

**MINUTES OF THE U3A GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON 16th APRIL 2015
AT THE SOL IFACH HOTEL, CALPE**

We had a full house today with extra chairs being brought in by the hotel. John Pickford, President, welcomed everyone especially the 8 new members to the meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER:

Our main speaker today was David Elford who was a senior executive of many high street store operations and his illustrated talk 'A Walk Down the High Street' gave us a most fascinating insight into the reasons behind the successes and failures of the big names we all know today. He held our interest and answered questions in a very fluent manner. The vote of thanks was given by Tricia Adams and he was presented with a small gift in our appreciation. Members commented he was one of the most interesting speakers we have had.

APOLOGIES FROM THE COMMITTEE: Ellen Mitchell, Tina Wallis

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED: There has been correspondence from a member concerning the postal voting emails which have been circulating. We are looking into the background to this and will report back at the next meeting.

MINUTES OF THE MARCH GENERAL MEETING:

The minutes had been put on the website and circulated. They were proposed by Keith Cherry, seconded by Geoff Pearson and signed by the President John Pickford.

MATTERS ARISING SINCE THE LAST MEETING:

- **Newsletter:** The newsletter and other monthly paperwork had been circulated as links to the website. When asked if this was an improvement, the members present responded that it was much easier for them to open and we will continue with this method of circulation. Those without email picked up their hard copies as usual.

NEW BUSINESS:

- We are always looking for volunteers to help out with our General Meetings. If anyone can offer help they were invited to speak to a committee member after the meeting.

REPORTS:

Social: Report given by Kerry Edwards in Tina Wallis's absence

- Our next event will be the informal Dinner/Dance to be held at Dracula on 29th April. The list for this event is now full and all attendees are fully paid up.

Groups: Report by Diane Putnam:

All group details and news are on the website. Additional items of note are:

- JUGS ladies' lunch. Thursday 7th May. Manuela had the sign up sheet as Val was away. Lunch plus lovely singing from Hector at Mama Nostra

- Mens' Dining. Last Thursday of the month at the Punjabi Restaurant towards the end of the Dry River Bed. Contact Roger for details
- Papercraft workshop with Liz. Next meeting was to be 17th April on Iris folding back by popular demand. Examples of her work were on display
- Yoga. Ted Marshall is investigating a new venue. Contact him if you are interested in a course of classes starting in September in Calpe town centre. 50€ for 10 weeks – you may attend up to 3 times/week for this sum
- Possible new group, Chess. Diana Farmer would like names of anyone interested. Sign up sheets were available and Diana will be here for 2 months at a time

Diane explained that she would be away for a few weeks including the month of May but would be available on-line and will respond to queries.

Travel:

Penny Brighton presented the travel report:

- 31 May Northern Spain and Southern France. Still a few places left
- 24 June Manises/Albufera/Cullera: Trip now full
- 24 September a subsidised day trip to Elche. Do as you please (palm gardens, or the Elche historical sights
- Med Cruise in October. A few places available with price on request.

All complete trip details are on the website and there is a suggestion box available at the travel desk.

Culture and Publicity:

Rod, in addition to the usual publicity reports to the newspapers, announced a visit to the Iris Gardens on 13th May which will be the last visit as the owners are unfortunately moving away.

The swimming pool has re-opened.

Membership: Teresa reported 8 new members today. We now have 576 paid-up members and she took a total of 950€ at today's meeting.

Treasurer: Edith reported a healthy balance of around 5,900€.

INTRODUCTION OF JOSÉ AND MAITE, THE MANAGER OF KUTXABANK AND HIS ASSISTANT

José wished to introduce himself to our members. We chose Kutxabank to be the U3A's banker when Barclays in the town closed and it has been a successful arrangement. They are in the 1st position for solvency in Spain and make a monetary sponsorship when members open both a savings and current account. Thus the more members who take them up on this offer the greater is the benefit to both the U3A and to the member.

INTRODUCTION OF CÉSAR SANCHEZ, MAYOR OF CALPE AND CAROLE SAUNDERS, COUNCELLOR

Members had been asked to send in their questions to be put to the Mayor to which we had a very good mixed response. The questions were put into a hat as we were limiting the number of questions owing to the time factor. The most overwhelming question concerned parking in the town, the loss and re-instatement of the blue zones, illegal parking and loss of many parking places owing to building works and so we took this topic first. The Mayor's reply was (in brief): the blue zone parking has gone out to tender and will take two months to put in place. The police have to give fines for illegal parking but

have to be reminded (weekly) by the Town Hall to do this. On the subject of land for parking: the Town Hall does not have any but they are talking to people to see if any land could be opened up for parking.

Other questions included (very brief resume)

Noise at the back of the Sol Ifach: summer police will be in place which will help matters. The Town Hall will no longer give licences where there is 'acoustic saturation' (Calle Castellon) but there is a need to find a place where youngsters may go. If you have a problem with noise you need a police report – call them – they must respond. The Portuguese had a special licence.

The fountain will be re built and will cost 40-50K. There are other priorities but it will be done.

Debt: Inherited debt was over 60 million and is now reduced by 20 million. The Town Hall will not put up taxes which causes grief but will work within budget to improve things. The inherited budget was 40 million but now the actual budget is 32 million so with 8 million less they are doing more things.

Next 5 years? Mayor could not talk about the future and the ideas of his party as he does not wish to compromise anyone during election year. The Town Hall website is available in English.

Avenida del Puerto bus stop and loss of parking space: This area is being reorganized and will be put right.

Cracks in road: Police have opened a Facebook and Twitter page and now you can complain directly to them.

Carole Saunders has taken all the questions away and will respond to us enabling us to report back fully at the next General Meeting.

AOB: None

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on 21st May when our speaker will be David Farmer, one of our members and ex-Mayor of Shrewsbury. He and his wife Diana have led an interesting life and we look forward to hearing his talk.

There followed tapas and a drink for all present. We were pleased that the Mayor and his entourage were able to stay and mingle with our members.

Janet Bond, Secretary
24 April 2015