

# South Central Network

## Webmasters meeting

Held at Cosham Community Centre

June 4<sup>th</sup> 2015 2.00pm

U3As represented Solent: Hayling Island: Gosport: Chichester: Havant: Portsdown: Portsmouth: Waterlooville: and Ems Valley

Apologies from Rowlands Castle: Horndean: and Meon Valley

The meeting was opened by Jan Almond, the Chairperson for Gosport U3A

Thanks were given to John Worley for offering to share his knowledge of Site Builder

Request for phones to be put on silent. It was agreed a tea break at 3.00pm

It was agreed that each U3A represented should pay £4 towards the cost of the room £25. Any money left over would be held by Sally Ingledew and used to buy refreshments for future meetings.

Sally Ingledew S C N manager and from Gosport explained that the meeting had been called to explore changing from the current way of running the website to Site builder. Several other U3As were also considering this.

John Worley gave an account of his experience of Site Builder(SB). He has set up several sites, including the Southeast Region Site which includes a list of all the networks in the region, and the U3As that belong. It is useful to have links to and from the Regional website, and the local networks, and even the individual U3As. John was able to show several websites for comparison and evaluation. There were questions after seeing the Emsworth site, and Havant.

The following points were then made that some U3As eg Waterlooville have created their own websites.

Disadvantage: dependant on one person, for maintaining and updating

may not adapt for changing technology eg displaying on a smart phone.

With Site Builder . It is an easy system to learn and so a webmaster group can be set up to meet every 6mths, with one editor checking the site once a month. Also it's possible for GLs to update their own pages. And of course is free.

The representatives from each U3A then explained how their website was set up, while it was displayed, and any advantages or disadvantages were discussed.

**Portsmouth U3A.** Started with their own website 8yrs ago, changed to SB which they like as more than 1 person can edit, especially groups.

**Portsdown U3A** Bought a professional designer in with money from Hampshire and IOW Community fund. The site is set up using Word Press (WP) The site is maintained by 6 editors. Others are maintained by 12, one a month.

WP is free to download

Corrections from Portsdown U3A below

*Portsdown U3A has a site administrator. In addition, Committee members and Group Leaders who are willing receive training as editors so that they can maintain their own pages. There are currently 8 people in that category.*

*Please note also that our site administrator is Phill Mer-ron [phill.merron@talktalk.net](mailto:phill.merron@talktalk.net)*

**Hayling Island U3A** created their own website. This has led to 2 problems, 1 the site is not utilised properly, and 2 one person does the whole lot.

**Waterlooville U3A** started 2006. The website was done by a local designer and is run by Kevin Stock and a backup. Disadvantage that GLs cannot update their pages. Advantage they have a members area. 79% of their members have email, and the website gets 1000 hits a month. The GLs are asked to check their pages monthly

**Solent U3A** is considering using SB. He uses idiyary and finds it very useful. At present the site is hosted by HCC a free service, and he created the site from scratch using code. He is also aware of the problem of only one person knowing how to maintain and maintain the website.

**Ems Valley U3A** is a self build website, and is run entirely by one person, which apparently the committee do not see as a problem. An important point mentioned was put copyright on the pages, together with terms and conditions, this applies mostly to self built sites.

**Chichester U3A** have a WP website written by the previous webmaster, and is very complicated. The present committee have decided that change is necessary, and they are looking at SB as the change can be instant. They think it is too busy and should be easier to read. They have 8 levels of permission. A weekly bulletin is sent out and can be emailed at less than 300 per hr. A quarterly newsletter is also sent out, and they have distribution groups are set up to deliver if people haven't got email.

Below, a corrected version from Chichester U3A

Commented [S11]:

*Chichester U3A is a large U3A with 850 members (80% email coverage) and over 100 groups. They have a WordPress website written by the previous webmaster, which is looking dated and has shortcomings for current needs. The present committee have decided that change is necessary, and they have set up a small working party that is looking at the exact needs prior to evaluating whether to develop the current site or move to SB. They think the site appears too busy and should be easier to read and are seeking significant improvements in the Groups area. Website management enables up to 8 levels of permission. A weekly emailed bulletin is sent out using the on-line membership database and is emailed at less than 300 per hr to avoid spamming detectors. A quarterly newsletter is also sent out, and they have distribution groups are set up to deliver if people opt to received a printed version (65%).*

**Gosport U3A** currently has a website hosted by one.com , and it is based on Dreamweaver, a software package. The disadvantage of this is that this is expensive, and fairly complicated to use. So, a move to SB is being considered. A monthly news letter is sent by email and for people not on email if they let the Updates team have 12 self addressed envelopes then the Updates will be printed and posted out to them.

Some general points discussed about websites in general were data protection including use of photos, and use of password protected areas. These will be explored more in the Membership Systems Workshop July 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **South Central Network Website**

There was discussion as to the value of this. Advantages, all members would be able to access it, and so be aware of what other U3As are doing. There could possibly be some sort of area for exchanging

ideas. In the case of a project day progress would be easily available for all to see.

It would of course be up to each U3A to decide how much, and what they may want on the website. Sally Ingledew would be willing to set the site up using SB, and unless there is strong negative feeling will be done over the summer.

Correction below

*Sally Ingledew proposes setting up a prototype website to be evaluated at the next Chairmen's meeting Oct 1st*

Overall an interesting and informative meeting. There will be another meeting next year, and if anyone has any suggestions for topics to be discussed then please let me know.

Sally Ingledew

South Coast Network Manager

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