minutes.

### **Chairman's Report 2023 – 2024**

I would like to welcome all of you to the Saffron Walden u3a Annual General Meeting for this year – our 40th. It has been my pleasure to serve as the Saffron Walden u3a Chairman for the last year and to work with my dedicated and supportive committee: Vice Chairman and Activities Organiser Mary, Secretary Susan, Treasurer Steve, Membership Secretary John, Speaker Organiser Brian and not forgetting our non-committee Website Manager Martin.

We had a good response to our recent request for more committee members and have recruited three worthy candidates to join our existing team – giving us the promise of 8 committee members going forward into the 2024/2025 year.

More and more of you, our members, are using our Beacon system to pay online for your membership and for classes and trips. We are grateful for this as it not only saves us time but it is proving to be efficient in so many ways.

This last year has seen our membership grow steadily. There was a real surge at the beginning of this year when our membership grew in one month by 62, from 686 in January to 748 in February. This was mostly due to our Activities and Groups taster meeting in January where we signed up 30 new members at that one event alone. For this outstanding recruitment achievement we were awarded a u3a grant which paid for the cost of hiring the Bowling Club for that event.

Another success was our choir's summer concert on the bandstand in Jubilee Gardens. The event also featured the ukulele group and we drew a big crowd and raised over £500 for the chosen charity – the East Anglian Children's Hospices, a very worthy cause. Other events that were featured during the year were our first Antiques Roadshow, which was very well

attended and which we will be repeating this coming October, and our Christmas Buffet. Our Christmas Buffet for this year sold out within 6 hours of the email being sent – which took us all by surprise and we apologise to those of you who missed out. We will be rectifying that situation next year.

We have two new groups that have both made excellent starts during the last year: New Testament Greek Reading and Crochet, or the 'Happy Hookers' as they like to be called! We welcome them both to the fold, and encourage any member who wishes to start a new group to approach our Activities Organiser Mary.

I would like to thank all of our hard-working and dedicated coordinators who have served us so well throughout the year and finally, a big thank you to all those who have come today to renew your membership and to those of you who have just joined us – a warm welcome and we look forward to seeing you at our 40th Birthday celebrations at the Town Hall later this month, invitations will be sent out during the next few days to all paid-up members – no ticket required. And let's remember the u3a ethos of learning, laughing and living – thank you.

*Jim Dwyer, Chairman*

### **Treasurer's Report 2023 - 2024**

The annual accounts and financial statements have been prepared using applicable Accounting Standards and have been examined by an Independent Examiner, in accordance with the Charity Commissioners' requirements. My thanks go to Malcolm White who offered his services to examine the accounts. Malcolm has also agreed to examine the accounts next year.

**Usable Income** for the year totalled **£11688.07**, which consists of membership fees, Gift Aid, bank interest and subscriptions for last year's Xmas tea. **Expenditure** was **£13167.78**, resulting in a **shortfall of £1479.71**. Expenditure included the payment for the Xmas tea.

*This loss was planned as we wanted to reduce the current account reserves.* **£5398.28** of the expenditure was paid to the central u3a to cover TAT membership and the fees for the TAM magazine. Current reserves stand at about **£17,242** in the bank and building society, of which about £2,750 is committed to various group expenses and £4320 is committed to T&T expenses. I would not want to see the reserves drop any lower, hence we have increased membership fees from **£12.50 to £15** this year. The financial situation will be reviewed during the year and a decision will be made regarding the following years fee.

Group and theatre and travel activities have been vibrant this year.

**New class fees**, excluding Theatre & Travel, totalled **£14,110.61** with **expenses of £11551.83**. Including bf from 22/23, there is a **net balance of £2749.14** which will be carried forward into 2024/5. Thank you to all group coordinators for good management of their finances. Please continue to check the current costs of halls (with Susan or me) before working out term fees. Any groups with money left will retain this balance.

Theatre and Travel trips are flourishing. Thanks to Chris Duffy and her team for the hard work they put into it. **T&T received £29507.00** and **spent £28087.82**. The T&T account remains healthy at **£4317.27** at the end of the year.

Many more people are now paying their **class and T&T fees via BACS**. This seems to be working well and eliminates our need to bank cheques in the bank or PO.

About 300 people have renewed using the **automatic renewal via Paypal**. This is encouraging, as it eliminates a lot of work for John and me in processing renewal forms and cheques. Paying via the Paypal interface does not mean having to have a Paypal account, as you can use a credit card as well. The use of BACS for paying membership fees has also risen. This is fine for new members, but we would encourage renewing via the automated PayPal route.

*Stephen Messenger, Treasurer*

There were no questions.

I would like to propose the adoption of the accounts. Martin Hugall proposed and Keith Patmore seconded the adoption of the accounts.  
Agreed Nem.con.

### **Appointment of an Independent Examiner**

Malcolm White has agreed to examine our accounts for the year 2024 to 2025.

### **Election of Committee:**

The Secretary reported that the following candidates had correctly completed nomination forms in accordance with the Constitution:

#### **Nominee**

Elaine Bewick  
Susan Brown  
Mary Curtis  
James Dwyer  
Sue Matthews  
Steve Messenger  
John Trueman  
Chris Wilkinson

#### **Proposed**

Susan Bouzan  
Hugh Herdon  
Rose Peram  
Ian Lawson  
Rose Peram  
Christine Duffy  
Christine Taylor  
Ian Lawson

#### **Seconded**

James Quill  
MA Cousins  
Julie Ball  
Jean E Pattenden  
Ivy Eldreeth  
John Martin  
MA Cousins  
Penny Lawson

Martin Hugall proposed and Christine Simpson seconded that the candidates be accepted en bloc.  
Agreed Nem.con

### **Any Other Business:**

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 2:48 pm.