



## RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION (UERSA)

The **Annual General Meeting** of the **University of Exeter Retired Staff Association** was held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021, 6 pm at Exeter Cricket Club

### **Those present at the meeting**

There were 29 members of the Association present at the meeting (list with the minutes on file).

### **Apologies**

34 apologies were received.

In the absence of the Chair (Chris Austin), the Meeting approved a proposal by the Secretary that David Batty should chair the proceedings.

### **1. Minutes of the virtual Annual General Meeting held in October 2020**

The minutes of the meeting were signed by the acting Chair as a true record of the proceedings.

### **2. Report on the Year 2020/21**

With Chris Austin's absence from the meeting, David informed the meeting that it fell to him to make a short report on UERSA's fortunes over the past, very strange 12 months. The Covid pandemic had necessarily impacted on the Association and we had seen a modest reduction in membership over the last year. Sadly, some losses had been due to the deaths of members; over the last two years especially, we had lost a number of colleagues who had once held high office in the University. In summary, paid subscriptions had fallen from 228 in 2019-20 to 209 in 2020-21 which equated to 332 members (including partners) falling to 313.

As reported to members on a number of occasions, data protection constraints continued to prevent our being informed of newly retired staff at the University, therefore hampering our ability actively to encourage such individuals to join UERSA. Chris Austin and David Carpenter-Clawson contributed an online presentation to the most recent of the University's annual Preparing for Retirement sessions but many of those attending would not have been particularly close to a retirement date. We did welcome three new recruits last year so we could but persevere!

The UERSA Committee had, of course, not also been able to meet in person, undertaking most of its business via email. One result of this had been the lack of activities, be they outings to local landmarks or events held inside such as the annual quiz, the summer party and the Christmas lunch, to which the whole membership is invited to subscribe. However, once the green light was given by Government to allow more mixing and our members grew more confident, our special interest groups sped into action. The walkers were back on the hills, the gardeners sought out local estates, both large and small, table tennis was pursued outside in Heavitree Park, and the photographers introduced their own competitive edge to their snapping. More recently, monthly coffee mornings had been reinstated through the good offices of Bruce Coleman and the Exeter Cricket Club while the wine group had reactivated its tastings in the airy spaces of St David's Church; perhaps it wouldn't be too long before the restaurant group was able to meet again. We owed a big debt to the various group leaders for their efforts in getting us out and about.

Throughout the pandemic our four-monthly newsletter, attractively produced by Sandy Day, had aimed to keep UERSA in touch with its members. Roger Coles continued to maintain our website – another point of contact. The special interest groups might care to note that the site's picture gallery could do with more contributions; potential members should be able to see that we were back to being increasingly active!

One area where we had tried to offer help to members had been that of University email accounts. A good number of us valued this facility but the University quite rightly had a concern for the continuing security of such a system. Procedures behind the introduction of multi-factor authentication and the changing of old passwords had been a challenge for some, but we had worked closely with Exeter IT to give members the best advice on how to implement them.

Turning to the membership of the Executive Committee, on behalf of the meeting David thanked three retiring members. Chris Austin had chaired the Committee over the difficult period of the pandemic but now felt it an appropriate time to stand aside. Sandy Day had brightened up the UERSA newsletter and we now needed to find a willing hand to continue that good work. Christopher Dean was also standing down. That left us with a number of vacancies and we should very much welcome volunteers to fill the gaps: members were invited to spread the word.

In conclusion, David wished members the very best for the coming year and he looked forward to seeing many of them at UERSA events over the months ahead.

### 3. **Treasurer's Report**

**David Smith** confirmed that his Treasurer's Report for 2020/21 had previously been circulated to all UERSA Members with the agenda for the Annual General Meeting (report filed with the minutes). He reiterated that a healthy balance remained in the Association's account, particularly given that there had been no activities for the whole membership since the start of the pandemic. Members of the Committee had been discussing ways of using funds wisely, especially in support of the special interest groups. The room hire cost (£250 pa) for the Wine Group was to be paid from central funds and other suggestions included paying transport costs for the Garden and Walking Groups to allow them to travel further afield and paying rental costs for the Table Tennis Group. Members were asked to let the Committee know if they had other suggestions. The Cricket Club would be grateful for any donations if the premises continue to be used for UERSA meetings.

The members present at this year's AGM unanimously agreed that the subscription fee for 2021/22 should remain at £6 per person/couple.

### 4. **Election of Officers and Committee for 2021/22**

The Meeting approved the election of the following Officers and Members of the UERSA Executive Committee who have agreed to serve a further year:

**Laurie Burbridge** will become **President** for a year from the AGM 2021  
**Bruce Coleman** will become **Immediate Past President** for a year from the AGM 2021  
**David Smith (Treasurer)**  
**Julie Orr (Secretary)**  
**Roger Coles (Website Editor)**  
**Wojtek Krzanowski (Membership Secretary)**  
**David Carpenter-Clawson**  
**Sue Milward**

The following members of the Executive Committee confirmed that they would be stepping down from the Committee at the Annual General Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021:

**Chris Austin**  
**Sandy Day**  
**Christopher Dean**

The UERSA Committee proposed the following nominations to the Meeting:

#### **\*Election of Chair 2021/22**

**David Batty**

#### **\*Election of President-Elect 2021/22**

**Anne Mayes**

**\*Election of Committee members 2021/22**

**Judy Mead**

**\*A unanimous vote in favour of these nominations was received at this Annual General Meeting.**

There was a plea for any members interested in joining the Committee to come forward. As it stands, many of those elected have already served on the Committee previously.

**5. Special Interest Groups**

In a written note, Anne Mayes reported that the Garden Group managed an almost full programme with five visits between May and September. By their nature, they were outside as were the teas - apart from the first at Heathercombe, which is a dead end in the middle of Dartmoor and is huge. It did, however, rain! It was heartening to see so many there despite that rain and most of them couldn't stop talking, so pleased they were to leave their four walls and meet others. The next visit, to The Garden House, was not so well supported but it was a fair way and expensive unless you were an RHA Member or had a magazine free ticket. Springfield was very well attended and we welcomed some new members. A delightful garden and excellent tea. A full house again at Little Ash, again with new members. Lots of chat at the various tables at tea. The last was at Cadhay; unfortunately it had to be on a Friday so traffic was a challenge and prevented some from getting there. However lots did, albeit a bit late in some cases. Again a very enjoyable visit with a talk included. The cream tea was a fitting and tasty end to our season.

'The Meeting expressed its appreciation of Trevor Preist's work as Co-ordinator of the Walking Group, a role from which he had recently stepped down to be succeeded by Jan Smith and Judy Mead. The group had continued to meet regularly.

**6. Suggestions for future activities and events**

It was confirmed that there would not be a Christmas lunch this year but that it might be possible to arrange a lunch for the whole membership in 2022 instead.

Two coffee mornings had taken place and another one was planned for late November, and it was suggested that this could have a Christmas theme.

It was hoped that a Summer Party could be held in 2022.

**7. Any other business**

At the end of the meeting, the Chair thanked the retiring members of the Committee.

**After the AGM, wine and nibbles were available for members**