

South West Hampshire u3a Network
Notes of Meeting 29th January 2024
Meeting Notes

Present

Ann Beeching – Joint Network Co-ordinator – Eastleigh AB – Chair

Joy Lyon – Joint Network Co-ordinator – Totton South JL

Chandlers Ford KG, BH

Totton South HC

Botley, Hedge End & District LJ

New Milton WN, DG, GE

Monks Brook TE

Winchester AE, VT

Lymington HR

Eastleigh District SA

Chandlers Ford BH

Fordingbridge JM

Southampton CR

Romsey Archway DG

1. **Introduction** – AB welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. **Apologies**

AB, JS, SD

3. The notes from the previous meeting were accepted as accurate.

Matters Arising

To correct VR to VT re the item on Google Meet

Missing Discussion Point re the Forthcoming April Meeting, and whether we should have a speaker raised by JM

4. **Susie Berry Report**

Due to Susie's absence JL reminded us of the forthcoming Network Link on 12th February and the Fit for the Future Meeting on March 4th when it was our opportunity to understand and take part in the discussions about the proposed u3a Councils.

5. **Joint Network Activities**

a) Network Quiz, that took place on Wednesday 29th November 2023, with eight u3a's and thirteen teams. (Appendix 1) JL thanked CR for her organisation and Jill Haistead for her testing questions. Unfortunately, no photos were taken – if anyone has any please send them.

- b) AB led a discussion about a future Network joint activity. Her suggestion that it could be an event such as a Table tennis competition. CR suggested that other activities could take place at the same time such as games and snooker. Everyone asked to send an expression of interest, that should include ideas and venues. **ACTION POINT – ALL**

6. **Peer Group Sessions**

AB has tried to find a mutual date for the Secretaries' Peer Group meeting that suits all the group coordinators, but it is proving impossible. It was agreed that she would decide a date and send it to all who have expressed an interest. **ACTION POINT AB**

A meeting date of 19th February has been agreed for the Groups Co-ordinator Peer Group. This date will be sent out to all the Network u3a's to notify groups coordinators who are not signed up.

It was agreed that a Business Secretary peer group still needed to be organised. This is important as any following meeting could include new Business Secretaries, especially since most u3a's are due their AGMs in the near future, and officers would change.

7. **SW Hants Website Development – Progress and Questions**

The following link was included in the agenda.

<https://siteworks.u3a.org.uk/u3a-siteworks-training/introduction-video>

The upgrade is being rolled out.

JM reported that she has not definite date yet as to when the network site will update and she will need to pass over the website when she retires at Fordingbridge's AGM.

DG (Romsey Archway) asked if all the u3a's have reached out to the network team to have a better understanding of when their u3a will go live. His webmaster has been involved with the team rolling out the upgrade and Romsey Archway is to go live next month. Depending on the requirements of the u3a it is possible to go with the straight upgrade or to customise it as needed.

JL raised the query of how the list of u3a's due to go live is managed and the time scales involved, as Totton South is about two-thirds down on the list. DG agreed to ask his webmaster to clarify.

ACTION POINT DG

8. **Meeting Dates and Host u3as 2024 2.00pm starts (Appendix2)**

AB/JL Led the discussion around the following points:

a) Timings of Meetings – Bimonthly or Trimonthly

After some discussion a vote was held with the u3a's online, with 10 voting for 3monthly meetings, 5 for 2 monthly and 3 abstainers. The proviso was that if a u3a required a meeting before the 3months they could liaise with AB/JL to call an extra meeting via Zoom.

The next meeting is to be held **on 15th April** at Crosfield Hall, Romsey as there was a difficulty getting a venue before this date.

b) What do u3a's want from the meetings?

There was a general debate amongst all those present, but also some concern that out of the 20 u3a's in the Network approximately only half were regular attendees at these meetings.

But they were not compulsory and often u3a's were busy with their own internal affairs especially when officers were new to their posts.

AB thought if the new council was approved we would get more than one trustee or council representative.

Hearing the Trust updates in forthcoming meetings of Network Link from SB was important as it would give all the u3a's the opportunity to pass on the information to their committees, and membership, whilst offering the chance to question or clarify points.

DG said he thought the contacts were useful, and CR the ideas such as the STAR team and the scanning membership cards for example.

Peer group meetings are important, and AB asked if having speakers would encourage more to attend?

9. **Succession Planning –**

JL/AB thanked DG(New Milton) and GE for their ideas after their meeting.

a) Role description of the network coordinator's role (Appendix 3)

b) Tasks that might be undertaken by Network members.

There was a general discussion around job descriptions and whether we all had them for each role and how detailed they were. JL reminded us there were model job descriptions on the u3a website.

DG(New Milton) said he felt that with his current role as Chair and running several groups, he could not take on anymore tasks. BH agreed with that sentiment. AB/JL both said they understood that all chairs were busy. It was muted that perhaps a third coordinator could help.

JL asked if there was a way that keeping the list of network attendees updated to simplify communication. It was suggested designated emails that were handed over from person to person as people changed roles., for example SWHantsnetwork@??u3a.org.uk where ?? is the initials of the u3a, would mean less housekeeping of the emails.

To remain on the agenda for the next meeting.

ACTION POINT AB &

JL

11. **"Your Spot"**

- * VT raised if known where the returns as 'undelivered' Third Age Matters Magazine went. Due to the issue of the distributor of the Third Age Matters Magazine going into receivership at the time of the meeting, it was agreed this point could not be followed up now. To be raised with SB at next meeting.
- *
- * VT and JL asked if all u3a's have paper or online membership forms. Those on u3aweb have online and paper. Meanwhile those on Beacon may get the facility with the upgrade. DG (Romsey Archway) agreed to help JL with the pdf form so it could be filled in.

ACTION POINT DG & JL

- *
- * SA asked whether other u3a's had issues with funding groups that hired venues for activities. For example, the table tennis group hired a hall for their meeting and had a list of members who like to play but not everyone attends each month, therefore there is a shortfall in covering the cost. They are currently charging a nominal fee to attendees only. The consensus was that groups should be self-funded and all who sign up should pay whether they attend or not and any shortfall should definitely not be paid by the general membership. Several u3a's look at charging monthly, annually, or bi-annually to make life easier for their treasurers.

12. AOB

- * The idea of having a Tea Dance for a Network Activity was thought a good idea.
- * GE is looking for advice to what projector to buy. AB and CR agreed to send out the details of what they had

13. Next Meeting – Monday 15th April 2.00–4.00pm at Crosfield Hall Hosts to be confirmed

AB closed the meeting at 4.10pm

Appendix 1 – Joint Network Quiz

The first joint SWHants Network event took place on Wednesday 29th November 2023 thanks to Christine Rowland who offered to coordinate the event. Eight u3as participated with thirteen teams taking part a total of 78 members. Congratulations to Fordingbridge who gained first place with 76 points, although two teams were close on their heels with points in the lower 70s, and three with points in the upper 60s. It was a lively and enjoyable meeting with the hall buzzing as we puzzled over answers, checked our markers hadn't let us down and generally had a good time.

Having been told we would be disqualified for using phones, everyone was so obedient that, as far as I am aware, no photos were taken ... does anyone know differently?

Special thanks go to Jill Haistead who generated and delivered questions ranging in topic and difficulty, and remained calm as requests for repeats and queries came from the floor. Also thanks to the quiet hero, Tony Evans, who ensured coffee and lunch happened with the kitchen left clean and tidy at the end of the meeting.

Post Meeting Feed Back

A very enjoyable afternoon but might be a good idea next time for teams to be introduced to each other at the beginning and the queue for lunch might be better managed to reduce the length.

Appendix 2

Potential Meeting Hosts and Scribes

Red indicates not yet confirmed

| 2024 | | Potential u3a pairs | |
|----------------------------|-----|---------------------|------------------|
| Jan 29 th (5) | Z | Chandlers Ford | Eastleigh |
| April 15 th (3) | F2F | | |
| May 20 th (3) | F2F | Totton | Totton South |
| July 29 th (5) | Z | Ringwood | Anton |
| Sept 30 th (5) | F2F | Test Villages | Eastleigh |
| Nov 11 th (2) | Z | Hythe & Dibden | Fawley & Holbury |

Appendix 3

NETWORK CO-ORDINATOR ROLE DESCRIPTION

1. Purpose of this document

To outline the role and responsibilities of the South West Hants Network Co-ordinator(s).

2. Role Summary

To facilitate the efficient organisation of the Network business

3. Main Responsibilities

a. Meetings

- Plan regular Network meetings – currently 2 monthly
- Set Network meeting agendas and circulate notes
- Ensure Zoom license is available for online meetings or venue booked for face-to-face meetings

b. Communication

- Maintain the Network Representatives' contact names on Google or Beacon
- Monitor the Network's emails on Google
- Liaise with South East Regional Trustee and Regional Volunteers
- Answer general queries and follow up those passed to SERegion Trustee or Trust
- Circulate minutes and notes of SERegion Network, Network Links and other notifications from the Trust.
- Encourage all u3a Chairs to join the Network or delegate a committee member to attend Network meetings

c. Support

- Ensure Peer Groups are set up and continue to meet regularly (at least annually)
- Assist any joint Network events requested by network members
- Support Network Website Manager.

4. Skills and Experience

Good organisation and communication skills plus an ability to use a computer for dealing with emails and other information.