

**Notes from the annual meeting of Alt-Sheff Collective
Saturday 25th October 2014 at Eten Cafe, Sheffield**

Attendance

Andy
Jonathan
Karen
Myke
Monika Kostera (visitor)
Trevor

Apologies

Chris
Joe
Nkululeko
Richard
Tracy

Monika (www.kostera.pl) was introduced as a visiting academic from Poland. She takes an interest in Alt-Sheff as part of her study of values-led organisations.

1. Notes of previous meeting / Review of the year

Circulated and discussed. We've been going since 2008, declared ourselves a co-operative in 2012. Inputting events is Jonathan's main voluntary activity, but it's fun with the support of the wider group. It's been a bad year personally; working hours cut to 3 days, organisation is close to collapse, but he also worked at Webarchitects just over a year – they host our website and are activists, giving an insight into co-operatives and online web security. Jonathan has also been writing the Alt-Sheff article in "Now Then" magazine for nearly 5 years.

The site receives up to 30 hits a day, averaging two minutes - i.e. real people are reading the listings / events. It's up to date on events, but the links section must contain dead links, and there has been no newsletter for ages, due to other time pressures.

2. Events submitted but refused

Everyone happy with refusals so far.

3. The "look" of the website

Changing the **slogan** discussed: Happy with how it is, perhaps change 'business' to 'businesses'.

Comments worth updating with outside sources - 'Sharrow festival says Alt-Sheff is great', etc.

Comments will be sent by email to Jonathan.

Videos Decision made to remove links to the video section, but leave it online for reference.

Focussing more on content and photographs.

Design Leave this for the tech meeting along with social media integration / image upload issues.

4. Running of the website

Discussion carried to section 7

5. Policy

The "About us" page basically OK covering this, but we should engage in an email discussion with the possibility of adding an explanation as to why we are pro-radical, alternative, ethical etc. and generally providing more information about us as a group.

6. Publicity

It was agreed that we should add share links (Twitter/Facebook, etc) to events page.

When adding an event - add functionality to automatically post to Twitter/Facebook, etc.

Add social media links to the header (Myke happy to do this).

Consider printing promotional flyer/business card to hand out, possibly at fundraising events.

7. Fundraising

We are not fully paying our website bill, only about half; standing order donations welcome.

It was agreed to add a link to donate in the Alt-Sheff email signature when messaging groups.

Add **donation** event/link/page on the site, possibly along with our actual hosting costs. (Not PayPal, but rather direct bank transfer to Webarchitects with reference Alt-Sheff - discuss in tech meeting). Linked to from the site email.

Fundraising opportunities are eagerly available via Trevor, ; shared benefit gig. Sharrow festival, or perhaps more ideally, the Diversity Festival (still in the planning stages, pub event - Trevor will put the idea forward). Requires 2/3 volunteers for staffing the door, and poster design, driving equipment (Andy, Karen and Jonathan volunteered).

Public image: Alt-Sheff promo video for about us and donate page - not necessarily with our faces, could be voiceover. Increasing awareness to the fact that we are a small non-funded voluntary group.
Offering a product - people are eager to create something as it could motivate people to donate. Such as a pdf of special events, offering a download link with a cheeky 'donate now' button.
It was agreed to focus on the pdf, then the possibility of paid printed versions and posters/flyering in local cafes, etc.

8. Other activities

Discussion carried to section 9

9. Links with other organisations

We sent a letter of support to **Sheffield Live Television**, this is now launched.

Hannah Festival Directory which covers things in the North of England - Alt-Sheff will be featured in next year's edition, in return Jonathan and Andy will distribute issues this year.

Applying to join **Co-operatives Yorkshire and Humber** - happy to apply, Myke and Andy to be nominated representatives for the email list.

Discussion about promoting **Sheffield Forum** and **Sheffield Indymedia** as other "made in Sheffield" websites. Agreed to contact Sheffield Forum re affiliating links - we are happy to promote them regardless, but if they offer some Alt-Sheff promotion in return we could make a big deal about it (possibly in the side menu).

10. Technical stuff to pass to the tech meeting later

Read through the notes, web improvements to tech meeting agenda.

Push the newsletter signup, and build automatic monthly email newsletter (Myke volunteered).

Changing Alt-Sheff logo font discussed, a little bit dated, no decision.

11. Anything else?

Monika Kostera has contacts with Polish co-operatives and anarchists, along with a 'really cool' IT groups that could be considered for free hosting. She would like to be considered for help, as an outsider, providing it doesn't change the way our group runs.

www.leedstidal.org is starting a 'hub' website for social change. As a comparison to ours, their web designers say it needs £6000 to build, from group membership subscriptions and crowd - funding, plus £60 to print 1000 business cards.

12. Next meeting; Format? Public? Gig?

No decisions.

END OF MEETING – The following list is Technical stuff to pass to the tech meeting later

Technical stuff to pass to the tech meeting

Logo: change 'business' to 'businesses'.

Comments (homepage): worth updating with outside sources – if any sent in.

Videos: Decision made to remove links to the video section, but leave it online for reference.

Add share links (Twitter/Facebook, etc) to events page.

When adding an event - add functionality to automatically post to Twitter/Facebook, etc.

Add social media links to the header (Myke happy to do this).

Add donation event/link/page on the site, possibly along with our actual hosting costs. (Not PayPal, but rather direct bank transfer to Webarchitects with reference Alt-Sheff - discuss in tech meeting).

Linked to from the site email. Also a promo video and pdf download - when made (Jonathan / Trevor / Andy).

Footer > Promote Alt-Sheff = Broken Link

Footer > RSS > Typo: RSS reader to receive updates from Alt Sheff:

Footer > contact@ opens your email browser whereas <https://alt-sheff.org/contact/> opens a form with spam-catcher (which is better, change **Footer > contact@** to this)

Admin > Add Event > Upload image doesn't work... would be good, if poss.

Do we have to SFTP images first into <http://alt-sheff.co.uk/img/uploads/> filename.jpg ?

(This location is mentioned in the Admin form)

About tab:

<http://alt-sheff.org/about/> > This website is hosted by Webarchitects [INSERT *which also offers webhosting*] in Iceland where the electricity is from renewable sources.

Newsletter tab: <https://alt-sheff.org/subscribe/> could say “Our newsletter is only very occasional, we do not send spam or pass your email address to any other organisation or person for any reason. to subscribe just insert your email address. ”

The backup, check it's working? Forbidden: You don't have permission to access /admin/backup/ on this server.