

Minutes of Oban u3a Committee 05.11.24

Held in the Corran Halls

Present: Neil, Sue, Rosemary, Penny, Richard, Joy, Graham

Apologies: Evelyn McManus, Jim McManus

October minutes

Graham Cameron suggested correcting Group Leaders to Group Convenors as Oban u3a's preferred term (TAT refers to Leaders) **Action: EMcM**

It was also noted that new groups need a Convenor or Convenors: some emerging groups have not established one yet.

Matters arising:

Christmas lunch - about 40 attending so far (Rosemary); 8 payments so far (Richard). People can pay today (cash or cheques) - membership can be reminded after this meeting. **Action: RY**

Merchandise: a customised banner has been bought & is going to be delivered in Oban tomorrow. It was used by Coral u3a at a volunteers event this week.

WhatsApp group for Committee: set up & in use. Should we have an Instagram a/c? Discussion of how useful this would be for our members/potential members. Penny will ascertain at today's meeting if a significant proportion of the membership uses Instagram.

Action: PE

Groups:

Calligraphy not to operate this year.

Ukulele to start in January led by Annette Tedder as GC: band to follow in the spring; possible GC identified.

Cribbage - continue to advertise (I taker so far).

Book Group 4 - prelim meeting at end of Oct.; group intend to continue. 4 potential members; could advertise for more. GC not identified yet. Book Group 3 has 1 space.

Ukulele: new venue (Congregational Church Hall). Joy will do a RA. **Action: JS**

Beacon: 2 more convenors had trained.

Rosemary Power offering a series of talks/discussions on Jane Austen in 2025.

Art Visit trip to Helensburgh successful; notifications re practical w/shops/events have been useful to members. Art-themed films at Fort William and future exhibitions discussed. Next visit likely to be at Kelvingrove (curated tour of the art works). Art Visits - several of us will share Convenor role as visits are arranged. JS thanked for progress on groups.

It was suggested that Pickleball might have to consider having another court or more sessions, because of increasing numbers and broad spread of abilities.

Action: JS to ask CA

Membership:

Current membership: 155 (including 1 Associate Member); New members: 4
Resignations: 0.

The number of members still to renew is now down to 9, from 15 last month. A final reminder will be sent shortly. The membership records of those who have not renewed by the end of November will be permanently deleted, rather than marked as lapsed.

Action: NS

Treasurer: see report

Cash from Mull and Iona u3a (the u3a has been formally disbanded) - not putting it in to our profitability. Following standard procedure, the money has been put into our a/c but recorded as money we're holding for another group - hence could be given back if the group starts up again. Any future Treasurer needs to be informed - will be in the report.

Action: RB

Mull former members have been invited to attend our meetings.

Sue could put something on Mull Facebook e.g. re Oban u3a walks for Mull former members to join.

Action: SP

Bank of Scotland is now putting a charge on the a/c (we're not a charity so they can: £4.25 a month for a community a/c - 100 free electronic transactions a month. 81 made in August (usually our busiest month). There are still 3 banks offering free a/cs but Treasurer's recommendation is to stay with BoS for now.

Live Argyll, who run Corran Halls, have introduced a new system using online portal for booking and payment. Direct bank transfers not accepted; payment can only be with a debit card. Bookings have to be paid up front to be guaranteed. Cancelled bookings are offset against future bookings, i.e. not repaid directly. Richard has drafted a message to Live Argyll expressing objection to the system as it has an impact on customers but no benefits for them. Will be sent with the support of the committee.

Update: RB spoke to the Corran Halls manager after the meeting. The method of charging u3a will remain the same as before, i.e. invoice and bank transfer.

Glencruitten Hall, Rockfield, Argyll Gathering Hall? Catholic Cathedral hall.

McQueen's hall in Stevenson Street. Golf Club, Scout Hall, Bowling Club.

Recommendation: Committee supported the objections Richard made. Should he apply for a debit card for Oban u3a or pay with personal card and claim on expenses? Committee not in favour of the latter; preferred the option of applying for a debit card. Richard made clear this is a very involved procedure and would pay with his personal card. *N.B. No longer relevant after Richard had discussed with CH manager.*

Action: RB

Richard has put in a list of requests for Corran Halls for booking in the coming year. First Tuesday mornings (of the month) have already been given to other organisations (Feb, March, April, May 25 - offered week after for first 3 and 2 weeks after for May). Committee alarmed at this prospect as membership not happy with changes to a regular date for the general meeting and talk. We pay £16 an hour

(48 per meeting) for current venue. Pros and cons of other venues discussed: portable screen would need to be taken to Glencruitten. Parking isn't good at Glencruitten.

Committee decided suggestions should be sent to Richard with rest of committee copied in. Have other groups had this problem? **Action: All**

Richard to speak to Russell immediately after the meeting to express our concern about the new system and failure to offer u3a our regular booking slots in 2025.

Action: RB

Banner: Has the banner been claimed for (not in accounts)? Sue has the claim and will submit it after the meeting.

Speakers: Rosemary outlined future plans for speakers. Basking Shark Oban for March; Mary Sandilands hasn't agreed a date yet. Will have Bob McCulloch in reserve. Penny has received 2 suggestions: Hildegard Berwick on Bert Lowe, Glasgow artist; Ed Link (surname to be checked), a speaker on National Tapestry. Rosemary has received 1 other suggestion.

Bob Batty will set up today but has not confirmed he'll continue to do so in future meetings. Tech requirements to be sent to Chris AND Bob until it's clear who will do so in future. **Action: RY**

Committee 2025 - 26: Penny, Joy and Rosemary are standing down in Sept 25. Sue will stay on but not chair. It was hoped that Evelyn & Jim would continue. Graham - will stay but not undertake further responsibility; Richard - will stay; Neil - not sure but likely to stay if not moving away. Annette can be asked to join us in January; possibly Steve too? At least 1 more person will be needed to join at the AGM. **Action: PE**

Training: Evelyn will attend Beacon Business Secretary training on 18 Nov; Evelyn, Jim and Penny have signed up for AI workshop on 8th November. Sue reported Beacon workshops are full now.

TAT: support for Fit for the Future resolution at the AGM was overwhelming.

Publicity leaflets - available from Anne Walsh Scotland. Brand centre templates - are available for download. Limited access (Sue can't access directly). Publicity drive in Jan? Sufficient to put a piece in the Oban Times. We should have our own publicity leaflet so it's ready when we do want to access. Penny or Sue Evelyn will download the templates from the brand centre to Dropbox. **Action: PE/SP**

We can use u3a Scotland's Zoom a/c if it's available.

Penny attended Rural u3as meeting with Liz Ervine and Anne Walsh. A new group has formed at Cowal and there is an established group in Kintyre - Penny able to offer support re Pickleball, website, social media & lend Cowal our banner. Thanks to Sue for creating the customised banner.

JS was asked to suggest that Group Convenors organising events (e.g. walks) which might be accessible to Cowal or Kintyre members let Penny/Joy know, so that Chairs of those u3as can be informed and their members invited to join the activity. Sue could put info on their facebook pages or send it to them if they want it e.g. our newsletter. **Action: JS/SP**

Liz Ervine had invited Penny to join her Chairs forum; Penny has declined.

AOCB: St Conan's Christmas tree festival invitation - declined as we're a secular organisation and the money collected supports the church.

Next Meeting (December): Committee to have a short meeting at 11.00 in the hotel to review Membership etc.

Action: Penny will ask if we can use a room at the Royal - perhaps the bar in the room we're booking.

Penny will not be here in Feb. The committee would decide at the January meeting whether to hold a committee meeting in February or not. **Action: All**

Meeting closed at 10.28

*Minutes taken by Joy Sullivan, Groups Coordinator, in Evelyn McManus's absence.
Minutes approved at December meeting on 3/12/24.*