

POST EVENT REVIEW

OPEN AFTERNOON REPORT FRIDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Despite The Queen's death and the prospect of rain, attendance was excellent. Several people said that it was the largest turnout they had seen. My observations are below.

Publicity

- Local press – the Communications Co-ordinator had a letter published in the Crawley Observer advertising the event
- Social media – local Facebook community groups proved to be another useful source of publicity. The Secretary and the Communications Co-ordinator advertised the Open Afternoon in their respective local neighbourhood groups, attracting some interest in the process
- To note for next year – alert other organisations with a similar demographic, e.g., the WI and Probus, to our Open Afternoon. Use Facebook local neighbourhood groups more widely

Room layout

- The Friary did not follow Peter's floor plan. Therefore, not only did we have to slot some Group Leaders in where we could find a space for them, rather than follow Peter's plan, but also the Friary's layout of tables meant that during the peak time it was very difficult to get from one end of the room to the other as the two narrow passageways from the back to the front of the room were too congested to pass through easily
- To note for next year – if the layout is wrong again, and if there is time, it needs to be changed so that it follows the floor plan

Attendance

- By taking photos throughout the afternoon, it was possible to estimate the number of visitors and the peak attendance times
- People started arriving from 2.00pm onwards, although the start time was 2.30pm, and by about 2.15pm the event was well under way. Fortunately, most people were ready
- From the photos taken it was possible to gauge that the peak time for attendance was between about 2.30-3.00pm. After 3.00pm people gradually started to leave, and the room was less crowded
- By 3.45pm there were more Committee members, Group Leaders, and RUGs than members and visitors left
- To note for next year – make sure we are ready for visitors from 2.00pm onwards. Post someone outside the Friary to attract passers-by into the building

Membership table

- There was a long queue for the membership table between these peak times. A third person helping out at the table for half an hour or so might have speeded things up a little but the unexpectedly large number of people seeking to renew or join on the day could not have been anticipated
- A few people were queuing just to collect and take away an application form. If there had been spare copies to hand to the RUGs in attendance it would have eased the queue. Not everyone wants to wait in line, and we may have lost a few prospective members
- To note for next year – a third person at the membership table at peak times. Spare copies of application forms to be given to the RUGs

General observations

- The help given by the four RUGs on and near the door was invaluable; we could not have managed without them
- Some tables fared better than others when it came to the volume of visitors. Some people came with a specific group or groups in mind, but others came to browse. For groups like Painting and Drawing, where there was a visible end product on display, it was easier to gain people's attention. For others sitting behind an empty table, simply displaying the group's name, they did not always attract as much attention or fare as well with people stopping to talk to them
- To note for next year – think about what can be displayed on a group's table to encourage people to stop and engage with them

Conclusion

- The success of the afternoon can be measured by the membership statistics shared by the Membership Secretaries shortly after the event: 17 new membership applications completed with payment, five more forms handed out, and 70 renewal/payment forms received
- Another measure of success comes from two emails sent by Group Leaders. Folk Singing took the contact details for seven potential new members and the Theatre Group not only added ten members but there are also 14 new members waiting to be registered

Sue Parker

Communications Co-ordinator

24 September 2022