

NAO - National Activity Officers Report

Wow what another year. It started off with our first virtual NAGM, it was weird to not be at the hotel having the social weekend which has been so much a part of my last few years I did miss the banter but not the commute. Year two of lockdown had also led to the Spring Holiday sadly having to be postponed for another year. This also then affected the planned 80th celebration planned for June 2021

It's definitely been interesting to do the accounts as for the first time ever I was having to work out what the three venues had kept, with all three happy to postpone but keeping the deposits. I'm working through the last bits of administration stuff getting the statements forward to myself and understanding the surplus/ losses the NAGM has made since 2016.

I now have a better understanding of at least running the event at The Jacobean what the event will cost, also for the first time hopefully on the Sunday being able to BACS or give a cheque to the hotel which the bank will not bounce. I know it's a planned agenda item but maybe 2023 maybe time for a venue change.

Then came the late summer and me being fortunate enough to grab the last space on the Southern Area Center Parcs event, which was a lovely break and nice to see so many people physically after so long working from home at the Longleat site. Then was the week in Hoburne which is in October and has been pre cursor to the Spring Holiday event where me with Tina and sometimes Adrian sample the site and local area. If the entertainment crew is the same this year as last it will be a great weekend in April. Talking about caravanning holiday then came the return to Searles for WASH, it was nice to have so many groups and people to attend on what's become one of Plus's flagship events. Well done to Keith and the team.

Recent times have also been sad with us losing both Simon Good and Alan James (AJ), both men I have had the pleasure of being in the company with over my plus years and I'll be raising a glass to them both at the NAGM evening meal

I've been pleased to see groups going strong with weekly zoom meetings being organised and the variety of events you can still do on these. There has definitely been a strong community support as I'm sure as many others my year has been full of ups and downs. But to be invited to other groups and areas meeting as well as Stevenage's has been a well needed relief in the tough days experienced. It's nice to see some physical meet ups starting to happen too.

I still have a full folder of activities groups have run in the past if anyone would like some ideas of things that can be run in the future, talking about that we still have spaces for the Spring Holiday, but the caravans were confirmed to the site at the Friday of the NAGM as its now 6 weeks out, so if your booking on your be in a twin room sharing with others already booked into the double rooms. £69.50 will secure you a space. The 80ish celebration £35.00 each is still going ahead on the revised 23 July 2022 date at The Weston Hall Hotel. So what with NAGM February, Hoburne April and 80ish in July this has definitely kept me occupied but I do love doing this.

I then don't do much for the other 6 months of the year all three events at different stages keeps me ticking over, especially at the of year when I must pass them onto Katie for her independent audit.

As previous mentioned, I am pleased that the yearly Hoburne break still goes ahead with having a consistent about 40 attendees and going into its next holiday this April with almost 50 people in attendance, all Plus members. So to have 1/6 of the whole membership at an event you run is amazing. The change of venue to the Cotswolds has allowed us to see a few more of the Midlands groups members joining us this year. I must personally thank Adrian B with being the support backup with the running of the NAGM and Spring Holiday.

I would like to re-stand for the role of National Activities Officer for 2022 to 2023.

The below poem I found a few years ago I think still sums up how I think Plus works and is a positive spin on life

"From quiet homes and first beginning,

out to the undiscovered ends,

there's nothing worth the wear of winning,

but laughter and the love of friends.

[Hilaire Belloc](#)

Ben Allen
NAO
22 January 2022