

West Wolds U3A Convenors' & Volunteers Meeting

24th November 2023

Held at Market Rasen New Life Church.

PRESENT

Committee – Shirley Fuller, Terry Francis, Gary Beighton, Sharon Rupp, Ginny Beard, Sandra Dean, Dave Ebbage.

Convenors – Julia Francis, Gillian Anderton, Yvonne Heathershaw, Caroline Dale, Barry Dukes, Pat Hage, Jacqueline Reid, Audrey Storey, Brian Ward, Kay Green, David Oliver, Bill Roberts, Kathryn Wade, Paul Ettridge, Dawn Stopper, Pauline Wood, Clare Harden, Margaret White, Gordon Jennings.

1. INTRODUCTION

Shirley Fuller welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. The main purpose of the meeting was to thank the Convenors for the important contribution they make to our u3a, because without them we would not have 50 groups. This afternoon was an opportunity to introduce the new Committee, demonstrate the advantages of using Beacon to run groups, give an overview of the forthcoming 25th Anniversary year and a chance for questions to be asked. The other Volunteers who support the u3a will join later.

2. MEET THE COMMITTEE

The 7 members introduced themselves and what they have done and hope to do on the Committee.

3. ANNUAL FEEDBACK

There are guides, including a Convenors Handbook and Risk Assessment forms among other things on our website to help Convenors run their groups effectively. Copies of all the available documentation was available on a table in the hall. If a new group is to be started or a change of Convenor, we offer a mentoring and support service.

4. INTRODUCTION TO BEACON

Beacon is management tool to run membership, groups, finance and mailing which supports volunteers to run their u3a, and it protects and secures all data held on it by avoiding personal information being held on individual PC's. There is a small fee to cover running and development costs, and Beacon is always being updated. If anyone had any ideas or suggestions, our Beacon administrator is Steve McCarthy.

Convenors can have access to Beacon which will enable them to view their group members and check if they have renewed; assign and remove members from their interest group; email group members or the entire membership to advertise an event, and so on.

Gary then demonstrated how to set up and add members to a group and other functions in more depth. Any Convenor that would like access and training should contact Steve McCarthy, or speak to Gary at the end of the session.

5. 25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

A sub-committee including Sandra Dean, was formed to come up with ideas on how to mark this anniversary. Sandra noted what an achievement this milestone was especially after Covid when member numbers dropped. Now groups and members are increasing thanks to our volunteers and people who see value in what we offer.

The logo was then shown (designed by Gary) which will feature on the celebration cakes at our monthly meeting, which coincidentally is the actual 25th Anniversary on March 14th 2024. All members are invited to attend and this will kick start a whole year of events, one per month. The list of proposed events was displayed, showing a variety of active and social items to appeal to a wide variety of tastes.

Many of these activities promote what we do best. It is hoped that where an event is at the same time as a group, that group will participate in the event, an opportunity for members to mix and take part. Volunteers will be needed to help with arranging and supporting some of these items; maybe in a small way or more involved if desired. Gary suggested that groups might like to arrange their own event too. David Oliver asked who from National Office would be attending the March meeting as it will hopefully be covered in the TAM magazine and give us good publicity. Shirley advised the Regional Trustee John Lewis would be coming but National Office could be invited to send a senior board member too. Pat Hage advised this was the case for the 20th Anniversary when the then Chairman of the Third Age Trust, Pam Jones attended. Kathryn Wade suggested a feature be submitted for the TAM and local press.

6. Q & A

No further questions were asked.

7. CLOSE

Shirley once again thanked the Convenors for their continued hard work and support and closed the meeting at 2.20pm.

OUR OTHER VOLUNTEERS ARRIVED & REFRESHMENTS WERE SERVED

The Volunteers Meeting commenced at 3.05pm and after thanks to them for all their support over the last year at the monthly meetings and publicity stands among other things, the meeting followed the same agenda omitting the section on Beacon.

Sharon Rupp
Secretary