

LANCASTER MEN'S HUB NEWSLETTER



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LMH and the year ahead

This is an important newsletter because 2023 is going to be a year of change for Lancaster Men's Hub, so please read this article carefully. There are three main questions that have to be resolved this year, all of which will have an impact on the work and membership of the Hub.

Funding

As stated in a recent open notice to members, the services provided by Lancaster Men's Hub are currently free. These include the regular Friday Elevenses, Walking Football, Games Evenings and all the other events organised for members. This is only sustainable because the Hub receives an income stream with three sources: **Grants, donations and earnings from sales and services**, mainly from woodworking projects. Each of these sources provides broadly one third of our income, but none are guaranteed for the future. As an example, Elevenses is currently funded by one-off grants for food costs/room hire, and donations. When the grants run out in June 2023 the event will cost £80 per week to run, which is an unsustainable amount when donations are generous but unpredictable and, despite the efforts of our woodworkers, income from sales is handicapped by not having a suitable premises to produce the items for sale. In the absence of any further grants the question of charging for Elevenses and other desirable Hub activities will have to be addressed.

Membership

Related to the funding problem, membership of Lancaster Men's Hub will also be a question for discussion that needs addressing in 2023.

Membership is free, and will remain free, but it may be that we need to give members some concrete advantages if charges for some activities need to be considered. No decisions

have yet been taken but these advantages might include things like free or reduced participation in any charged events and specific members' information about forthcoming events and priority participation. Lancaster Men's Hub exists to provide opportunities for encouraging **well-being through doing**. An increased emphasis on membership rights and responsibilities could help to extend individual participation in events, particularly in Elevenses. It might also spread the benefits of working together to a common purpose to more people, whilst also taking the pressure off an increasingly small group of members. It should also be pointed out here that increased membership is a key target for the charity in its dealings with funders and the Charity Commission. It has already been decided that **non-members will only be allowed to participate in future Hub activities for four sessions** before they are required to take up the free membership; this includes Elevenses.

Premises

The question of premises has been highlighted over and over again in this newsletter and there is no need to rehearse the arguments about the urgency with which we need a workshop premises. However, the points made above highlight the fact that, without suitable premises, the Hub will struggle to outgrow its present size and effectiveness, and the success we have had up to this point may be prejudiced.

Upcoming Events

Watch out for announcements about the following events as Winter gives way to Spring!

- A new series of Games Evenings
- Diary of Men's Talks (overleaf)
- A series of walks

Don't forget that we have Elevenses every Friday from 11.00 am at the Cornerstone on Sulyard Street.

Free coffee and social drop-in.

Everyone is welcome.

Barn Owl Boxes

Lancaster Mens' Hub have been commissioned to construct three Barn Owl Nesting boxes for farmer Richard Rhodes under the "Farming in Protected Landscapes (Forest of Bowland) Scheme". We bought and cut the timber in November, but then assembly was put off until after Christmas. We delivered the



boxes to Richard on his farm, just past the Jubilee Tower, on a bright frosty day; that will boost our LMH funds by just under £200. The photo is of me, Ken Jones and Richard Rhodes himself.

Luckily I don't charge extra for the grimace! (I have since practiced using the remote control timer on my camera.)

John Wood

Games Evenings

Before Christmas the Hub ran a series of four Games Evenings on Thursday evenings, which were enjoyed by a small group of members. A variety of games were played, and refreshments were provided, making for a most convivial evening. David Smith is continuing these evenings (which



started on 19 January) but we would like to see a wider participation and more games being catered for. Why not come along to the Cornerstone at 7.00 pm for a game of Whist, Dominoes, Backgammon or any other games that you might like to suggest to David. The more participants the merrier so we can

Poetry in Motion

Over the last few months LMH member Ben Guilfoyle (aka The Woolly Hat Poet) has been running Poetry Evenings at the Herbarium on the last Wednesday of each month. These have been a great success and Ben has donated the surplus for the first three months to Lancaster Men's Hub. On Friday 20 January Ben presented the Hub with a cheque for £518, for which we are extremely grateful, and would like to wish Ben and his venture every continued success in the future when other charities will benefit from his generosity.



not only guarantee a pleasant evening's entertainment but give members the opportunity to play, and perhaps learn, new games and renew their acquaintance with old favourites. No appointment necessary, just turn up.

Diary of Men's Talks 2003

January 27

Robert Shipworth

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service

February 24

Sarah Baines

ICC Development Lead

March 31

Dr Fred Ayres

Lune Valley Bee Keepers

April 28

Kath from Adullam

Walk-with-a-Doc (amongst others)

Any Volunteers?

Lancaster Men's Hub is heavily reliant on the efforts of a small group of volunteers to keep the organisation going. Recently we have seen an increasing number of fellow-members coming forward to help out with their time and expertise, thus meeting our objective of involving all members in the running and enjoyment of the Hub. We are also approaching Lancaster University for student volunteers, and we will be attending the CVS sponsored Volunteer Fair on 23 February to offer opportunities for work with the Hub. Thanks to everyone who has come forward to help; if you want to volunteer in any capacity, just ask any one of the Planning Group at Eleveses and we will gratefully accept your help.