Kent u3a network Autumn Meeting2023

28th November on zoom

**MINUTES**

Attendance:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **U3a** | **Representative** | ***Apologies*** |
| Ashford, Wye and District | Barry Andrews |  |
| Bearsted and district | Graham Gibson |  |
| Borough Green | Chrys Short |  |
| Canterbury |  | Robin Terry |
| Cranbrook |  |  |
| Dartford |  |  |
| East Medway |  |  |
| Edenbridge |  |  |
| Faversham |  |  |
| Goudhurst and District |  |  |
| Gravesend | Alan Scott, chair |  |
| Hawkhurst |  |  |
| Isle of Sheppey |  | Heather Thomas-Pugh |
| Kings Hill and District |  |  |
| Knole |  | Debbie Magness |
| Maidstone |  | Mary Rix |
| Maidstone Invicta |  |  |
| Malling District |  |  |
| Medway | Kevin Booth, Angela Howe |  |
| Meopham |  | Mike Chantry, chair |
| Orpington |  | Sue Howe |
| Paddock Wood | Michele Sinclair |  |
| Pembury | Maggie Hall |  |
| Saxon Shore |  |  |
| Sevenoaks | Beryl Mansell | Ken |
| Shepway and District |  |  |
| Swanley and District |  |  |
| Tenterden | John Russell |  |
| Thanet |  |  |
| Tonbridge | Lionel Shields |  |
| Tunbridge Wells | Chris W |  |
| Westerham | Stuart Barnes, vice chair | Tony Pearson |
| White Cliffs Country | Sue Edwards |  |
| Plus Committee | Eleanor Brooks |  |
|  | Jenny Akehurst |  |
|  | Frani Hoskins |  |
|  | Rob White |  |

1. Welcome and updates from Chrys

* Hold the date of the AGM – it will be in the study day on 27th March. This means that the reports will only cover 9 months this year. This change is in response to suggestions from the member for a way of reaching a quorum.
* Borough Green is up and running, our newest u3a in Kent. We are working with National Office to make the process easier for any other new u3as. Huge thanks to all those who have helped eg lending banners / bunting.
* Social prescribing – there is now guidance that u3as can use if and when you need. A few u3as have had people referred inappropriately, and the guidance aims to clarify what “u3a” is for prescribers to prevent further unhelpful referrals. You can also use the Patient Participation Group or other group such as protected learning time (PLT) to work with health professionals. Please see separate email sent to chairs with further information from Gravesend who have put information into surgeries including a slide show for the TV screen in the waiting room – this was shared so we could all watch it. The network Guidance will be sent out soon and feedback is welcome to Beryl Mansell [berylmansell@btinternet.com](mailto:berylmansell@btinternet.com) and Chrys Short [chryspendragoniorwen@gmail.com](mailto:chryspendragoniorwen@gmail.com) who wrote it.
* York festival 18-20 July 2024 – hope you have seen information from national u3a.
* Kent-wide publicity. At our last meeting, member u3as asked for support in getting the u3a name more widely known. We are currently looking at hiring a stall at either the Kent Show or the Kent Garden Show. If this is viable, we would very much appreciate support from u3as in terms of helping to provide material for the stall and in terms of sending someone to help staff the stall on one of the days.
* Beacon details for your u3a. Please can we very kindly remind you that every time you have a change to your committee, please inform Jenny Akehurst our Beacon Administrator. Angela will be sending out the form for you to update with details about your u3a.

1. New ideas for the network - how can we be of use to you?

* A few new Facebook groups have started up that are helpful, and there seems to be a need for practical advice for things that happen in u3as! Rob will set up a closed Facebook group for committee members, which we hope would be responsive to problems and help people who can’t get through to national office for help.
* Networks have been asked to wait for their new website so we will extend ours a bit to carry us over. Idea for publicity: drop u3a publicity onto other local sites. This might be more effective that having our own public Facebook group.
* National Link Meeting. Poor publicity but 3 national subject advisors spoke well. The creative writing newsletter has been sent out to all chairs to share with group leaders. There is so much available nationally including Interest Groups Online for £12 a year. Best kept u3a secrets! Could be a huge boost for local groups.

1. Study Day Wednesday 27th March 2024 at the Friars

* We have looked at alternative locations but cannot find anything more suitable than The Friars.
* The feeling was that whilst it might be more relevant to some that others depending on the topics, we would like it open to all committee members. Whilst we are limited for numbers, we can cater for 2+ from each u3a.
* Ideas for topics:

Publicity - U3as talking about how they promote their u3a? eg Alan from Gravesend. We note that the Third Age Trust was mandated to publicise u3a nationally by the AGM. Recruitment of new committee members eg grab people in your group.

National resources available but under-used eg Hilvary talking about content of national link meeting.

We decided that a variety of topics during the day would be best. Any further ideas please send to [Eleanor.brooks1661@gmail.com](mailto:Eleanor.brooks1661@gmail.com)

1. Question and answer session on committees

* **What is the best thing to do to reward volunteers? Is it in order to take them out for a meal?**

Malling: group leaders thank you lunch paid for by u3a funds.

Treasurer: yes, the finance section on the national website says this is okay.

Tonbridge: annual session for group coordinators for lunch. Presentation first

Gravesend: all volunteers include newsletter editors etc to village hall and have a buffet.

Tunbridge Wells: all 140 volunteers invited to a lunch.

* **We want to put together an advertising campaign, but are disappointed in the A5 leaflets, available to customise, from the Branding Centre.   Would there be any objection to us creating our own local poster, using the u3a coloured logo and the “Learn Laugh and Live” slogan?**

Carole Dickenson: care! The Brand Centre and logos have conditions. Please get back to national and say they need improving! How much impact do posters have? Is social media more effective?

Jenny: you can work with national u3a to make sure you follow the guidelines. This happened in Bearsted.

Gravesend have made their own and give them to group leaders to give to members to distribute. Deliberately targeted barbers to attract more men.

Jenny: you can download the logo to use on your own posters.

**How do you ensure compliance?**

Some people have a role holder such as vice chair, business secretary.

Some put all the policies on once a year.

Good idea of the day to Alan for Gravesend:

Advertise in the barbers if you want to attract more men!

FUTURE DATES

March 27th STUDY DAY and AGM

July 4th Summer Meeting