



Working with



Chairs Report AGM May 21st 2016

At last year's AGM City Synergy took an important decision to join up with ESAB. I would like to start this report by thanking Daniel, Sue Fever and all the staff for the way they have made us welcome, being part of a bigger grouping gives us lots of opportunities and we will be working hard in the coming year to develop our communication of what is available

Also at last year's AGM we spent some time in three groups and I wanted to report back on these

Booking events has improved thanks to the diligence of Jonathan and I want to say a big thank you to him for this work

Iris will report on the financial position including fundraising but I am pleased to say that we are in a more stable position. I want to thank the committee for their support in this and particularly Iris. We cannot be complacent about finance and will still need to raise money through a variety of means

Recruitment of members remains a challenge, we are always pleased to welcome new members, Kevin and Yvonne having joined us this year.

This is your group and we welcome your feedback, if you have ideas of things you could do to help us continue to provide our activities and to offer our services to more visually impaired people please have a chat with myself

Starting up the monthly coffee/tea events has proved a useful step with a regular number of people attending, We have been to a number of venues through the year alternating with the Brighthelm centre, we plan to vary the day of the week some months so that those whose have commitments on Wednesdays have a chance to get along. We also want these to be an easy opportunity to welcome new members.

Aside from the coffee/tea mornings/afternoons, we have run about 16 activities during the year, looking back through these is a reminder of how much work goes on behind the scenes to provide a programme and I want to thank the committee and volunteer for their efforts through a year that has had a number of challenges.

Amongst the highlights were the trip to Middle Farm & Charleston, The Murder Mystery organised by Chris & Jonathan with a sparkling cast that kept us guessing. A Poetry and Storytelling afternoon at the Friends Centre led by Jane Trott and Liz Porter, A Fundraising Dance at Moulsecoomb, Walks to Devils Dyke and Rottingdean and the pantomime at Ropetackle in Shoreham. We also tried out Disc Golf and hope to have another session this summer

We are constantly working on the programme and want to have something for everyone, we are aware that different times and days suit different people and will try and reflect this. Amongst ideas being planned are trips to the Spa Valley railway and Penshurst Place, we will also do further disc golf and tenpin bowling as well as going to shows at the theatre and other venues. Don't forget to let us know your ideas

We are aware of the pressures facing many at this time with regards to benefits and other changes and whilst it is important we retain our focus on providing social activities we also feel a responsibility to be aware of how these affects us as visually impaired people and where we can go to get support.

These are complex issues and we want to ensure that you do not feel isolated if you encounter them. We are working with ESAB and the Fed to work out what needs to be done and how best we can respond. We want to encourage you to be confident to ask if you are in a situation of needing assistance in these areas.

As I mentioned this has been a challenging year for many of us and we have therefore appreciated more than ever the support and encouragement that has been so readily available to fulfil our programme. We look forward to another full year and to lots pf enjoyable events

Paul Gillett#

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