OPENING DOORS COMMITTEE MEETING

THURSDAY MARCH 12TH , 2.00PM

LYME PUBLIC LIBRARY

Opening Doors: Our mission is to be a trusted source of information and support to empower people to make connections in our community.

MINUTES

Members present: Mary Seidner, Lilian King, Greg Miller, Ariana Eaton, Kathy Tisdale, Mike James, Jeremy Crisp, Karen Conniff, Stephanie Goulde, Nancy Leake, Laura Mooney.

The meeting opened at 2.05pm. with brief news updates. Mary Seidner reported that the town nurse, Sammee Piette, will be giving a presentation at the Lymes' Senior Center "Preventing Loneliness and Staying Connected", Tuesday March 24th 10.00am. Sammee is available to speak in the mornings, and the group agreed that we would like to hear her talk at one of our sessions. 9am would be a convenient time. A discussion concerning the value of outside speakers addressing the issue of loneliness and making connections followed and it was agreed that this would be very beneficial.

Mary also reported that an L.Y.S.B. survey of mental health issues in schoolchildren showed that 28% often feel lonely, even when in groups. The highest rate of loneliness is in the 16-24 age group.

Other reports included the Lions' Pancake Breakfast and Night Giving, and a sewing group at St. Ann's Episcopal church. This group is looking for projects to share as it has a huge supply of fabrics.

The library was established as the hub of resources. The mission statement above was adopted as a unified message for all websites. The library website has established a page for Opening Doors which gives information for the project and lists all the organizations involved so far. Clicking on a name gives a direct link to that organization's website. It was recommended to list "Opening Doors" on the library's Home page and to give the Opening Doors logo to each group to add to their websites.

There followed a discussion concerning issues of identifying and connecting with lonely residents: Jeremy identified the problems facing Baby Boomers in particular as they age. They are so numerous that their needs such as home visits, social visits for carers and transportation will strain resources. We need to develop links through the mail, publicity on a wide range of media, and develop computer connections such as zoom meetings and presentations.

Rides are needed so we should explore transportation possibilities and Uber availability to help bring the house-bound to events. Insurance and security concerns for drivers and/or home visits. Can we develop partnerships to help with these resources?

Greg expressed a general need to explore ways to connect Opening Doors activities across our organizations either directly or through publicity which should target those who could benefit from them.

Tasks;

Refine the library website to give greater visibility to Opening Doors on the Home page and increase publicity. Add a welcome note.

Each organization needs to coordinate with the links from the library hub so that a resident searching Opening Doors links will easily find a reference on any website.

Search for volunteers.

Help for the hard of hearing.

Research insurance requirements and security measures for drivers.

Arrange a date for Sammee to speak to the group.

Next meeting: Thursday April 30th at 2.00pm