

## NAO - National Activity Officers Report

Wow what a year. I started off so unexpectedly when Steve announced me as this year's NAGM 2020 recipient of the Linda Street spirit of 18 Plus award, which also came with a gift of a personal organiser. Who knew what would befall us a month later. 2020 was the first year we were able to run the event through the sole NAGM account making a surplus and payments so much easier to track. I've been working alongside James since this time and I have now have access to the full NAGM accounts to also make payments from the account as well as pay into. This should stop the situation we had the last two years of delaying the payment to the venue, thank you for the Jacobean for bearing with us whilst this was sorted. They were still happy to have us for 2021.

The role does also come with some accounting as I have worked on spreadsheets, so we have a better understanding of what the NAGM costs us to run at the hotel and with Adrians help have been able to cobble together these since our 2016 75th birthday event. 2018 and 2019 created a challenge as well as the full cost of the event, we have separate accounts to confirm the monies which went through the NAGM account solely. This then ties up with the ins and outs of Lloyds Bank NAGM bank statements. It has thrown up some learning curves for us when we pay monies in, as it's difficult to look at something 6 months later when you put a figure but not note how that was broken down. To clear up the accounts, once we had the figures sorted these monies were transferred in the main account. With this the NAGM 2020 event started with a blank slate and the account now has a national loan of £2000.00 to assist with the paying off the current year's event and deposit booking of future venues when required. From 2020 onwards will have the yearly surplus or loss added as I have been doing with the Spring Holiday Accounts.

Then Covid hit and a social club where I could visit people once a month became a no go out option. Then sadly the Hoburne holiday could not go ahead but we pressed on with changing the event to a year hence and a slight change of venue with the Hoburne group still being used but moving to their Cotswolds site. Most people decided to credit their monies a years hence, it was the first time the accommodation for the 2021 event was booked to almost capacity at 13 months before it went ahead. This unfortunately again is still up in the air but still a person to look on the positive I've managed to secure a booking for 01-04 April 2022 at the same cost of £69.50. We have been very lucky with the Hoburne group to be able to hold this cost from the third year, hence why the 6th years (5th as 2020 was cancelled due to covid) holiday is booked 15 months in advance to get the best deal I can.

I've been pleased to see groups going stong 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

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 also had contact from the ex plussers asking us to organise an event to celebrate our forthcoming 80th. Cue a hell

a lot of hard work and collaboration and after a seemly fruitless search we happen to come across a venue I'd contacted as an alternative to the NAGM for forthcoming years. The Weston Hall Hotel was contacted and success they were more than happy to accommodate us and could let us have the date we required of 12 June 2021. Adam and Tracey joined me for the visit to the venue with Adam live streaming as we went. So what with NAGM February, Hoburne April and 80th in June this has definitely kept me occupied but I do love doing this. Even though 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,

I am pleased that the yearly Hoburne break still goes ahead with having a consistant about 40 attendees and going into its next holiday this April, covid permitting. I hope the change of venue to the Cotswolds will allow us to see a few more of the Midlands groups members join us one year. I have to personally thank Adrian B with being the support backup with the running of the Spring Holiday and NAGM.

I would like to re-stand for the role of National Activities Officer for 2021 to 2022.

With the NAGM, Spring Holiday and 80th birthday to keep me busy, I'm just getting started.

A poem I found a few years ago but it 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  
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