

TBH-U3A Summary of Responses to Member Survey (77 received)

General: Survey responses were overwhelmingly positive and constructive but there were a few issues where some response/adjustment on our part is proposed

Questions 1&2: Reasons for Joining Group & Whether Expectations Met

Of the 77 respondents, nearly all cited learning reasons for joining the group - learning new things and more about issues of interest. Only 48 respondents mentioned social reasons/meeting new people,

A large majority agreed that the Group had met their learning expectation, while a minority (30) indicated that their social expectations had been met - reflected an issue regarding the social dimension of the group which appears elsewhere in responses to some subsequent questions - especially 12 and 18 - more below on this.

This is of some concern to the Team as the social dimension of U3A groups is viewed as equally important as the lifelong learning one, so this is something that we will be following up on.

Question 3: Rating the Programme of Talks

Most respondents rated the talks programme 5 out of 5, with just 10 rating it slightly lower at 4.5 or 4, so this is a very positive response, which the Team much appreciates

Question 4: Topics of Interest to Members as Expressed in the Survey

LIT: Books, Literature & Theatre: 54

CAP: Current Affairs/Politics: 53

ENV: Environment/Gardens/Animals/: 50

ART: Art, Architecture & Crafts: 47

GEO: Travel/The World: 38

HEA: Health & Wellbeing: 37

MUS: : 36

HIS: History/Archaeology: 35

LOC: Local Issues: 33

SCT: Science & Technology: 28

TRP: Trips: 23

LAN: Languages: 21

SPT: Sport: 9

Question 5: Rating of (non-talk) Activities Engaged In

33 members responded to this question, mostly very positive about Heaney Exhibition, Glendalough, Joyce House and Drawing Class much commended and enjoyed. Responses to other questions indicate an interest in continuing, maybe expanding such activities, with some demand also for sub-groups and maybe a local project too (see Questions 6, 7 & 18).

Question 6: Suggestions for Future Events

Quite a few suggestions here which we will begin to draw upon for our 2020 programme. As the survey was carried out anonymously so we do not know who put forward various suggestions for topics, speakers, activities or sub-groups, the Team would be appreciate follow up contact with us through our group email(info@thebrayheadsua.ie) or with Team Leader Isolde.

Question 7: Readiness to Give a Talk or Lead a Group

Around 8 volunteered a talk or to lead an activity, including 2 walking tours. For follow-up on this, please contact us as propose above re Question.6

Question 8: Support for Group Climate Action

A poorly-drafted initial question on this issue lead to initially confused results but when question was re-framed and clearer, a large majority of respondents - 46 - expressed support for the full range Group climate action outlined in the question, as compared with 7 who did not.

Question 9: Communications - Meetings, Website, Group Emails & Responding to Emails

A substantial majority of responses to these questions were very positive about all forms of Group communications but 6 members indicated that group emails were too long, to which Isolde pleads guilty and will aim to reduce their lengthy a bit, whilst stressing that these emails serve as both notices and something of a newsletter, especially for members who may be absent for a while. Re communication at meetings, the main issue commented on was difficulty hearing some speakers and questions as a result of microphone-use issues or members sitting far back to hear properly, with some also indicating difficulties viewing slides from a distance. All these points are noted by the Team, who will do their best to address these concerns, whilst urging members to fill up the rows in the front/Lounge area and not block off seats to others and to try to arrive in time to secure seats in this area rather than having to sit in the Bar area. We noted that not many rated the Group website, leading to Team concerns that it is not being used to its full potential, so a reminder to members to check it out regularly

Question 10: Suggestions re Organisation of the Group

All very positive responses here.

Question 11: Rating Welcome Received

All very positive

Question 12: Rating the Social Dimension of the Group/Meeting New People

As mentioned in relation to question 1, though overall the results here are generally very positive, 22 respondents rated this below the top mark of 5 and, though most of these gave a rating of 4, 4 others rated this dimension at 3, 1 at 2 and 1 at just 1. Some commentary here and elsewhere tends to indicate that a small number of members feel a bit left out, with mention of many who already know each other, and some noting large numbers departing immediately after talks. While a clear majority seem happy enough with the social

side of things, the Team is committed to addressing this issue and, would greatly welcome ideas from members about this – particularly any who may be feeling a bit left out.

Question 13: Rating BGC and its facilities

Nearly all responses were very positive with 2 mentioning the cold during the winter (since then hopefully resolved), and a small number also weren't delighted with the quality of the coffee and tea served. The Team is reviewing this and discussing with BGC but so far we haven't identified a solution for large numbers of cups which need to be served up quickly at the same time, other than to get hot water to add to coffee/tea that may be too strong for some and noting that freshly-made coffee and tea of many kinds may be purchased at the bar for much of the year at a reasonable cost. One member mentioned the issue of access for non-drivers but it might be noted that the Team itself were concerned at the outset that this may be an issue, lifts were offered by some members but none sought them

Question 14: Membership Fee

All respondents agreed that the fee is reasonable, with 1 asking if it might be raised slightly to allow a higher-amount book token to be provided to speakers/activity leaders. In this regard, the Team has agreed the book token value from E25 by a modest E5 to E30.

Questions 15 and 16: Group Programme Schedule

Members were asked if they would prefer to stick firmly with a fortnightly schedule of meetings or to add in occasional extra meetings/activities/trips on occasional alternate Thursdays, as we are currently doing. A substantial majority expressed a clear preference for the latter, with just 10 expressing a preference for a fortnightly programme, so this is what we will continue to do

As regards holding meetings in June, again a large majority wanted to retain meetings in June, with just 8 against. However, as a second fortnightly meeting next June would not take place until the 25th of the month, the Team felt that next year at least – and without prejudice to future years, that we will hold just one formal meeting next June, though consideration will be given to organising an activity mid-month if members would like to do this.

Question 17: Benefits of Joining Group

Most respondents noted learning benefits, but just 22 mentioned social ones, again reflecting an issue previously identified for follow-up discussion by the team and some action.

Question 18: Suggestions to improve the Group

Feedback here very positive about the Group, with issues (most mentioned previously also) including more trips, outings to theatre etc, subgroups (books/literature; cinema; theatre; music) and with hearing/mic and slide-viewing issues flagged for attention.