

## SCN Membership Secretaries Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021

Attended by:

Sally Ingledew		SCN Manager
Kevin Stock		SCN Admin
Maggie Brisbane	Chichester	Mem Sec team
Sue Kent	Ems Valley	Mem Sec
Linda Clachan	Gosport	Mem Sec
Alison White	Havant	Mem Sec
Peter Haskell	Hayling Island	Mem Sec
Clive Midson	Horndean & District	Mem Sec
Sally Forster	Isle of Wight	Mem Sec
John Stych	Locks Heath	Mem Sec
Ann Riglin	Portsdown	Secretary
Olivia Quinn	Portsmouth	Mem Sec
Hilary Nicklin	Portsmouth	Chairman
Sandra Hodgetts	Rowlands Castle	Mem Sec & Treas
Richard Handy	Solent	Chairman
Richard Ryan	Solent	Mem Sec
Richard Herbertson	Stubbington	Mem Sec
Chris Adams	Stubbington	Chairman
Tony Jackson	Warsash	Mem Sec
Jo Derham	Waterlooville	Mem Sec & Chairman
Angela Chapman	Waterlooville	Beacon Support
Gill Slimm	Guernsey	Mem Sec
Barbara Warburton		New Forest NW Manager
Jane Guard	Lymington	Mem Sec
Ingrid Summersby	Totton	Treas
Helen Creighton	Totton South	

Apologies received from Emsworth & District, Meon Valley, Jersey

Welcome Sally Ingledew

Introductions. Everybody introduced themselves. There were three visitors from the New Forest Network.

### **Membership fees**

Some are keeping the same, some are increasing, and some decreasing (usually when the u3a has sufficient funds) and one a year's free membership.

Change of date of renewal to give a longer period for the money, reduction in postage for "analogue" members.

Some u3as have got new members, and some have lost members.

Gosport canvassed members on the fees, and the agreement was to keep it at £28

Money spent on zoom licenses and zoom speakers. Some local u3as share a speaker for a zoom talk.

### **Membership forms**

Diversity and Inclusion. Should there be a question on the form for people needing particular considerations?

After discussion, the group felt that public halls will be accessible, and that the most a u3a can do is ensure if possible that there are eg hearing loops.

If question asked on membership forms needed to be stored, updated etc. Ideally if there are considerations to approach group leader to discuss this. Perhaps personal risk forms might help.

It was also thought re gender that really it should be up to the member concerned to say what they want to be called (Mr, Mrs, Ms etc)

Waterlooville have a standing agenda item for committee meetings relating to D and I and Accessibility issues.

New member coffee mornings offer one to one opportunities to address any issues and these are found very valuable.

Agreed that asking prior jobs experience probably is against GDPR. Asking what skills they can offer the u3a is not very successful. Some u3as ask what their interests are.

### **Renewal forms** should renewals be annual?

It was an equal division between u3as that asked members to renew every year by filling in a form, and those that didn't.

Renewal communications email or letter restates details, address etc for member to check.

Membership card could act as receipt.

Guernsey 80% pay online, and print their own cards.

It is as easy to send a renewal form as it is to send out reminders. Open day for renewals works well.

Forms sent out by email or post if needed. Stubbington put renewal form on website and is also sent out with the newsletter both digitally and by post where needed. Digital renewals are becoming more popular and easier with Beacon if the member portal has been activated.

Forms also include gift aid and privacy statement.

Discussion about how members can renew using members portal. Not popular.

### **Membership cards**

Can scan on phone and show !! Beacon allows group leaders to check. Some members like a membership card. Most use for face to face meetings. Particularly useful to scan at monthly meetings. Cinema group needs membership cards, with a different colour each year to prove membership of a u3a.

Some u3as have stopped issuing, as they weren't asked to show them. Problem at monthly meetings using paper lists.

### **Forms of payment**

Waterlooville are considering direct debit.

Cash, cheques and BACS are all used. With BACS problem with identifying members.

Cheques and cash not ideal as trips to the bank, but direct debit very successful.

Standing orders not ideal as membership costs may change.

Guernsey & IOW recommended PayPal. Members do not need a PayPal account but can use a card to pay. It is worth the small cost. A cheque scanner is very useful and comes with banking apps.

Discussion re PayPal and Beacon and problems. Apparently, there are still problems.

## **Retention and Recruitment**

Retention of existing members, and attracting new members.

The possible problem of members lack of confidence to go to meetings.

SI explained that u3a office is well aware, and a two-pronged attack, to cater for older non IT members and social media to appeal to younger members. Member Link with all useful links in one place. This will be sent out to u3as shortly, as will a toolkit with many helpful ideas for u3as

Concern expressed about those not online.

Guernsey got used iPads from local businesses and helped people use them by phone. When lockdown finished for them their members were glad to start meeting again with very good attendance levels.

Coffee mornings, picnics etc could encourage people to mix.

### **Recruiting a new membership secretary.**

General difficulty in recruiting committee members leading to the same people staying longer or rotating between roles. SI suggested nuclear solution.....ie telling members that the u3a will close if people don't come forward for committee roles.

People want to help but not commit to a committee role. Chichester have found it useful to have a team, whereby team members of the team can focus on the areas that use their skills best e.g., admin, meet and greet etc. Stubbington are hoping to recruit at a relaunch.

Suggest small teams of members for various roles lead by a committee member.

SI suggested an open workshop run by SCN to explore the problem of recruitment of committee members. This will be further discussed at the Chairs meeting in March.