

CHAIR'S REPORT AGM APRIL 2024

Alison Sorrell

Over the past year, the Events Team has arranged three face to face workshops for members, all held at the Barnabas Community Centre in Shrewsbury.

In June 2023 we had Christina Bachini and Lindsey Wheeler presenting the "Chris Lin Method of Creativity". In October 2023 we had a day devoted to Neurodiversity when, in the morning session, Neville Tomlinson and Karen Whitehead shared their experiences of working with and living with autism. In the afternoon Charity King shared her experience of being diagnosed with ADHD as an adult, and how the condition affects her life. In March 2024, we rounded off Forum's year with Duncan Stoddart and Scott Reeve facilitating an interactive workshop entitled "Knowing your therapeutic ground" covering the assumptions and beliefs around the subject of long-term therapy.

Since the end of lockdown, we have tried to provide networking opportunities via coffee mornings at Palmer's Café in Shrewsbury, for members to meet and exchange news. Sadly, after the first couple of events, numbers dropped off considerably, so we tried a different format. In September last year we introduced a two-hour session in the afternoon, with more structure and specific topics for discussion. Members could invite along colleagues, who were not members of Forum. The format has proved popular and is now called "Kitchen Table CPD". It is held approximately every three months. Forum pays the hire fees for a private room. Members buy their own beverages. If non-members wish to continue to attend we have to insist that they join Forum, as our constitution says that we provide events "for Forum members".

We would be delighted if members would like to highlight any of their interests or specialisms on these afternoons. Geoffrey Beatson has worked hard with the development of Kitchen Table and is keen to help anyone who feels a little shy about speaking at one of these events. Everyone who attends gets a CPD Certificate for two hours.

We hope that we can attract more members to attend our events, as it takes a lot of time and effort to arrange them. It would also be beneficial if one or two would like to join the Events Team. All time spent doing Forum work (including attending Team meetings) counts as CPD.

We appreciate it may seem too daunting to "jump in", so we welcome members who are considering joining to observe our committee meetings before deciding to

become a Team member – attending as an observer also counts towards your CPD. Feedback has been, “I had a warm welcome and an enjoyable time!”

I want to say a big thank you to Neville, our treasurer for the past seven years, who is standing down from our Team tonight. Emlyn Murr has volunteered to take on the role of treasurer and awaits your vote later in the proceedings.

Neville has kindly said he will be available to Emlyn if he needs any help as he takes over the reins.

Looking ahead, we plan to continue arranging three training/workshop events each year and four Kitchen table events, provided members think that is what they want from Forum. It has been a challenging time for all of us, and I hope that Forum has managed to keep you informed and updated during what has been a very unusual and unprecedented four years.

Feedback and suggestions from members are always welcome. It is easy to communicate with us via Anna Harlow, our membership secretary, and via our website.