

SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP (Alan Provis)

Alan Provis

On Wednesday 27th September the two groups combined, and a total of twenty members attended an afternoon tea at Park Farm Hotel in Hethersett. Everyone enjoyed the tiers of sandwiches and cakes that the hotel provided and also, of course, the congenial company.

The idea for the group was originated by Pam Yeomans in February 2022. Its aim, to give people living on their own the opportunity of having a Sunday lunch with others instead of staying at home by themselves. Sundays can be a tricky day of the week, as friends and family can be occupied with other activities that don't necessarily include you.

The first lunch was booked on the first Sunday in February 2022 at the Queen's Head in Hethersett and wondered how many people would and all six people booked attended. By May there were twelve wanting to join her group, and, by September there were too many people interested in venues to be able to manage at one sitting. A second group was started for the second Sunday of the month, with Tricia Delahunty alongside to help.

Then, in November 2022, I, started to re-attend u3a, hoping to join a singles Sunday lunch group; but there was a waiting list. It was suggested that I begin a second group. A meeting was called in the Tiffey Room at Central Hall with eight people showing interest. An inaugural lunch was booked at The Stag, Breckland Lodge, for January 2023 with twelve people attending this successful event. To date there are 28 members in group two, and group one has nearly 40. Lunches are held within a ten-mile radius of Wymondham, visiting pubs and hotels to enjoy good food and equally good company.

The Sunday Lunch Groups have become victims of our own success and have been wanting a third volunteer to start another group. Thankfully, Diane Gibbins has come to our rescue, and she will be forming her new group shortly. We are very grateful to Diane as it means that new, single members can join a group immediately, without having to wait. Diane's Sunday lunch will be on the fourth Sunday in the month.

It was recently suggested that we might try to expand activities to during the week once a month, getting the two groups together of these occasions. Pam's thoughts were that although some people have active social lives, others, who have recently experienced break ups or bereavement and who were trying to start again with steps towards a new, normal life for themselves may possibly feel more confident doing this amongst other single people. These extra activities began a few months ago with an afternoon trip to Peter Beales' Rose Gardens in Attleborough and included an afternoon cup of tea and cake, followed by afternoon tea on Wednesday 27th September at Park Farm Hotel, Hethersett. It proved, again, to be a success and another meeting will hopefully take place next year in the Spring/Summer.

Two activities are planned for November, for interested members to try Carpet Bowls at Central Hall, Wymondham, and a trip to The Sainsbury Centre at the UEA in Norwich. A Christmas lunch is planned at The Crown, Great Ellingham on 3rd December for all the groups and with the OPEN DAY coming soon there may be even more members to consider. In February next year we will put on our overthinking caps on again to arrange other events and ideas from members, providing they are feasible, will be very welcome.

Overall, a very successful initiative.