

Chester u3a AGM – October 2023

Groups Coordinator Report

1. As we approach the completion of another u3a year, the number of interest groups stands at approximately 80. I say approximately as the situation is sometimes fluid.
2. As Groups Coordinator, the main ongoing task is to monitor incoming emails and to respond in as timely a manner as possible. Most commonly emails are to do with:
 - General queries about eg what groups are there? how do I join?
 - How can a new group be set up to cover xxx?
 - I have spaces in the group I coordinate. How do I go about advertising that?
 - Issues to do with Beacon or the website which are passed on to the Beacon manager or the web master.
3. Another part of the role is to facilitate the setting up of new groups. During the past year, only one new group has been initiated, though there is some interest in a handful of others that might take off soon. After the demise of the Craft group was reported last year, it is good news that a new one has been started.
4. It was decided to re-introduce the concept of our groups providing helpers for the two monthly meetings. A rota for 2023 was created starting with groups whose name begins with the letter A and continuing alphabetically, while bearing in mind the size of the group. It was thought that one small group on its own might find it more difficult than larger groups to provide the required assistance, so some meetings might show two groups as being jointly responsible. Chester Times prints details of the rota as a reminder. All group coordinators were supplied with the rota and a separate guidance sheet for each venue.

So far, there has been mixed success. On the whole it has gone well, but on occasion no one has turned up to help, which puts more pressure on the people who are running the meeting, or on committee members who have to step in and help.
5. We also re-introduced the idea of a Coordinators' Lunch as a means of saying thank you to the coordinators for making our groups work, and as a time for coordinators and committee to communicate and share ideas. This year's lunch was on Saturday 30th September at Hoole Community Centre. I was unable to attend as I tested positive for Covid the day before. I believe the occasion passed well, apart from some people feeling the lack of a PA system, for which my apologies.
6. As I come to the end of my time as Groups Coordinator and a Committee member, I would like to say thank you for the experience. I would also like to say thank you and welcome to Sheila Morris who has agreed to take over the role.

Mal Waite