

## **South West Hampshire u3a Network**

Notes of the Meeting held on Monday 15 May 2023 2 – 4 pm  
Crosfield Hall, Romsey Host: Lymington u3a

**Present:** Eastleigh District, Totton South, Lymington, Fordingbridge, Southampton, Monks Brook, Winchester, Romsey Archway, Romsey District, New Milton

**Apologies:** Susie Berry Third Age Trust, Lyndhurst, Chandlers Ford, Botley & Hedge End

### **1. Introduction**

All were asked to sign in and indicate whether they were willing to share email addresses. Tea and coffee were available.

### **2. Attendance and Apologies – see above**

Joy explained that it was proving difficult to set regular dates which did not clash with at least one of the u3as involved. She had tried to obtain dates of their AGM and general meetings, with little success.

### **3. Notes from 27 March**

Apologies to be added from Jill Haisted.

**a.** Cloud Storage: Dave was still investigating getting an IRL to make the website easier. Setting up a cloud account was relatively easy but codifying document structure and referencing was problematic. Joy suggested that this be included as a regular agenda item. Joy told the meeting that the September meeting would be face-to-face to enable Romsey Archway IT specialist to attend.

**b.** Hamble Valley assets have come to the network. The printer has gone to Botley and is working; everything else has been re-homed and is in use. Lymington has expressed interest in borrowing the double-sided display board – they have booked a market stall on u3a day. The banner is not quite ready; some of the photos were not of sufficiently high resolution so were being tweaked. It is being updated by Appleton Signs, who made the original banner for Hamble Valley but they have said that they can't make any more. Botley and Hedge End would also like to borrow it – to apply to SW Hants Network.

### **4. Regional Trustee**

Susie Berry had sent her apologies and had not got a report to give us. Liz Thackray is visiting our area in July for a week, possibly w.c. 17th. She would like to visit 'ordinary u3a groups'. Hilvary has arranged accommodation for her. Fordingbridge and Romsey & District have general meetings that week.

Action: Days and dates of meetings to be sent to Hilvary at [u3ahilvary@gmail.com](mailto:u3ahilvary@gmail.com).

## 5. Joint Network Activities

Christine Rowland was disappointed to report that she had received a poor response to her request for information about potential joint activities. Ann said that her table tennis group might be interested. Joy said that more information was needed as to how it might be organised.

Christine suggested a quiz day, which was well received, particularly if it could be held in, say November – cost and venue would need to be established. Jill suggested that skittles was always popular. Vernon queried whether this would involve existing groups or new ones, and

emphasised that most people preferred daytime to evening meetings, especially in winter. New Milton has an afternoon quiz group which is very competitive. Christine pointed out that it would be extremely difficult to find a venue large enough for 20 teams. Kay suggested that it be held annually at a different venue each year. Joy suggested setting up a small team to work with Christine. A maximum of 10 rounds of questions would be needed and this could be shared. Jill volunteered to set questions.

**Action:** Determine whether there is interest and report back to the next meeting, emailing Christine Rowland.

## 6. Peer Group Sessions

Ann reported that the recent Secretaries group session had been very successful. There was enthusiasm for a repeat in the summer. Winchester gave a good report of the Chair peer group meeting, attended by 6–8 people. More experienced attendees are necessary in order to generate discussion. The next PG meeting will be for Treasurers

**Action:** Ann to email treasurers to see if there is interest in having a meeting in August and if so, what dates in early August might suit them.

## 7. Meeting Dates and Hosts

Monday, 10th July, 2–4pm Eastleigh to host, on Zoom,

Monday 18th September New Milton and Winchester to host face to face Monday 27th November Botley & Hedge End and Southampton to host on Zoom

Venue discussion resulted in consensus that the Romsey hall was central for everyone and reasonably priced.

**Action:** Ann and Joy to send checklist of admin tasks required when hosting.

It had been decided to hold the July meeting on Zoom because of difficulty travelling around the area in the summer, but this could be changed if wanted.

Joy said that although it was preferable to have fixed days and weeks for these meetings, doing so would exclude at least one u3a because of their regular general and/or committee meetings. The answer seemed to be to put fixed dates in the diary well in advance so people could arrange other commitments to suit. Availability of the Crosfield Hall might be a problem.

**Action:** Joy, Ann, Grania and Vernon to discuss September venue.

## 8. Beacon

In a change to the order on the agenda, Joy reported that entering network reps on Beacon was made difficult by the fact that different people attended meetings but only one rep could be

shown on Beacon and that person would not necessarily know to whom to send information. There were no plans in the Beacon upgrade for people to respond to the sender of Beacon messages. Gmail, on the other hand, made it possible for all involved in a conversation to contact each other, e.g. peer groups. Another problem is that Beacon doesn't show who is copied in.

**Action:** Joy will liaise with other networks using Beacon to find out how they manage it. Meanwhile, she will continue to use Gmail emails. If anyone has a problem with too many messages, they can block the senders.

Hilvary reported that Beacon now has the ability to use barcoded membership cards. Eastleigh has a barcode scanner – Ann to ask Eastleigh if they could assist

In answer to potential objections to the impersonal nature of scanning barcodes on entering meetings, the answer was that the person using the scanner should also greet the member and welcome him/her.

WhatsApp groups were discussed and regarded as very useful for liaison between group members, e.g. walkers. Dave pointed out that texts were being used increasingly.

## 9. Succession Planning

This will be left on the agenda for all further meetings. Both Ann and Joy would like to stand down, therefore two people are needed to take over and asked members to mention at meetings that assistance is needed. A staggered takeover could be arranged, and the candidate need not be a committee member. In addition to this network, there is also a national network, Network Link, conducted on Zoom, information on which is promulgated by TAT; and the SE Regional Network.

**Action:** Ann and Joy to produce role description.

## 10. "Your Spot"

a. Christine raised the question of first aiders and how to handle an emergency. After discussion it was agreed that this should be mentioned at the start of meetings, with one person being designated as responsible for calling 999/111 if necessary. Many venues had their own first aiders on site, with accident reports being produced in house.

Multiple calls to the emergency services must not occur. It was not recommended for any members to undertake formal first aider courses, as these would then need to be regularly updated. Ann suggested noting where the nearest defibrillators were located near to the venue.

**Conclusion:** Leave it to the professionals. One person to call 999 or 111 if necessary and follow instructions.

Kay reminded the meeting that risk assessments should be carried out before all activities, and we should have our own record of any incidents. Dave raised the question

of insurance, and it was suggested that we could get someone from the Third Age Trust to speak to a meeting on this. However, it would be covered in the Keeping It Legal module, which could be done on line. The next one is from 2 – 4.30 on 18 May. Hilvary mentioned that Risk Assessment and Incident Forms are available on the “Information for u3as” section of the website.

Joan pointed out that her u3a had a provision of £500 to cover possible excess payment, in the event of an insurance claim which was ring-fenced in their accounts.

**b.** Grania asked whether it was allowed for a group to donate funds they had raised to another charity. The answer is negative, the only exception being if the aims and objectives of the receiving charity are identical with u3a. Individual members or groups thereof could donate monies provided u3a was not mentioned and it did not go through u3a books. She has sought advice from Susie and will pass it on to Ann when received. She said that New Milton wanted to avoid registering as a charity, which prompted the question of why. There are advantages, including discounts on hall hire. It was agreed that this would be covered in the Treasurers peer group meeting.

**c.** Vernon suggested that it would be practical for u3as to share a Zoom licence. It appears that Zoom will not countenance this. Joy pointed out that there is a regional Zoom licence via Susie, at no cost to the individual u3a using it.

David queried potential data protection issues with WhatsApp. Because it is end-to-end encrypted and only the participants have access this was not a problem.

## **11. AOB**

**a.** Ann asked if anyone used the what3words app when arranging rendez-vous for walking groups etc. **Her group found it very useful.**

**b.** Joan asked if anyone was using Beacon and NatWest. Fordingbridge treasurer will contact Jill to discuss this.

**c.** Vernon asked if a list of speakers issued by Thames Valley Network was recommended speakers; it was generally felt that we would not be allowed to rate speakers, but one would assume that only acceptable ones would be listed. Eastleigh District u3a had, in the past, placed a box at the door where members could add a card showing an emoji to reflect their view of the speaker.

**d.** Vernon asked what the black and white building on the network website was; it is Tudor House in Southampton – open to the public for a fee, with a café accessible without fee.

**12.** Next meeting: Monday 10th July, 2–4pm Eastleigh hosting on Zoom