London Region of U3As

LRU3A – IT/WEB PEER GROUP

MEETING – 12th May 2025, 16.30, on Zoom

Zoom link details:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88392263297?pwd=VmVHNEdzYnZVb3cxd1NzSFZCcVVOdz09
Meeting ID: 883 9226 3297   Passcode: 760142

These meeting notes are not minutes – they don't try to capture all details discussed. But they do try to record key discussion points or actions arising.

ATTENDEES:

No	u3a NAME	REP NAME	Att	Apol.
1	Abbeywood & Thamesmead	???		
2	Barnet	Marisa Nicholls		
3	Beckenham	Liz Tarrant		1
4	Bexley	Paul Wilkins		
5	Brent	???		
6	Bromley	David Moody		
7	Crouch End & District	Julian Osley		
8	Croydon	Steve May Jenny Wilson (RT)		
9	Dulwich & District	David Beamish		1
10	Ealing	Phil Broomsgrove (PB) Jurek Narozanski		1
11	Enfield	Gaye Illsley		
12	Hackney	Angie Daly, Tony Hollingworth Hettie Roelofs		 1
13	Hammersmith and Fulham	Graham Tigg (GT)		1
14	Harrow	Kathy Westhead		
15	Havering	Brian Hudson		
16	HGS	David Powers		
17	Hillingdon	Tony Kemp	1	
18	Hillingdon South	??		
19	Hounslow	Sally Eggett		
20	Islington	Derek Harwood (DH) Vivek Nanda (VN)	1	 1
21	Kenton & District	Dick Nathan		
22	Kingston			
23	Merton	David Lusty		
24	Mill Hill	Richard Driscoll		
25	Newham			
24	Northwood	Malcolm Bentote		
25	North London	Mike Christie (MC)		
26	Norwood	Geoff Street		
27	Orpington	Roger Howe Maurice Childs		1
28	Palmers Green	Frances Halliday Colin Nesbit	1 1	

		Pat Bleach		
29	Redbridge & District	Lennart Christensen		1
30	Richmond upon Thames	David Wood		
31	SE London	Mark Serebriakoff	1	
		Martha Fox	1	
32	Stanmore District	Martin Carr		
33	Sidcup	Trevor Ford		
34	Sutton	Phil Thomas		
35	Tower Hamlets	Peter Sellars		
36	u3a in London	Shafeeq Siffiqui		
		Mari-Ange King		
37	Upminster	Richard Strauss		
38	Waltham Forest	Jane Harrington		
39	Wandsworth	Andy Carr		
40	Welling	Maria Guest-Naharnowicz		1
	Surrey Network	Ian Funnell		

AGENDA:
1. Questions submitted
2. LRU3A IT Skills Training
3. Open discussion
4. Review of Actions Arising
5. AOB

Quick recap (from Zoom Companion, not edited):
The meeting covered various aspects of managing a community organization, including location challenges, online renewals, website management, and cloud storage solutions. Discussions also focused on IT skills training programs, teaching computer skills to members, and the challenges of preparing and presenting content in a rapidly changing technological landscape. The team addressed the use of different systems for internal management and public communication, as well as the importance of effective member communication and group management.

DISCUSSIONS

1. **Questions Submitted, SiteWorks (SW)**: "I have someone who would like to take over our u3a website (she doesn't know much about websites). I don't know whether to make her an administrator or author or a user or something else?" The meeting come up with the following advice: if they are to take over as Web Manager then they need to be created as an 'Administrator'. An 'Author' can only edit or create certain aspects. An 'Editor' can only edit (not create). To create a new user, in the SW left hand member, scroll down to 'Users' then add new member details and select 'Administrator'. There can be several Administrators per site.

2. **Questions Submitted, Cloud Storage**: "What are the groups thoughts and recommendations on setting up a shared drive for important documentation for their respective u3as? We have been looking at google drive and Microsoft 365(OneDrive) shared drives but they all seem to stumble on committee members needing their own account on the respective

platform to be able to use the shared drive. How have other u3as managed to set up a shared drive and have there been any costs involved?" Several of those present had set up shared drive on the cloud for either their Committees or for members sharing a role. Some liked Google Drive, some preferred Dropbox. Yes Google Drive requires individuals to have a gmail account. But if Committee Members are set up with a gmail 'alias' account they have this already. Domain aliases used by others (but not relevant re cloud storage). Limited cloud memory storage available, but then you have to pay for more memory (which ever system you are using. See the LRU3A Shared Practice Guide for further help (but costs shown might now be out of date): Cloud Storage Options.

3. **IT Skills Training**: LRU3A are currently running their third IT Skills Training programme with AbilityNet. 5 face to face sessions, 25 places on each. Generally over subscribed by 2 to 3 times capacity. A large range of competencies present. Shows level of challenge re 'Digital Divide' for our members. AbilityNet do hold public training sessions but will also put on a bespoke session for a u3a. A couple of London u3as had organised this.   Also the national office does run regular workshops, also by AbilityNet. These are on the national website under the Learning Events tab: IT Training

   Lead on to general discussions about forms of computer training provided per u3a. Most have some form of IT support. Reminder of subjects on the LRU3A website: Sharing. Also per u3a eg Islington. Consider more linkage of these across London or nationally. Action: DH.

4. **LRU3A WebManagers PSG Meetings**: suggestion that dates are posted here. Action: DH

5. **Open Discussions, Beacon & SiteWorks Consistency**: Discussions re how people kept these two separate systems consistent, carrying the same data for eg Groups listing. All agreed it just had to be through manual effort – people communicating same data to allow both Systems to be updated.

   NOTE: Graham Trigg had asked: "the Beacon support team needs more volunteers - more in the imminent newsletter but basically testing, documentation, enhancements and training." Contact Graham if you want to help.

6. **Open Discussion, Member Use of Beacon:** discussion re, how was Beacon used. For those u3as that use Beacon (over 600), most use it for 'Membership Management' (Module 1). Some use it also for 'Group Management (Module 2) – especially for those u3as that are 'Pay As You Go' type subscription. The least used Module, for 'Finance/Treasurers' (some felt too simple, some felt too complicated). So in other words, it was used by various Committee Roles. Few u3as tried to get their members to use it regularly (for eg the 'Calendar' function). The exception being for the 'Renewal Online' function. Islington had 85% renewals online through Beacon (& hence PayPal). Easiest method (followed by BACS). Islington didn't allow cheque or cash payment. Yes Membership Secretary had to support members to achieve this objective (online renewal) by eg assisting/ reminding members what their password was; and reassuring them that they didn't need their own PayPal account – they could pay as a 'Gust' (tick box lower down the relevant Beacon page) and a credit card.

7. **Review of previous actions:** DH had checked with GT re Zoom link for the fortnightly Monday SW drop in sessions. This was / is sent to registered SW Web Managers. Also in the SW News letters – also sent to registered SW WebManagers.

8.   **Review of actions:** one remaining: DH to organise a physical meeting in due course (Spring?).
New actions arising:
- Add future dates to /LRU3A Peer Group webpage
- Consider greater sharing of IT Help material

9.   **AOB:** nothing raised.

Send any future suggestions for agenda items for future meetings to Derek.

Next Meeting:
Generally all meetings to be: 2nd Monday, every 3 months (ie next meeting: 11th August) at 16.30.