



## **Minutes of the Fourth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of The Bray Heads U3A Group**

**Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 at 10:30 am in Bray Golf Club**

### **1. Welcome**

Jane Grimson (Outgoing Chair of The Bray Heads) welcomed the members to the Fourth Annual General Meeting of The Bray Heads U3A Group.

There were 43 members in attendance with a number of apologies including two Co-ordinating Team Members, Mary Ashall and Mary Mullen.

### **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

The Agenda was adopted. It was agreed to take item 8b immediately before item 8e.

### **3. Approval of the Minutes of the Third AGM of the Bray Heads U3A Group, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and Matters Arising**

The Minutes of the Third AGM were approved and are included in Appendix 1. There were no matters arising.

### **4. Secretary's Report**

Léonie O'Toole-Bates presented the Secretary's Report, which is included in Appendix 2.

### **5. Treasurer's Report**

#### **a. Approval of audited accounts**

The accounts were approved unanimously and are included in Appendix 3.

#### **b. Approval of donations**

€250 to Vincent de Paul, Bray

€250 to the Bray Women's Refuge

Donations of €250 to Vincent de Paul, Bray and €250 to the Bray Women's Refuge were approved unanimously.

### **6. Membership Co-ordinator's Report**

Nikki Gordon presented the Membership Co-ordinator's Report. The Bray Heads has 193 full members following the inclusion of over 40 from the Waiting List, which is now closed.

Average attendance at in-person meetings has been quite low with an average of 43, and a maximum of 53. This represents a significant decrease from the average attendance at Zoom meetings of between 50-60. However this is quite understandable since we had been meeting virtually for a year and a half due to the pandemic.

### **7. IT Co-ordinator's Report**

Harry McAlinden presented the IT Co-ordinator's Report. He drew members' attention to

the website: [www.thebrayheads3a.ie](http://www.thebrayheads3a.ie) and also to the password protected members 'only section. The Chair asked for one or two volunteers to help with the audio-visual set-up at meetings.

## **8. TBH-U3A Sub-Groups**

### **a. Climate Action Sub-Group**

Jane Grimson reported that the Group had not meet separately during the past year but that there had been 3 climate and biodiversity related talks which formed part of the main programme. The Co-ordinating Team will consider the future of the Group, whether its activities should be “mainstreamed” or whether it should continue with a separate programme of activities.

### **c. Writing Sub-Group**

Michael Gordon, who facilitates the Group, presented the report. The Group meets weekly in Wicklow Lawn Tennis Club at which members read and commented on each other's compositions each week. One or two of the members have had their work shortlisted and published. The Chair thanked Michael for his continued commitment to facilitating the Group.

### **d. Walkers Sub-Group**

Margaret Merne gave a report on the Walkers Sub-Group. There have been 10 walks, one per fortnight, during the last year. Participation has been disappointing with typically only 4 or 5 walkers and on one occasion only 2. In addition to the walks, Margaret together with Mary Kelly organised a boat trip to the Great Saltee Islands. This was a great success with 8 members participating. They also organised a walk from Shankill to Rathmichael Church which was much enjoyed and appreciated by the participants. Margaret encouraged more members to join the walks, the vast majority of which are flat and not at all strenuous.

### **b. History & Archaeology Sub-Group**

Mary Kelly reported that the Group had not met separately during the past year but that there had been 3 talks with historical themes as part of the main programme and more are planned. She encouraged members to volunteer to participate in the “Stomping Grounds” meetings, at which members speak for up to 10 minutes on an interesting family member from the past, or a family artefact which has particular significance. The philosophy of U3A is very much based on active participation by members and these meetings provide an ideal opportunity for this and the stories have proved diverse and fascinating.

### **e. Group Visits**

Mary Kelly reported on 3 trips which had been held in the past year: a visit to Charleville House and Gardens, Marsh's Library, and the Museum of Literature of Ireland, These were very well attended and greatly enjoyed by the participants. The Chair thanked Mary for all her work in organising these visits ensuring that they always run smoothly.

## **9. Chairperson's Report**

Jane Grimson presented her report on the past year. She thanked members for their

participation and the Co-ordinating Team for all their support and hard work in ensuring that The Bray Heads runs well and that we have an interesting and varied programme of talks and visits. She reported that the Team had decided not to continue with hybrid in-person and Zoom meetings as they are too technically challenging and also because social interaction among members is central to the ethos of U3A. She noted that while attendance at in-person meetings had been quite low, this was understandable given that things are only beginning to return to normal after the pandemic and expressed the hope that this would improve over the coming weeks. She encouraged members to attend those talks which might initially seem to be of little interest to them and “outside their comfort zone” as these can often turn out to be the most interesting and stimulating. Finally, she noted that the new layout of the room with members seated at tables of 4 was working well and there are no plans to return to the pre-pandemic lecture-style layout.

#### **10. Elections to Group’s Co-ordinating Committee**

As the number of nominations (2) equalled the number of vacancies (2), there was no need to hold an election. The Co-ordinating Team for 2022-23 will be:

*Continuing members:*

Nikki Gordon, Jane Grimson, Mary Kelly, Isolde Moylan, Mary Mullen, Aoife Nic Réamoinn, and Léonie O’Toole-Bates

*Members elected for 2022-2024:*

Mary Ashall (nominated by Mary Kelly; seconded by Nikki Gordon)

Ian Ring (nominated by Léonie O’Toole-Bates; seconded by Mary Mullen)

#### **11. Group Programme, November 2022 – March/April 2023**

Isolde Moylan presented the draft programme from November 2022 to April 2023 (see Appendix 4).

#### **12. Christmas Celebration**

Léonie O’Toole-Bates asked for volunteers to participate in our forthcoming Christmas Celebration on December 15<sup>th</sup>. This is always a very enjoyable event. She also asked members who wished to do so to bring along a wrapped gift for a child – labelled on the outside whether it is for a boy or a girl and of what age; these will then be passed on to Vincent de Paul for distribution.

#### **13. AOB**

Jane Grimson asked members whether they had any suggestions to encourage more members to return to in-person meetings. This seems to be a problem in all organisations following the pandemic. The suggestion by Liz McManus that we should each approach members we know and try to encourage them individually to return was welcomed.

There being no further business the meeting closed.

## APPENDIX 1



**Third Annual General Meeting (AGM) of The Bray Heads U3A Group  
Conducted Remotely Via ZOOM  
Thursday, 9 December 2021, 10:30 a.m.**

### MINUTES

**Item 1: Welcome**

Jane welcomed both full and temporary members to the AGM.

**Item 2: Adoption of the Agenda**

Jane requested approval to change the order of the Agenda, taking Item 10 Elections to the Group's Co-Ordinating before Item 9 Chairperson's Report. **Agreed.**

**Item 3: Approval of the Minutes AGM 3 December 2020 & Matters Arising:**

- Minutes were Approved
- No Matters Arising.

**Item 4: Secretary's Report:**

The Secretary's Report was given by Mary Mullen and had been circulated to all members prior to the AGM.

**Item 5: Treasurer's Report and approval of the audited accounts:**

The Treasurer's Report was given by Ian Ring .

Ian expressed thanks to Anne Byrne, previous Treasurer, and to Colm Fagan who had yet again kindly agreed to audit the accounts. He also expressed thanks to Bank of Ireland who had agreed to give our group two years free internet banking.

- There was no income from attendance at Bray Golf Club due to the pandemic

- No expenditure on Bray Golf Club.
- All income was from subscriptions from members and temporary members.
- Expenditure was on IT, book tokens and Zoom license.

Colm Fagan expressed gratitude to Ian and recommended the accounts to members as a true and accurate account.

**a. Approval of accounts – given**

**b. Approval of donations of €200 each to Five loaves and Vincent de Paul – given.**

Jane explained that in previous years members had brought gifts for children to the Christmas Celebration which were then given to Vincent de Paul for distribution. As this is not possible during the pandemic, she suggested that individuals might consider making donations directly to their chosen charities instead.

**Item 6: Membership Co-ordinator's Report – Nikki Gordon**

Nikki reported :

- 164 full members in the Group
- 73 are on the waiting list; 41 of whom are temporary members
- 17 members have not re-joined since we started

**Attendance at Zoom Meetings January 7<sup>th</sup> – November 25<sup>th</sup> 2021**

- An average of 50 people at 28 meetings
- Highest attendance was 80
- Average attendance January to June was 60
- Average attendance September to November was 33
- There has been a noticeable drop off in attendance since June.

**Item 7: IT Co-ordinator's Report – Joe Murray:**

- The Bray Heads U3A website address: [www.thebrayheads3a.ie](http://www.thebrayheads3a.ie)
- Website Member ID : Member
- Website Password: lockit!down

Joe reported from April 2020 that of the 48 events, 41 were recorded and uploaded to the website. We will continue to use Zoom into 2022.

Suggestions from members: [joseph@jma.ie](mailto:joseph@jma.ie)

Jane told the meeting that Joe is stepping down and she wanted to acknowledge his incredible work. Recording takes a lot of hard work to edit and put on website.

**Item 8: TBH-U3A Sub-Groups:**

**a. Climate Action Sub-Group – Jane Grimson**

Jane reported that the Climate Action Sub-group had held 2 Zoom talks:

- The Water Beneath Our Feet, Groundwater by Bruce Misstear
- The Role of the Oceans in Earth's Climate by Peter Croot.

**b. History & Archaeology Sub-Group – Mary Kelly**

Mary asked members to look at interesting things in their family or locality to talk about at future meetings of the Sub-Group. 12 members had shared their stories between March and June and she encouraged more members to volunteer.

**c. Writers Sub-Group – Isolde Moylan**

Isolde reported that the Writers group was set up in May 2020, led by Michael Gordon and was conducted in a workshop format.

- Two 10-week sessions were held last year, and in 2021 there was another 10-week session from January to June, and one 8-week session from October – November.
- The group is limited to 10 participants to enable the members to read their work each week. Two new members replaced previous members in the most recent session.
- The focus is on developing creative writing skills – short stories, poetry, and memoirs (some of the pieces are to be read at our Christmas event on 16 December)
- Some of the work written by the group has been published and one member has been short listed and her short story is to be published
- The group hopes to continue in 2021 and is encouraging others interested in writing to form another group, with support from this existing group.
- Huge appreciation was given to Michael as he puts in a tremendous amount of work and gives great advice and shares information about writing techniques.

**d. Walking Sub-Group – Margaret Merne.**

- The walks were led by Margaret and also on occasion by Ian Ring.
- The group meets every second Friday and there were 18 walks.

- 25 people signed up at the beginning but some of those have never attended.
- Best attended walk consisted of 8 people.
- In December 2020, the walks were restricted to within county.
- In January 2021 5 km restrictions were imposed.
- 4 walks were cancelled due to bad weather including one in July due to extreme heat.
- Margaret has 26 walks listed for next year, one walk every 2 weeks giving a full year's programme of walks.

**Item 10: Elections to the Group's Co-ordinating Team: - Jane Grimson**

Continuing Members of the Co-ordinating Team:

- Mary Ashall
- Jane Grimson
- Nikki Gordon
- Isolde Moylan
- Mary Mullen
- Leonie O'Toole Bates
- Ian Ring

**Members elected for 2022 – 2024:**

- Aoife Nic Réamoinn
- Mary Kelly

Jane said we would like more members to come forward to be co-opted to the co-ordinating team. It is important to get new people on the committee.

**Item 9: Chairperson's report: Jane Grimson.**

Jane reported that the transition to Zoom meetings went very well and it was good to see so many members participating. As we had very little expenditure during this time, we were able to extend the membership to March to include temporary members.

**Member's survey:**

The results of the members survey showed:

- 87 responses
- Some duplicates
- Number of couples submitted joint responses
- Total of 101 individual responses i.e. approximately 63% of Full Members.

**Question 1:**

*Do you intend to renew your membership of the Bray Heads U3A group for 2022?*

There were 85 responses. All were positive.

**Question 2:**

*Assuming that the public health guidance and the Bray Golf Club Rules permit us to return to in-person meetings in the Club would you prefer to :*

There were 86 responses.

- 48.8% return to in-person meetings as soon as possible
- 39.5% Stay on Zoom initially
- 9.3% Stay on Zoom for longer

Jane said it will take careful planning, risk assessment in accordance with Health guidance and rules for future in-person meetings.

- We will be starting off on Zoom.
- There will be issues to address including how to combine in-person and Zoom which will present technical challenges.
- Numbers may need to be restricted at Bray Golf Club so we may require members to register in advance, for example using EventBrite.
- A Risk Assessment will give us some guidance as to what measures we will need to take for example: wearing of face masks, attendance only if symptom-free and not a close contact of someone with Covid
- Tea / coffee may not be possible.

Jane returned to the subject of Joe Murray stepping down:

Joe has been our webmaster and IT co-ordinator from the very beginning. He has done a fantastic job, the website is terrific with so much information available to members. Fortunately, Joe has agreed to continue in that role of webmaster. He was solely responsible at the beginning for AV and microphone technology etc. He conducted the transition to Zoom single handedly and put in hours and hours of work for which we are very grateful.

Jane said she was delighted to announce that Joe was to be awarded honorary life membership of The Bray Heads U3A. He will be the first honorary life member and it is so well deserved for the wonderful work Joe has done.

**Item 11: Forward Planning for 2022.**

Jane invited any comments for future planning from members.



### **Suggestions from the floor:**

- Margaret Merne suggested a speaker from the Wicklow Mountains National Park to give a talk on conservation and climate change and its effects on the park. The suggestion was welcomed, and Margaret will try and organise a contact.
- Brian Whyte proposed: a talk on local broadcasting and local radio and a talk on the proposed greenway in the river area of Bray. He indicated that he would source the contacts.
- As Dublin Bay is the only biosphere in Europe, Brigid O'Brien proposed a talk on the topic. She will source a contact.
- Isolde introduced the topic of the Waiting List and temporary members who have been very active participants in the Zoom meetings. We are not in a position to decide what to do given the uncertainty regarding returning to in-person meetings in the Golf Club and the trajectory of the pandemic. But in the meantime, temporary members are most welcome.

There were no further suggestions from the floor.

### **Item 12 Group Programme January – June 2022 – Isolde Moylan.**

Meetings will initially be exclusively on Zoom.

- **January 6** Dr. Rose Ann Kenny Professor of Medical Gerontology TCD on the subject of Ageing
- **January 20** Dr. Patrick Geoghegan, Professor of Modern History TCD: Daniel O'Connell
- **February 3** Ian Lumley An Taisce: The COP 26 Climate summit in Glasgow.
- **February 17** Cecelia Hartsell: President John F. Kennedy's visit to Ireland 1963
- **March 3** Jim McNicholas, Chairperson of the Camino Society Ireland: An Introduction to the Camino de Santiago
- **March 10** Michael Roddy former Reuters correspondent: Fake News
- **March 24** Dr Jim Malone , Robert Boyle Professor of Medical Physics TCD: From sorcery, Alchemy, Science, Prayer, Art and Evolution to Mystery
- **April 6 Wednesday:** Dr. John McCullen Former Chief Park superintendent and author: The Phoenix Park
- **April 29** Barry O'Loughlin Bray Heads Member: Aspects of Indian Culture.
- Isolde Moylan to give a further talk on the Middle East which is not scheduled yet.

Isolde said it is a team effort putting the talks and subjects together

Jane encouraged members to put forward suggestions for interesting speakers and talks

**AOB:**

Jane invited members to add to the discussion.

Richard and Margaret Webb asked whether it would be possible for them to continue as members from afar as they are no longer resident in Ireland. Jane said we hadn't thought about the possibility of having overseas members, but she was sure it would be possible. On Zoom it would be easy but if Zoom fades out we would have to consider how this could work. She added that Richard and Margaret's involvement in The Bray Heads has been very much valued, to which Richard and Margaret said the quality of our talks was so high they didn't want to lose that participation.

There were no other items and Jane formally closed the AGM meeting.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **The Bray Heads U3A**

**AGM Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022.**

#### **Secretary's Report**

The Bray Heads U3A Group continued to face the challenge of Covid which necessitated that we continue our meetings on Zoom, as we were unable to return to Bray Golf Club in January.

Following our Christmas Festivities on December 17<sup>th</sup> we took our Christmas break and recommenced our Zoom Meetings on January 6<sup>th</sup> 2022.

Our Co-ordinating team going forward into 2022 are as follows:

- Jane Grimson (Chair)
- Isolde Moylan
- Nikki Gordon
- Leonie O'Toole Bates
- Aoife Nic Réamoinn
- Mary Kelly
- Ian Ring (Treasurer)
- Mary Ashall
- Mary Mullen (Secretary)
- Harry McAlinden (co-opted)

Our Co-ordinating team has held a total of 8 team meetings to date. The members of our team outside of these meetings also spend time working on our future programme, searching for topics and speakers of interest for the year ahead, making contact with potential speakers, updating the programme of talks, and organizing trips/activities.

Our Programme began in January 2022 with our Thursday meetings on Zoom and continued exclusively on Zoom until 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2022.

We had a total of 9 Zoom meetings in this period. With a diversity of topics which included talks on:

- The Phoenix Park
- From Sorcery, Alchemy, Science, Prayer, Art and Evolution to Mystery
- Russia and Ukraine: the return to war in Europe
- Fake news: those yelling it loudest are usually the fakers
- An introduction to the Camino de Santiago
- President John F Kennedy and the summer of 1963: civil rights, cold war politics and an Irish homecoming
- Cop 26 – The UN Climate Change Conference, Glasgow, October- November 2021: the issues, the hopes and the outcomes
- Daniel O’Connell
- Age Proof.

From 14<sup>th</sup> April we initially tried a hybrid form of meetings with both attendance in-person at Bray Golf Club together with virtual attendance via Zoom. This proved to be a considerable technical challenge and therefore had to be abandoned after a couple of meetings. We give a special thanks to our IT team of Ian, Harry and Jane for their technical support.

During this period, we held a total of 6 meetings.

Topics in this period covered :

- An abridged history of The Incas of Peru
- Jazz – The Story and Recordings of the Music
- Nature in crisis – what can we do about it?
- Time, place and action in three plays by Brian Friel: Philadelphia, Here I Come!, Aristocrats, and Faith Healer
- James Joyce’s ‘After the Race’ story in ‘Dubliners’: A Reading and an Exploration’
- Creating evidence-based policy to address the climate and biodiversity crisis

There were two outings during this period, namely in May to Charleville House and Gardens, and in June to Marsh’s Library, both of which proved very popular and was much appreciated by those who participated.

Following our meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2022 we took our summer break and on September 8<sup>th</sup> we returned to Bray Golf Club, no longer continuing our meetings on Zoom.

We have had a total of 4 in person talks since 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022:

- My Ocean Racing Adventures: LegenDerry Crew on the Clipper Round the World Yacht Races of 2013-14 and 2015-16
- Revolution or Rebellion? The American Declaration of Independence, 1776
- In the wake of the Vikings
- Wexford Opera – one of the Great Miracles

We also included two outings:

September: a walk from Shankill to Rathmichael Church led by Margaret Merne

October: a tour of the Museum of Literature Ireland.

**Summary:** We have had 19 meetings with a variety of speakers covering a wide variety of topics.

Our Co-Ordinating Team would like to welcome all our new members who have joined from the Waiting List. We have decided not to re-open the Waiting List. Since our return in September to in-person meetings at Bray Golf Club, we know some people are finding it difficult to come to gatherings with the threat of Covid still very much around. Although the wearing of masks is not mandatory at the moment in indoor places, we support and encourage any of our members who would feel safer if they were wearing a mask to do so. We look forward to welcoming old friends back to our Thursday meetings.

**Mary Mullen**

**Secretary, The Bray Heads U3A Group**

## **APPENDIX 3**

BRAY HEADS U3A

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2022

| INCOME   | 2022       |             | 2021      |             |
|--|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
|  | €          | €           | €         | €           |
| Member Subscriptions                           | 4550       |             | 2870      |             |
| Temporary Members Subscriptions (Waiting List) | 1185       |             | 680       |             |
| Live Talk Entry Fees at Bray G.C               | <u>512</u> | 6247        | -         | 3550        |
| <br>   |            |             |           |             |
| EXPENDITURE                                    |            |             |           |             |
| Bray G.C                                       | 613        |             | 50        |             |
| Gratuities                                     | 462        |             | 260       |             |
| Speaker Book Tokens                            | 1450       |             | 1530      |             |
| IT (Website etc)                               | 287        |             | 927       |             |
| Equipment                                      | 70         |             | -         |             |
| Stationery                                     | 15         |             | -         |             |
| Charity  | 400        |             | -         |             |
| Bank Charges                                   | <u>10</u>  | <u>3307</u> | <u>63</u> | <u>2830</u> |
| Excess of Income over Expenditure              |            | <u>2940</u> |           | <u>720</u>  |

BRAY HEADS U3A

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2022

|              | 2022        |             | 2021        |             |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|              | €           | €           | €           | €           |
| Cash on Hand | 63          |             | 70          |             |
| Cash at Bank | <u>6415</u> | <u>6478</u> | <u>3468</u> | <u>3538</u> |

Represented by Accumulated Surplus

|  |  |             |  |             |
|--|--|-------------|--|-------------|
| Accumulated Surplus 31/8/2021              |  | 3538        |  | 2818        |
| Excess of Income over Expenditure for year |  | <u>2940</u> |  | <u>720</u>  |
|  |  | <u>6478</u> |  | <u>3538</u> |

**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT**

We have prepared the above Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet from the books, documents and information supplied by the Treasurer and certify same to be correct and in accordance therewith.

*Colligan O'Carbhaill & Co.*  
Colligan O'Carbhaill & Co.  
Chartered Accountants  
Bri Chualann Court  
Adelaide Road  
Bray  
Co Wicklow

5<sup>th</sup> October 2022