

## **U3a Network Meeting – 8 September 2023**

The Chair (Glynis) opened the meeting by informing members of the sad loss of Robert Toft (Treasurer) and Sheila Etherington

Finance update – Sue Blundell from Wellington, stated that she had met recently with Robert Toft for a handover of the Treasurer role. She informed the Group that there were issues with the system particularly over security, as she's just taken over. The current balance stands at £1245.08 and she thanked those groups who have paid (she mentioned that she's received a cheque from MD)

Network Event on 27 September – everything was in hand with 42 attendees. Some groups are not attending and MD was mentioned as 'embracing the event'! All groups were asked to inform the organisers if there are any dietary requirements.

### U3a updates:

Bridgnorth – over 300 members with a thriving membership. They hope to move to new premises soon and have carried out lots of advertising and publicity recently.

Shrewsbury – over 1000 members with lots of new SIGs starting. They've set up stands in the town recently and have captured quite a few new members

Wellington – 80 members but quite happy with that as there are lots of groups in the town with whom they don't want to compete

Wem – 150 members. They recently ran a 'Meet the Committee' event which was well attended and resulted in some new committee members

Oswestry Borders – They've recently introduced a monthly newsletter and are organising an interest group fair next month

Ludlow – over 600 members. They now run new member coffee mornings which are working well

Wolverhampton – 232 members but constantly struggle to recruit more.

### Regional & National News

The replacement for sitebuilder is to be piloted in the Autumn

Issues/questions I raised

Can groups share speaker lists? – apparently some speakers do not want their contact details shared and the best way to do this, is to look at other groups websites

Do all groups collect ICE numbers? – Bridgnorth stated that they use 'Beacon' for both their finance and membership information. Apparently, ICE numbers are collected on the membership forms. It was also agreed that 'Beacon' is used to email members. A number of other groups stated that they also use this and confirmed that it cost £1 per head annually.

Would other groups be happy to share publicity material they've used for recruitment drives? – Chris Wright from Bridgnorth said that she will take some examples of material they've used to the Network Event on 27 September, although she'll only be there for the first hour.

AOB:

- other groups have a SIG Co-ordinator which they've found very useful.
- A run through 'Beacon' and its uses, will be on the January agenda for anyone wishing to join the meeting (a maximum of 2 per group)
- The Network Secretary is resigning and they'd like a volunteer to come forward

Next zoom meeting – Friday 12 January