

West Lothian 50+ Network

Minutes of the Members Meeting – 20th May 2023 at 14 George St, Bathgate

Sue Bedford-Visser welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker. Trustees attending the meeting were introduced.

1. Speaker

We welcomed Steven Turnbull from the Foodbank. Steven was the speaker at our meeting last May and the Foodbank has been our chosen Coin Jar charity for the last year. Steven gave an update on the work of the Foodbank and invited members to visit the site of their main warehouse and produce garden at Whitehill Industrial Estate.

A number of members put down their names for a visit at the meeting. Transport will be arranged from the Hub for those that need it. *Members who were not at the meeting may put down their names with Jen at the Hub.*

£129.76 was raised via the Coin Jar and the Network has rounded this up to £150, which will be donated via bank transfer to the Foodbank.

2. Coin Jar Charity for 2023/24

Members were asked to put forward their suggestions for a charity to be supported over the coming year. The following suggestions were submitted: Young Carers, CHAS, Jak's Den, Alzheimers Scotland, MND and the Foodbank again. *Members who were not at the meeting may submit their suggested charities to Jen at the Hub.*

3. Raffle

The raffle was drawn during the coffee break. Thanks to members who bring in prizes for our raffles

4. Postponement of AGM to 19th August.

Sue spoke about the reason for this and addressed rumours that the Network is in financial difficulty, providing the current bank balance and other pertinent information relating to the Network's financial position. A number of questions were taken.

There was also discussion about the Constitution and the delay in being able to operate as a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) due to the difficulties experienced in opening a new bank account.

5. Resignation of Trustee

Willie Webster has resigned as a trustee with immediate effect from last Monday (15th May). Some implications for groups and other areas of the charity for which he had responsibility which the remaining trustees are looking into. Anne Webster has indicated her intention to step down at the AGM but remains Chair until that time. The huge contribution made to the Network by both Anne and Willie was noted.

6. Coach Trips

Heather Waddell spoke about upcoming coach trips.

There are still a few places on our coach trip to **Alnwick Garden** on **Sunday 28 May 2023**

Price £26:20, Departure 9:00am

This trip is now open to friends and family (adults)

On **Saturday 24th June** our coach trip will be to **Cairn O Mohr Winery with wine tasting** in Errol, Perthshire followed by free time in Perth. Depart Bathgate Railway Station at 09.30 am

Price £25. Booking at the Hub from Weds 31st May

7. Holiday

Heather Waddell spoke about the upcoming Glenton's "Yorkshire Gems" holiday for which there are still places available.

Monday 11th – Friday 15th September, Staying at the Corn Mill Lodge at Farnley, Leeds

DBB 5 days, 4 nights

Price £359.00 per person, Single Supplement £60 per single room

Deposit £30 payable at time of booking

Optional Glentons Travel Insurance £10, payable at time of booking. ABTA bonded for your peace of mind

The holiday includes:

- Entry to Harewood House & Gardens
- Sightseeing Skipton Canal cruise
- Excursions to Otley, Harrogate and Grassington

8. **Walking Day to Peebles 10 June** – this trip is now fully booked with all 53 seats taken on the coach.

Those that are booked - please note the earlier departure time from Bathgate railway station of 9am.

The 3 walk leaders starting their walks in Peebles have indicated that if anyone would like to join the group in Peebles by making their own way there this could be accommodated *but you must indicate your intention to do this with the Hub* or we won't know to meet you. This won't be possible for Walk 1 as you will be getting off the bus in Eddleston and walking the 9-mile route into Peebles.

9. Upcoming Events

Vanda Collins spoke about the **Choir Concert on 19th June** in Bankton Primary School in Livingston. Tickets are £5 on sale from the Hub.

Eleanor Shaw spoke about the **Seniors' Cinema at the Bathgate Cinema** on Thursday 25th May with a 10.30am start.

This month's film is Nomadland, starring Frances McDormand is about a woman in her sixties who loses everything and takes to a nomadic style of living, travelling around America in a van.

£6 film coffee/tea/biscuit. Be there before 10.30am

10. Groups

Vanda Collins spoke about the **New Whitburn Coffee group** to be to meet for the first time on Friday 26th May at 10.45am at the Hilcroft Hotel. Still time to put your names down for this new group.

Katie Ellam spoke about the new **Ten Pin Bowling Group** which met for the first time on Weds 17th May and will now meet fortnightly at 2pm.

Cost £7 for two games. Two lanes are booked but more might be available.

Still time to sign up for this group.

Italian Classes

A volunteer has approached the Network who is willing to take over Italian classes from John Walker. Michaela can provide a 10-week beginners course on Friday afternoons, 1:30 to 2:30pm at Rosemount. We have agreed a start date of Friday 2nd of June.

Capacity max 6.

Sue Bedford-Visser expressed the Network's thanks to John Walker who has been running Italian classes for the Network and sharing his love of Italy with us for several years.

Ukulele Group

Last month we were entertained by Carol and Alec who have formed a duo to take music into local care homes. Sue highlighted a similar initiative led by Eileen Lander and the **Ukulele group**. Recently they have put on a gig for residents and friends of Rosemount Court in Bathgate, with donations given to support the residents' social funds.

Two other gigs were also played recently, one at St John's Church Women's Guild and one at the Bathgate Partnership Centre. Well done to all concerned.

Last month we mentioned **Funding support for group development**. As an example, the Ukulele group fund their own equipment and uniforms but gig folders have recently been funded by the Tesco Community Fund which the Network has been able to access for this type of development.

Some discussion about the use and application of external funds in respect of group development.

It was noted that an informal **gathering of Group Leaders** was held on 18 April when trustees were able to hear at first hand how our staff team can best support the groups and their leaders. We hope everyone felt there was a productive discussion.

There were no further contributions from the meeting about groups. Sue invited groups to send in photos of group activities for use in promoting groups and the Network.

11. Volunteering with the Network

An **informal gathering of members interested in volunteering in various ways was held at the Hub on 25th April**. Subsequently Sheila Lincser is working out a rota of "meeters and greeters" to be available to chat informally to members who like to drop in (as we spoke about last month) and we have several other members who are keen to make a contribution.

12. Membership Fees

There are still some outstanding Membership Fees for 2023-2024 (were due on 1st April). A gentle reminder if you are still to renew your membership. Fee remains at the low cost of £20. The cut-off date will be the end of June at which time if fees have not been paid we will assume that you no longer wish to be a member and will remove you from the database.

13. Staff

We interviewed last week for a second **hub co-ordinator** and have now made an offer to one of the candidates who we hope will be in place on 1st June.

Leanne's temporary contract as **manager** has come to an end but she will remain to support financial administration in the Network. She is also a member and has promised to remain involved on a voluntary basis. We have interviewed one person for the manager's role and have a couple more people to see.

14. New Members Meetings

We continue to hold monthly new members meetings, and they are proving to be very popular. The most recent was on Wednesday and provided the opportunity for 14 members to meet others. These meetings are a reminder for trustees of why the Network is so important in helping others to make new connections and find companionship.

The next new Members Meeting will be on Weds 14th June, 5.30 to 7pm

15. Trustees are looking at relocating members meetings to the Legion following feedback from members via the survey— but it is booked up until September. Some compromises to be made in terms of cost etc. Discussion followed, after which it appears that the majority present at the meeting today are happy to continue to meet at the Hub.

16. AOB

The Network is a runner up in the Bathgate Procession's Jim Walker Community Award. As such, 2 members of the Network have been invited to the Oration on 2 June.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next members meeting will be on Saturday 17th June at 10.30am.

There will be no meeting in July.