

Summary of Results of Probus Questionnaire

The survey had been completed by nearly thirty members and widows of the club. It is not possible to include every comment, but the essence of the views expressed is included in this summary.

The President's Dinner. What did people think

Main criticisms were the event was too expensive/poor value; don't like the venue/parking, but some members enjoyed it

Other Comments : too formal, date crept forward , used to mark the end of the President's term

The Summer Buffet

Generally considered successful. A point was that the start time should be brought forward.

The RNLI Lunch

The main opinions were that it was too expensive, poor menu for the price, parking, and been there too often, but some members liked it.

The Holiday

Many members did not want to go to Warners again this year. Most would prefer a holiday to a hotel, with the proportion preferring a coach holiday to self-drive being approximately two to one. The maximum distance would be 2 hours self-drive or three hours by coach. Destinations such as Devon or Dorset in the West country or the Isle of Wight in the East cropped up as suggestions. Heathside Travel, Norman Allen or Highcliffe travel were mentioned in the survey. A few members commented the holiday was too cliquey. A comment was made that the holiday date had crept forward and used to be nearer the end of April, within the current Presidents Year of office.

Other Ideas for Outings and Events

Suggestions included (care necessary as Athelhampton and St Cross Alms Houses were mentioned on the questionnaire)

Athelhampton, St Cross Alms Houses, Winchester, Salisbury, Compton Acres, Bennetts Water Gardens, Poole to Swanage by boat, Downland Museum and Repair Shop, Stourhead, Beaulieu, Battersea Power station, Swindon and Railway Museum, Thursford Christmas Spectacular, Portsmouth Spinnaker Tower, Escoffier Restaurant, Dorchester Museum, Pub lunch (several suggestions), Hendon Aircraft museum, Fleet Air arm Museum, Laycock

Other General Points

Cost was important for events (many pensions not keeping pace); Age group getting older so help with transport, minimizing night driving, easy access were important considerations.

Singleton members may feel events not for them.

Finally, the diverse range of answers and comments has illustrated the impossible task of our events secretary has in trying to arrange outings and events to suit all tastes, and we should heartily thank him for his efforts and the many events he has organised on our behalf

Discussion and Recommendations from the Probus Questionnaire

The diverse range of comments arising from the questionnaire has illustrated that you cannot please all the people all the time. However, it was agreed by the Committee that we should aim to implement the majority of peoples' wishes.

Cost and value should be prime considerations when planning meals and events, and car sharing should be facilitated where possible. However, life is changing at a rapid rate and prices everywhere have rocketed in recent times and since Covid, to an extent, people need to be encouraged to participate in events.

The Events Secretary has already agreed a cream tea for the proposed visit to Athelhampton House rather than a ploughman's lunch in order to minimise the price of the event.

Singleton members sometimes feel that events may not be for them. We need to reassure them that they are indeed very welcome.

An alternative venue to the Lord Bute should be investigated for the President's dinner. The option to wear a smart suit instead of Black Tie should be given on the invitation. Alternative venues will be followed up.

The summer buffet was considered a success. However, the time should be brought forward, and it needs emphasising to some members this is a subsidized event. The President has already announced that the time has been brought forward to 1pm, and members given a breakdown of the subsidy by the club to this event.

In view of the advancing age of members and declining numbers, events that do not have too high a threshold in terms of required participants should be sought, and smaller turnouts should be counted as a success.

With respect to the holiday, a holiday to a hotel with coach travel was preferred by a significant proportion to self-drive (and rather than Warners) this year; with a maximum length of travel being up to three hours. It was felt that a coach holiday and consideration of the seating arrangements applicable at the venue would

encourage inclusivity. Companies would be approached for suitable suggestions. If numbers sufficient for such a holiday were inadequate, the possibility of including other groups such as the U3A Travel Group should be considered. The timing of the holiday could be a little later, but within the President's year.

As much notice of upcoming events and holidays should be given to avoid conflicts with members' other activities.