

Group Leaders meeting Wednesday February 6th 2025

Present: members of the Committee, 35 Group Leaders

Apologies: Judy Mosely, Roy Goodman, David Weaver, Ruby Walker, Roger Simpson, Sue Corcoran, Sue Zahra, Janet Anderson-Kaye.

Lesley Parsons opened the meeting with a welcome to all present. Lesley emphasised how valuable the work put in by group leaders is, the u3a would not exist without them.

Lesley asked if there were any specific topics to be addressed. Zoom was added to the list. EDI was discussed as a topic possibly for a separate meeting. The committee had attended a group session and found it very useful.

Emergency contact forms: there was a suggestion that these should be held by the committee. However, it was felt that they may not be accessible in an emergency. Another suggestion was that a family member may not always be the most appropriate contact in an emergency. Many families live 'up country' or may panic unduly if contacted. One leader raised the issue that a car parked, perhaps where it might be charged, if left should be remembered.

Lesley thanked those who had sent in completed questionnaires. Replies would be studied and it was planned to present the findings to the AGM in April. Lesley explained that a small sub-committee had produced a lengthy document so far.

A new Group Leaders start up pack was being considered. Members were shown how to access the current documents on the website. Lesley would circulate the first short draft for any comments.

Lesley reported that she had no response to her email concerning phone numbers shown on the website for enquiries. The meeting confirmed those present were happy to continue as before.

The meeting discussed email addresses currently showing on the public part of the website. The committee would like each group to have a contact in the form of 'groupleader@u3acarrick.org.uk' which would then be downloaded to the listed group leader. Some group leaders had set up a personal email address which they used for group use. It is not GDPR compliant to have private email addresses shown on the public part of the website. An enquiry from an interested person would go via the group email to the private group leader's address. It was explained that if the leader then replied their personal email would be shown, hence the advisability of setting one for u3a use only.

Beacon use was discussed. It is felt that one to one help is advisable for those not using Beacon as yet. Bob Williams would be happy to help.

Group registers could be downloaded via Beacon but as Bob explained, if leaders not familiar with excel, the process could be tricky. Again, help is available and there are other forms that can be used.

Group leaders were encouraged to set schedules of their meetings on Beacon.

It was emphasised that it is leaders responsibility to cancel venues as soon as possible if a meeting is not to take place and Jenny Fulleylove, the Treasurer, encouraged leaders to copy her into any bookings made, so that she does not make payments for meetings that do not take place. Some venues, such as Carnon Downs VH require a month's notice, others, such as Feock are much more flexible. A member asked if a venue list, with cost, was available. Jenny would put one in the newsletter.

Some venues, particularly Carnon Downs, had tightened rules for early arrival so to avoid extra charges care should be taken. It was noted that the internet link was unreliable at Carnon Downs.

Lesley mentioned the importance of welcoming new attendees at groups, she had heard of instances where new members had felt excluded. This was part of the EDI aspect. A suggestion was made that a dedicated welcomer could be useful.

Ric Reilly had raised concerns that as more groups were using Zoom, he was in need of some volunteers to assist, at least 4 would be useful. The committee is willing to fund if extra resources required.

There was a document relating to dementia available on the Members section of our website under 'General Members Interest'. Several groups had reported concerns. A leader questioned the use of the word 'frail' in an email, she felt 'less able' would be more appropriate.

There being no further topics raised, Lesley thanked everyone for coming and the meeting closed at 11.30