

LRU3A – IT/WEB PEER GROUP

MEETING – Monday 9th February 2026, 16.00, on Zoom

Zoom link details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81624610055?pwd=0hUb2yLCtUQ6tcjOO1mTH0OPjK4Zwy.1>

Meeting ID 816 2461 0055

Passcode 110193

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)	1	
9	Dulwich & District	David Beamish		
10	Ealing	Phil Broomsgrove (PB) Jurek Narozanski		1
11	Enfield	Gaye Illsley		
12	Hackney	Angie Daly, Tony Hollingworth Hettie Roelofs		
13	Hammersmith and Fulham	Graham Tigg (GT)	1	
14	Harrow	Kathy Westhead		
15	Havering	Brian Hudson		
16	HGS	David Powers		
17	Hillingdon	Tony Kemp		
18	Hillingdon South	??		
19	Hounslow	Sally Eggett		
20	Islington	Derek Harwood (DH)	1	
21	Kenton & District	Dick Nathan		1
22	Kingston			
23	Merton	David Lusty		
24	Mill Hill	Richard Driscoll		
25	Newham	Hilary Norton	1	
24	Northwood	Malcolm Bentote		
25	North London	Mike Christie (MC)	1	
26	Norwood	Geoff Street		
27	Orpington	Roger Howe Maurice Childs		
28	Palmers Green	Frances Halliday Colin Nesbit		
29	Redbridge & District	Lennart Christensen		1

30	Richmond upon Thames	David Wood		
31	SE London	Mark Serebriakoff (MS) Martha Fox	1	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 Carol Stilwell		

AGENDA:

1. SiteWorks – Analytics
2. Review of Actions Arising
3. Open Discussions
4. AOB

From Zoom AI Companion

Summary:

The meeting focused on discussing SiteWorks analytics usage across different u3as, with participants sharing their experiences and challenges with tracking website performance. The group then discussed alternative email marketing platforms to MailChimp due to upcoming changes in its free tier limitations, with members sharing their experiences using MailerLite and other solutions. The discussion also covered the new 'Digital Services for u3as' (DSU) initiative launched by the Trust, which will undergo a 12-week discovery phase to determine u3a's digital needs and available market solutions. The conversation ended with an update about the upcoming visit of the national Chair to London Region, including attending the London Region Chairs Forum scheduled for February 27th.

1. SiteWorks Analytics and KPI Development

The group discussed their use of SiteWorks analytics, with Mark and others noting seasonal variations with peak activity in January and September. They agreed to collaborate on establishing KPIs and metrics for comparing analytics across U3As. Current tools like Google Analytics lack comparative benchmarks. The discussion highlighted the increasing use of mobile devices for website access, with concerns raised about mobile-friendly design, particularly for tables and other content formats.

2. Review of actions outstanding: none

3. Open Discussions

WPVivid Plugin and Google Workspace

Regarding PB's first query about back up for SiteWorks: DH read out PB's query. Graham advised the WP Vivid plugin should work and mentioned that detailed instructions are available on the SiteWorks website. Graham confirmed that the instructions have been robust and stable for a while.

Derek also raised PB's a question about signing up for Google Workspace for Nonprofits, as their initial application was turned down. He planned to follow up with Francis from Palmers Green for advice on this. Mike mentioned that one of the difficulties with Google Workspace was the need to add code to the website's DNS, which might be challenging for U3As using U3A sites.

MailChimp Alternatives and Digital Trust

The group discussed the upcoming changes to MailChimp's free account, which will reduce the audience limit from 500 to 250. They explored alternative email marketing platforms, with Mike mentioning that his group switched to MailerLite, which is free and similar to MailChimp. Mark advised checking the original terms of MailChimp accounts, as older accounts may not be subject to the new charges. The group also addressed issues with MailChimp's email open tracking reliability, due to changes in email systems disabling pixel tracking. Derek mentioned a new trust initiative called DSU (Digital Services for U3As), which entered a 12-week discovery phase to determine U3A digital needs and explore available solutions.

Data Management and Communication Challenges

The group discussed data management and communication challenges, keeping contact details up to date. There is currently duplicate effort, locally and centrally. Graham raised concerns about maintaining duplicate copies. Derek also highlighted difficulties in maintaining up-to-date contact information for LRU3A. Noting that Ricky, the membership secretary, had to manually update local regional contacts. While separately all u3as have to update their contact details through the online '[Portal](#)'. Possibly the DSU project will look at this issue.

There was discussion about if a members details should be updated by Membership Secretaries or by members themselves. Derek highlight that members often forget their password.

Mike brought up a question about why renewing online on Beacon was complex, too complex. The group discussed membership renewal processes and security concerns, with Mike raising questions about how changes to member details are verified. They explored the challenges of member login method in Beacon, Some u3as have as low as 20% online renewals others are over 80%.

Council

Graham asked how the new Council was performing. Jenny (one of the London Region's Council Representatives) provided an update on her role, describing their efforts as examples, to improve the national website's mapping functionality and develop recruitment tools for committees.

AOB: The conversation ended with details about an upcoming chairs forum on February 27th, where chairs will share best practices and meet with the national chair and marketing manager.

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

Next Meeting:

Generally all meetings to be: 2nd Monday, every 3 months at 16.30 or 16.00.
11th May meeting to start at 16.00.