



HAMPSHIRE SOUTH CENTRAL NETWORK

SCN Webmasters Meeting Agenda

Thursday June 22nd 2017

2pm St John's Church Hall, 120 Redhill Road, Rowlands Castle PO9 6DF

In attendance

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Nick Hammond | Warsash | nick-hammond@ntlworld.com | Treasurer |
| Ray Davies | Chichester | raysdavies@virginmedia.com | Webmaster |
| Gail Jones | Emsworth | gailwjones@virginmedia.com | Webmaster |
| Claire Tame | Waterlooville | claire_tame@hotmail.com | Membership |
| Mike Smith | Solent | Websolentu3a@gmail.com | Webmaster |
| Tony Brett | Gosport | projects@gosportu3a.org.uk | Project coordinator |
| Judy Foster | Gosport | website@gosportu3a.org.uk | Webmaster / news updates |
| Andy G Forbes | Horndean | agforbes@ntlworld.com | Webmaster / Vice chair |
| Prue Amner | Rowlands Castle | prue.amner@bcs.org.uk | Webmaster / Group Coordinator |
| Geoff Worthington | Havant | gworthingt@aol.com | Webmaster / publicity |
| Andy Henderson | Hayling Island | andy@haylingu3a.org.uk | Webmaster / developer |
| Caroline Davies | Chichester | carolinedavies123@btinternet.com | |

1. Welcome

Rowlands Castle U3A Chairman, Kevin Connell welcomed all to the meeting.

2. Introductions

Sally Ingledew, SCN Manager welcomed all to the meeting and explained the overall format of the meeting. Each member introduced themselves.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Stubbington, Locks Heath, Portsmouth, Portsdown and Guernsey U3As

4. How U3As run their websites

SI took feedback from each of the U3As in turn covering the following aspects of their website management and implementation:-

a) How many people manage the content of the website?

All confirmed there was one main administrator with a deputy as backup support. Gosport, Solent, Hayling and Chichester also had editors for discrete areas of their websites especially Group's pages.

b) What access rights do you make available to others, if any?

Hayling had enabled a variety of rights in the website they had developed locally in Wordpress. Waterlooville has a member's area accessed by individual passwords.

c) Do you have a private area and what does it hold?

The majority had open websites. Hayling described in detail their encryption mechanisms for committee and membership. Waterlooville has a member's area.

d) How well is it used by the members and how do you know?

All reported the hits that were recorded to their sites and felt that this showed that the site was well used. There was discussion about the seasonal variations and the various ways these statistics can be skewed.

e) Has it enabled you to reduce your publicity e.g newsletters?

The majority still used newsletters or bulletins for their main publicity but had moved these to electronic versions for members, on request.

f) What innovative ideas have you developed?

- Solent described their news page.
- Waterlooville and Gosport had links to YouTube.
- Hayling described 'Your Pages' for groups to use as well as a link to member's calendars.
- Rowlands Castle uses the website to store member's History presentations for others to download.

There were two examples of U3As member's lists being linked to their websites which were wordpress. Hayling Island are effectively using their website to hold most of the information about the U3A.

It was agreed that the use of Site Builder inhibited innovative developments, but that it provided a useful way for less technically mind U3As to run their own website.

There was general discussion about the use of emails addresses and the storage of documents in the cloud.

5. Site Builder

Andy Forbes Horndean & District U3A asked whether the basic formatting features could be improved. This led to a productive discussion where most agreed they liked the consistent format although there was one who did not like the recent changes. All agreed that the current formatting requires a skill that is reasonable for a non-specialist however it is laborious and limited. The meeting suggest that the range of basic formatting of documents should be extended e.g.to be similar to Word, specifically including;

- Plain centred text [not pre-emboldened] added to formatting;
- Wider range of font styles and colour;
- Ability to box / borders round text
- Larger fonts for email as this is an accessibility issue for sight impaired and elderly members.

It was agreed that an email should be sent to the sitebuilder team on behalf of all users in the network. Andy Henderson suggested plugins that may help.

6. U3A Beacon Management System

SI gave an update explaining that Siftware now give technical support for the system. Revised terms and conditions are being compiled and will be available shortly. The new migration system is being worked on by Siftware. Membership and Groups is done, and Finance is in progress. SI called for feedback from Beacon users which she will give to the User Group on 4th July.

ACTION

Nick Hammond from Warsash, a supporter for Beacon system, described his experience with the system since April 2016.

The membership tool is easy for 155 live members and is used by executive committee, group coordinator and leaders. All have been given training and passwords to use their relevant functions. All have been pleased with the system and use the email aspect of the system but only to broadcast messages and not to interact.

Members can log in and see their groups and calendar as well as amending their personal data. Websites can be accessed from the members portal if the link is created.

NH is treasurer and thinks the financial ledger is good. Income from membership renewals is automatic. At year-end the system produces a financial statement for the AGM. Members can pay by cheque or BACS but Warsash do not use PayPal as there are problems at the moment.

They use some of the add-ons including:-

- Gift Aid processing and tracking
- Printing membership cards with bar codes
- Using bar codes to register members at meetings. Manual input can be used if a member forgets their card

The system is very secure and encrypted throughout. There was some discussion about security and caching.

ACTION – SI to check with Beacon if pages are cached, and if this matters for security. One member mentioned spam on the local server, also to be checked with Beacon.

From Beacon team. Yes it's cached but this is not seen as a security problem. To date no reports of spam emails.

SI explained that at the moment the system costs 50p per member for development and maintenance of the software which is ring-fenced by the NEC. This would also provide a backup system should any major problem occur. Currently a website is being developed with the idea that all Beacon related information should be in one place.

NH confirmed that Beacon does not need to be fully implemented at one time it can be incremental. He is willing to give presentations to others.

7. Regional Website

Hilary Robinson RT SE Region reports that John Worley is stepping down from this role. SI asked that anyone willing to take over to let her know.

ACTION ALL

8. Any other business

SI called for a volunteer to manage/create a spreadsheet of U3A contacts, and also asked for a volunteer to be secretary for the network.

ACTION ALL

It was suggested that agendas for meetings could be on the SCN website.

ACTION – SI

Gosport said they would like a suggestion box on their website, however there is no way for members to interact as it's Sitebuilder.

Chichester asked how they could access the Beacon information. The new website is:-

www.u3abeacon.info

SI will send minutes to all emails of all attendees.

Meeting closed at 4.00pm

