



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

## EAST LINCOLNSHIRE U3A NEIGHBOURHOOD MEETING

25 July 2019

Minutes of the meeting held at Belchford Village Hall

U3A Representatives Present			
Chair	Steve McCarthy	SMc	West Wolds
	Linda Brighton	LB	West Wolds
	Brian Ward	BW	West Wolds
	Philip Barlow	PB	Boston
	Ian Hulse	IH	Spilsby
	Mary Flynn	MF	Spilsby
	Mike Harrison	MH	Horncastle
	Neil Carter	NC	Horncastle
	Les Wylde	LW	Woodhall Spa
	Jean Hogg	JH	Regional Trustee
	Gill Cox	GC	Louth
	Jackie Barnett	JB	Louth
Secretary:	Sharon Rupp	SR	West Wolds
Absent:	Peter Marks		Alford
Apologies received from:			
	David Riggs		Skegness
	Mel Taylor		Louth

Item	Details	Action
1.	<b><u>Welcomes and Introductions</u></b> Steve McCarthy West Wolds U3A presided over the meeting and welcomed all attendees. Round table introductions were made. Apologies had been received from David Riggs, Skegness & Mel Taylor, Louth. Peter Marks, Alford was absent.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of the Last Meeting - 28 March 2019</u></b> Page 2, PB was unsure if the Louth Flyer email had been sent. He will check emails dated 28 March and advise SR if not received. The Minutes were then agreed and signed off.	
3.	<b><u>Actions outstanding from the Last and Previous Meetings</u></b> <u>Nov 18 Item 5 Recruiting Volunteers (PB)</u> PB gave a resume of the event and what points were taken forward for action at Boston U3A; namely reinforcing of the self-help ethos, welcoming visitors & new members and encouraging members to come on to the Committee. Actions set up to implement these principals include meeting with Group leaders to emphasise the principals of the U3A and encourage them to seek out potential committee members from their groups; strengthening the Greeter role at monthly meetings and	

	<p>stimulate newcomers to get involved, and educate members that being a committee member is not daunting by running articles in their Newsletter etc. LB advised that their Greeter Team have an Induction Pack which include the Principles. PB went on to advise that the Training and Induction that new committee members should receive is not helpful; the National website pages on this are not supportive and include a daunting reading list. JH felt the PowerPoint presentation on this subject (found under Downloads) was straightforward but she will take another look.</p> <p>SMc felt the National website was still difficult to use with no viable search option but JH confirmed this should all be resolved in time for the AGM, and defended the staff at N.O. who have a high workload. CLOSED</p> <p><u>Nov 18.6 Pre-Retirement Presentation (PB) - CLOSED</u></p> <p><u>Mar 19.5c Topics for Regional Event</u> Dealt with at 4 below- CLOSED</p> <p><u>Mar 19.5e Hearing Loop Details passed to MF - CLOSED</u></p> <p><u>Mar 19.6 AGM Accounts copy to MF - CLOSED</u></p>	
4.	<p><b><u>Regional and National Matters</u></b></p> <p>1. The Regional Event will be held in April 2020 and will include talks on the psychology of false memory and presentation by Sam Mauger. Also workshops covering: dealing with difficult people, adding value, facebook, induction for committee members, mentoring and so on.</p> <p>2. The National Conference 27-29 August in Nottingham will give an update on the Action plan which is a far reaching project. Louth will be attending.</p> <p>3. JH checked all the groups had submitted their annual return.</p> <p>4. The Charity Commission will require the following policies to become compulsory soon: Safeguarding, Accessibility &amp; Equality. The National policies on these can be found under Downloads, Support Your Members and Committee Responsibilities respectively. General discussion about blind or disabled members attending meetings and the potential issues this raises, and also how to account for members who have signed in at a meeting and then left, in the event of a fire drill. As long as the building is checked as clear then a 'sign out' register is not required.</p> <p>5. JH would like to encourage Shared Learning Projects (SLP's) in our area.</p>	
5.	<p><b><u>Keeping It Legal Workshop</u></b></p> <p>SMc has approached N.O. about setting this up in our area. MF and LW attended the one held in Leeds and found it very useful, and the members agreed it is desirable. JH announced that Sophie Wellings has left and for SMc to follow up the request with her stand in.</p>	SMc
6.	<p><b><u>Volunteers Recognition</u></b></p> <p>The member groups all recognised this as an important issue. Louth have instigated a series of initiatives following on from the the Workshop in Lincoln, including tea parties for their volunteers and new members meetings. NC noted that new</p>	

	<p>members need nurturing by being warmly welcomed, accompanied at meetings and remembered at the next meeting. Horncastle have increased their Newsletter circulation and are encouraging members to take an extra one to pass to friends in an attempt to tempt new members. SMC confirmed that in a recent survey 2/3 of members cited word of mouth as being how they found out about the U3A. He also raised a concern about the costs of putting on Thank You events for volunteers and JH commented that 'auditors' could query this on the accounts. However, as most of these gatherings impart knowledge or a message they could be viewed as a meeting with refreshments. Whether or not all the members attend a volunteer event, all members benefit, albeit indirectly.</p>	
7.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SR advised the Hall has always been booked from 9.30am-11.30am although the meetings always begin at 10am It was agreed to change the booking time to 10am-12pm.</li> <li>2. SMC highlighted the Health Check section on the National website, which Louth have also used (See Appendix 1). Of particular note were the following items: Retention of new members, groups to members ratio and volunteer percentage to membership. JB agreed with the usefulness of this check list and it had helped them focus on areas that required attention.</li> <li>3. NC suggested it was useful to know how many members were required to break even, in budgetary terms. MF had recently gone through this exercise after losing 40 members following a new fee structure change. Happily, Spilsby have now crossed the threshold again after active recruiting of new members.</li> <li>4. MF asked if all the groups have voted on the 3 resolutions in the AGM yet -no.</li> <li>5. JB outlined an initiative in conjunction with East Lindsay District Council to regenerate Market towns in their area. Please see Appendix 2 for more information. NC is interested in this scheme on behalf of Horncastle town, and JH will put the SLP coordinator at N.O. in touch with JB.</li> <li>6. SMC mentioned some projects West Wolds had been involved in with Lincoln University which would fall within the SLP remit, and NC the same. In January SMC is willing to form a sub-group within the Neighbourhood to facilitate communication between them and our groups for future cooperation.</li> <li>7. JB invited neighbouring groups members to join Louth's new French group &amp; details are at Appendix 3.</li> <li>8. MH our new treasurer reminded the members that the £10 fee to cover hall hire and refreshments is due at the November meeting (cash please).</li> </ol>	<p>SR</p> <p>SMC</p>
8.	<p><b>Date of the Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The meeting closed at 11.05am after thanks were given by SMC to all who attended. The next meeting will be held at Belchford on Thursday 28 November 2019 to be chaired by Woodhall Spa. The secretary will send a calling notice and Agenda.</p>	

Minutes Signed by:.....

Of.....U3A Date:.....

Encl.

Appendix 1



**U3A Health Check - 10 key questions**

This questionnaire is intended as a self-help tool only. It is for committees to use as a checklist to help them to monitor the health of their own U3A. The results will not be seen by anyone else and it is entirely up to each U3A to make use of it or not as they wish.

If you have any comments on the usefulness of the questions or suggestions for improvement to the document, please don't hesitate to send them to National Office.

We are constantly trying to improve support for U3As in line with members requirements.

1. Do at least 90% of new members renew their membership after their first year of membership?

**YES/NO**

*Retaining new members is critical to the future of your U3A. Low retention rates suggest that your U3A is not meeting the needs of new members.*

2. Do you actively monitor your membership statistics each year? **YES/NO**

*Analysing your membership statistics will aid your understanding of how your U3A is performing. This should include year on year changes in total membership numbers and, changes in retention rates, especially for new members*

3. Has your membership grown for 2 or more consecutive years? **YES/NO**

*Static or declining membership could imply that your U3A is not attracting new members. This may make life difficult when you need to find new committee members or set up new groups. Attracting new members is important to keep your U3A vibrant.*

4. Have you managed your U3A finances without any unplanned deficits for the last 2 consecutive years. **YES/NO**

*The financial health of your U3A impacts your ability to invest in the resources and equipment that you need to keep your U3A healthy. Unplanned losses will inhibit investment.*

5. Does your committee membership change on a regular basis and in line with your constitution? **YES/NO**

**YES/NO**

*It is important to bring new members onto the committee every year, if possible. This helps with continuity and avoids a period when most of your committee have to step down as all their terms of office expire at the same time.*

6. Does your U3A have at least one 'general meeting' per month, this includes speaker meetings and coffee mornings? **YES/NO**

*Having regular meetings every month gives committee members and group leaders more opportunity to engage with members, especially new members, and identify potential to take on their roles. Many U3As have two or more such meetings each month.*

7. If you divide the total number of members by the number of your groups - is the ratio of your number of members to number of groups less than 12? **YES/NO**

*Research has shown that vibrant U3As have a ratio of one group for every ten members. If you have a higher ratio, e.g. one group for every 12 or more members, then you have fewer groups than is ideal. This is likely to lead to more groups becoming full. This is especially discouraging for new members who cannot join the groups that they'd like to.*

8. Has the number of your interest groups increased year on year? **YES/NO**

*Groups are the life blood of U3As. Creating more groups gives members more choice and widens their opportunities for learning.*

9. Is your U3A open to new members? **YES/NO**

*New members are the source of new ideas, new group leaders and new committee members. Closing your doors to them makes finding all of these more difficult.*

10. Does at least 20% of your membership volunteer? **YES/NO**

*Volunteers should include anyone who contributes to your U3A including committee members, group leaders and their teams, meeters and greeters, tea and coffee makers, people who help put out and away chairs etc. U3As are run by volunteers carrying out a wide variety of tasks. If too few of the members actively volunteer, the U3A may be at risk. The indications are that U3As should aim to have at least 20% 'active members' who volunteer in some way best suited to their interests and abilities.*

**If you have answered "NO" to four or more of these questions, you may wish to consider developing an action plan to address these issues or seeking help from your Regional Trustee or the National Office.**

Drafted: January 2019

## U3A NEIGHBOUR MEETING, 25 JULY 2019

### EAST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL INITIATIVE TO DEVELOP, PROTECT AND PROTECT MARKET TOWNS.

East Lindsey District Council are seeking funding for a new initiative to develop, protect and promote the inland market towns in the District. Their proposal for Louth is to designate the Town Centre as a High Street Heritage Action Zone. Different proposals are being developed for other towns.

Louth U3A was one of a wide range of people and organisations who were recently invited to a “workshop” about the town and what could be done to improve and support the town centre. We may have been invited because our Market Towns Group (only such U3A group in the country) had sent copies of a survey of town centre parking provision to the County and District Councils. It was positive session and we have subsequently been invited to help support the bid and possibly take part in survey work as part of the project.

However, our group is currently quite small. Assuming that the initiative goes ahead, we will be seeking other Louth U3A members to take part.

We would like to know:

- Whether any other U3As in East Lindsey have contacted about a project in their area;
- If so, what it being proposed, whether your U3A is considering taking part and on what basis; and
- If not, whether your U3A might be willing to publicise the initiative in Louth and invite your own members who may live reasonably close to Louth to take part.

The ELDC application includes the following outcomes for the town:

- Improved street scene
- Improved traditional shop fronts and better use made of second floors
- Improved public spaces
- Create a cultural hub
- Better signage and interpretation linked to public art
- A community celebration of Louth’s heritage
- A digital platform to improve visitor experience

If they are successful with gaining the funding, volunteers will be needed to help deliver the individual projects. There will be a number of different research projects, including surveying shop fronts and gathering information about second floors in town centre.

### Appendix 3

Louth U3A are running a 1 year French course for beginners to low intermediate level (A1-A2 of the CEFR) - according to demand and levels of previous knowledge. It will be held in a central Louth venue in the autumn during the daytime. There will be 2 sessions per month each lasting 2 hours with some homework in between to consolidate learning. Actual days and times to be agreed to meet the availability of those expressing an interest.

We will be following an authentic French designed and written course book called Entre Nous which individuals will have to buy for themselves (with or without integral CDs) and pay a contribution towards the room hire for the sessions. Regular attendance is important to get the most out of this course and where absences are unavoidable, individuals should be prepared to keep up and study on their own so they don't fall behind too far. Members of other U3As are welcome to join us. To enquire further or register interest please contact: Jackie Barnett on 01507 313141 or by email: [Labarnett56@gmail.com](mailto:Labarnett56@gmail.com)