

Report on New Members Meeting 19th September 2023

Location & Time: St Paul's Canteen 14:30 – 16:00

This is a brief review of this event which introduced new, and a few potential, members to Crawley u3a. It was held again in the Canteen, a substantial room off the foyer of St Paul's.

The agreed purpose of the meeting was to welcome new members and to provide them with essential information about how Crawleyu3a operates, our relationship with the Third Age Trust, our Mission, Vision and Principles, the scope of our activity, and the parts members can play as volunteers in both support and committee roles. The new members were also invited to pose as many questions as they felt necessary.

In attendance were 3 committee members, Ann and Stewart Sole, two members of RUGS, and 32 (out of 65 invited) new and potential members. Some came late and some left early. The meeting was chaired by myself with support from the Communications Coordinator and the Membership Coordinator

The general feeling was that the meeting was a success as validated by some positive feedback received on the day. Many members remained to chat and introduce themselves after the formal presentation concluded.

What worked well

- The venue, St Paul's, has a car park, and adjacent bus stops
- Their foyer is welcoming.
- The canteen is spacious, and the comfortable seating configured in a horseshoe shape which encouraged participation.
- The atmosphere was informal and warm, and the engagement was constant and broad.
- RUGS provided tea, coffee and biscuits, with ample refills.
- The timing of 2 hours was appropriate, allowing opportunities to meet everyone.
- The necessary information, along with handouts [the latest Groups' Directory and a two-pager titled "Essential Information for all Crawley Members", both on the website], was imparted and our meeting objectives met.

What could be improved

- The major sticking point centred on the information concerning the time of the meeting. Scheduled for 14:30 for new members, some had received a note giving them the time of the arrival for the RUGS and Committee, 14:00! In the end we did not get under way until 14:40. No one seemed to mind. Tea and Coffee were served and a healthy level of conversation followed.
- The set-up of the room should have been agreed in advance.

In all, the meeting can be judged successful.

Jim McGough