



Lions Clubs International District 105 CW

MEMBERSHIP IDEAS AND RESOURCES

Introduction

This document has been written to assist clubs in aspects of Membership – Gaining New Members, Retention of Members, Starting a New Club or creating a Club Branch.

Every Club should have someone who takes responsibility for Membership. However, it should be said that all Lions Clubs Members should take an interest in finding new members and all Members should make sure that their Club is a happy Club so that Members want to stay.

Where do we start?

Here are some things you could do:

- Make sure that 'Membership' is on the Agenda of your Club Meetings. Talk the topic through with your Club Members – they are the experts in your area and will have contacts and suggestions of their own
- Read through this document and take note of the advice and ideas it contains.
- Check out the LCI website – it has great resources that have been gathered from Clubs just like yours and has some great ideas to develop to suit your needs www.lionsclubs.org
- Attend trainings, workshops, forums and seminars that are organised in the District. They are led by Lions who have gathered some useful information and experience that will help you. You will also meet other Lions and learn from them as you share thoughts and ideas,
- Talk to your Zone Chair and other members of your Zone Clubs. Share ideas and support each other
- Contact the District Membership Team via the Membership Officer – email gmt@lions105cw.org.uk

Membership Recruitment – How do we get people to Join us?

There is one obvious answer to that question – Just Ask!

It's important to make people aware that the Club would welcome new Members. It may not be a fact, but it is generally accepted that very few people say yes, they want to join, at the first time of asking. Sometimes it can take a long time for the question to come at the right time – but it is important for it to be asked. "Would you be interested in finding out about joining our Club?.....We are always looking for new Members you know....." however it is worded the direct question to someone who is interested will gain a positive response.



Show that you are a friendly and sociable group of people.

Invite a potential new Member to a social gathering so you can get to know each other.

Find out what they are looking for and you will often find that they want friendship and social activities and don't want to take on Membership if it sounds like hard work!

Even if you know the prospective New Member, it is good practise to meet with them and tell them more about Lions as they might not know as much as you think they do.

Note : Asking a potential new Member to attend a meeting is no longer considered to be a good start. Much better is an initial chat over a drink in an informal atmosphere (coffee shop or pub where you can talk for a while) gives each side a chance to learn more. The Potential New Member can learn a bit more about your Club and what being a Lion is and for you can learn more about them and what they are looking for without pressure or commitment to join.

Holding a Recruitment Drive – does it work?

The simple answer to this is yes, a recruitment drive can work, but like all activities it needs careful planning and the success you have may be variable. It may work one year and not another. You may only get one or two prospective New Members, in fact if you do then that is success! Think how much your Club could grow if you got 2 new Members a year!

A Case Study of how to run a Membership Recruitment Drive using Leafletting is in Appendix 1 and a sample of the Leaflet in Appendix 2 (2 pages).

Is your Club Female and Family Friendly?

Without quoting facts and figures, we have Clubs that are predominantly or totally male. This does not represent society and isn't representative of Lions Clubs International as a mixed gender organisation.

Think about how to involve females and families into your activities. Look at making links with family groups, school PTAs, youth groups, places where families can be found. Make sure that any publicity you have shows both men and women being Lions together.

How do People find out about your Club?

Visibility is vital.

Make sure that there is always a Membership stand at every event your Club attends. How you do this could be part of your planning and discussion at Meetings. There is a stand that can be loaned from the District Membership Officer to be used for your own displays.

Display stands can be customised, leaflets, posters and other materials can be printed from the LCI website or you can make your own to publicise who you are and what you do. MDHQ can also help if you look online or phone them, Use available resources such as the #LionsGetInvolved publication. Have a prepared sheet to hand to record the contact details of anyone who shows interest in Membership.

All Logos can be downloaded from the resources area of the LCI website. Using the correct logo and colours also helps with recognition and consistency.



Link with local groups and organisations – make sure your Community know who you are and what you do.

Get into local Press as often as possible. Tell the story of how you help your Community – even if you don't get into the paper often, keep sending in articles and photos and making friends with the local reporters.

Have a Facebook Page and link that with local Community pages. Keep it updated often.

Make sure that all Lions wear clothing that shows the Lion Logo and if you have helpers offer them a tabard or some other similar clothing so that you all look part of the Club Team.

Don't forget to wear your Lions badge (pin) – be proud to be a Lion and use the badge to show it!

Advice on PR can come from our District PR Officer and our Social Media Officer.

What about the Website?

One of our main windows to the world is our Club Website. Clubs should do their best to keep these updated and not too 'wordy', Does yours have a page that talks about joining your Club? Is there a button that people can click that says 'join us' ?

It is important that anyone who is interested in joining your Club can find out more and easily get in touch. Again, think about how its worded. Some Clubs say "our meeting is at...on... and anyone is welcome". The chances of someone walking into a meeting room unannounced are not only slim – is it really desirable that this happens? Have a 'Contact us..' page on your Club website, have a freephone number (available from MDHQ) and make that public. Put contact details on everything you publish and print.

Think about suggesting that anyone who wants to know more gets in touch with ...(put a name) ...for a coffee and a chat with no obligation – the 'get out' clause for both sides.

Advice on Membership Pages for your website is available from one of our District Team so get in touch for help,

New Members – making them part of the Club

It goes without saying that Prospective New Members need to feel welcome, that they are valued and that when they join their ideas and viewpoints are listened to. A New Member will always change a Club, they will have new ideas and will want to get involved – at their own pace – in the Club Activities.

The Membership Ceremony – make this special. Make the New Member feel special and make their 'badging up' something that they will remember. Most New Members are badged up at a Club meeting, but they don't have to be. Maybe at a Charter Anniversary could be an option if it is happening at the right time, or another gathering where this can be given an important place. The Ceremony wording can be found at <https://www.lionsclubs.org/resources/EN/pdfs/me22.pdf>

which has suggestions on different ways that this can be followed or modified. New Member packs are available from MDHQ and can be ordered by phone or online. These contain certificates for the new member and sponsor as well as a badge (pin). Allow a few days for delivery.



Induction of New Members is important.

They are Lions, and over time will need to learn about the wider world of the Zone, the District and Lions Clubs International. Again there is plenty of information on the LCI website: <http://members.lionsclubs.org/EN/lions/strengthenmembership/member-orientation.php>

It is good to pair a New Member up with a Mentor, someone who will sit by them in meetings, help them with their questions and understanding, things like what a Tail Twister is and how the finances of the Club work. The Mentor should take them to events such as Zone Meetings and Club Charter and make sure that the Club is meeting their expectations. A Mentor is not the same as a Sponsor, though it might be the same person.

Give the new Member a folder containing information they need such as a copy of the Club Constitution, a Calendar of events, roles in the Club with the names of those in the roles, a place to put their Membership Certificate. You could also include a recent copy of the Lion Magazine and a District Newsletter.

Remember to find social time for the Club Members and the New Member to get to know each other more. Just a half-hour drink together at the end of a meeting can help as can other Social events where business isn't discussed.

Ongoing support of a New Member is very important too. Don't just assume that they will pick everything up. That is where the Mentor has an importance, to keep up that support and friendship and it is recommended that this 'buddying' should take place for at least a year. We know that many New Members leave their Club after 2-3 years so making sure they are happy is important for retention success.

Retention – how to we keep our Members?

We can't argue with the facts – very many Lions leave their Club within the first 3 years. So why – and how do we stop it happening?

Sadly, many find that joining their Club does not give them what they expect – the chance to be with friends and make a difference. They might say that there isn't a Team Spirit and that their ideas are not listened to. They might be given too much to do, or too little, which again shows that they are not being listened to. This is why support and Mentoring is so important, so that there is someone who is looking after a New Member and can find out what is going wrong and act on it quickly.

Is your Club a Happy Club? Have you ever asked?

We can say that Lions who attend and join in are happy, but they may not be. So ask them. More importantly, ask those who don't attend and might be feeling unhappy. There is questionnaire available on the LCI website, <http://www.lionsclubs.org/resources/EN/pdfs/me15b.pdf>

which can be done anonymously and the results analysed to find out how your Members think of your Club and their Membership. There are also documents that will help you work out the results of the survey and if you need further advice get in touch with the District Membership Team. Your Zone Chair can also help with this.



What else could you do?

Use this checklist to see if there are some useful ideas here for your Club :

- Pair new members with long-term members as co-chairpersons on committees. They will each benefit from the experience.
- Ensure your club meetings are interesting and don't go on too long.
- Always have an agenda and keep to that agenda in meetings. Do not get side tracked by items which creep into the discussion.
- Use Sub-committees that can hold their own meetings and then report to business meetings
- Keep the FUN in fundraising, community service activities and meetings to get members interested and involved. You can still accomplish your goals while keeping the process lively and fun.
- Give praise freely, and regularly to all members who deserve it!
- Make sure members know you care about them. If they start missing meetings or are becoming less involved in activities, find out why. Maybe one Member could act as Almoner to keep an eye on the health and welfare of other Lions.
- Encourage input from all of your members regarding everything you do. Especially ask new members for their ideas and input. They may have some fresh, exiting thoughts, and this will show that you are interested in their opinion – AND be prepared to act on their ideas, even if it's something you have tried before.
- Ask those that have benefited from your club's service to speak to your club.
- Don't let activities and fundraisers become stale. Make sure that your club's activities are still relevant for your community and your members. Try something new.
- Encourage your Members to visit the meetings of other Clubs. These visits will introduce your members to fresh ideas and events.
- Work together with the other Clubs in your Zone, help each other out
- Encourage Members to attend District Convention. This event will inspire and encourage you and your members.....guaranteed! You will learn, hear new ideas and make new friends in Lions.



Starting a New Club or Club Branch

To Start a New Club or Club Branch you will need to have someone willing to support this new Project. This would be someone from your Club who is willing to guide the new Club, attend their meetings and offer their support both to the new Club Officers and in their Service Activities. We call these Lions 'Guiding Lions' and there is training available to help them to understand what the role is all about. The training can be done online and the information about it is at : <http://members.lionsclubs.org/EN/districts/district-governors/guiding-lion-program.php> where the online workbook and more information on what to do can be found. For more help on this, there is our Leadership Officer Team headed up by our GMT Leader who will be more than happy to offer help and advice. Email glt@lions105cw.org.uk

For many Clubs, starting a New Club or Club Branch is something that they have not done for many years – if at all. There are several steps to go through and many of these are summarised in Appendix 3.

The full information on this is found at <http://www.lionsclubs.org/resources/EN/pdfs/tk1.pdf> and the pages on the LCI website have plenty of advice and guidance. However, it would be wise to talk to the District GMT Coordinator – New Clubs, who can offer advice, support and guidance. If you involve your GMT Coord. from the outset you will find the process much easier and you will have the backing of the District behind you in your efforts.

Last but not least – money

Please remember that all Membership activities have to be paid for from a Club's Admin funds, not charity monies.

That does not mean that money cannot be raised by Members for a Club Admin account, however it must be made clear that this is the purpose – to keep the Club going and not to go to Charities.

So, in order to have funds for Membership uses it is important that a Club has money available in its Admin. Account.

How can a Club increase its Admin Account?

There are several different ways in which funds can be raised to support Clubs Admin accounts.

£ Tail Twister fines are the most generally used – Members 'fined' for things that might go wrong in a meeting for example.

<http://lions100.lionsclubs.org/EN/media/touchstone-stories/maintaining-culturefun/91-lions-fun.php> tells you more about the story behind this tradition.

£ Raffles are also often used to raise Admin funds.

£ Some Clubs have a social event

£ Other ideas? It would be great to hear them – please email to glt@lions105cw.org.uk



Appendix 1.

Leafletting: A Recruitment Drive

Leafletting for a Recruitment Drive requires careful planning. There are a number of examples of Clubs using poor leaflets and not properly considering the where, how and when.

Key points;

- The leaflet design needs to focus more on asking about what the reader might want, rather than “we need you”.
 - a good size is A5, 250 gsm, glossy, double sided, to give it a quality feel.
 - Agree spending at a Club meeting to include drinks/food. Plan ways to offset costs e.g. raffle.
 - Choosing the right event to invite potential Members to attend is very important. One Club, in January held a “thankyou social” for helpers/volunteers/friends of Lions. This is an ideal type of event to get potential new Members to attend as it does not feel like a membership drive. This can become an annual event. - The place date and time for the event matters; parking, food, drinks, ambience, etc.
 - Choosing the areas to leaflet is also important. Target newer build areas and consider the likely demographic of the area. Be realistic- assess the number of houses in the areas. Divide the target areas into blocks and rota the leaflet posting between Club Members.
 - Order relevant quantities of leaflets.
 - Record areas leafletted.
 - The Timing for leafletting matters. Somewhere between 10 – 14 days prior to the event. Some say its best to leaflet on a Sunday when there is no post.
 - Timing for putting on Facebook 14 days prior to the event with reminders as the date approaches.
 - For the event itself decide what to do; Membership table with various info, including contact sheet to record details of potential new Members, Pop-up Banners, posters, Welcome banner. Direction arrows outside the room. What type of food/drinks?
- Assign specific Members to talk to new comers and record their contact info. All Members present to circulate and chat to those attending. Have an icebreaking activity, like skittles. Very brief welcome/closing speech. Tell potential new Members next steps and engage Membership process.



Appendix 2

XYZ Lions Club

Looking for something to get involved with
in and around XYZ?

- Something fun and enjoyable?
 - A way of putting something back into your community?
 - A way of making a difference for others – and for yourself?

Do you realise there is already a group of men and women in XYZ who can help you find this?

Come along, enjoy a complimentary drink and nibbles and find out more about XYZ Lions Club.

Saturday January 28th 7.30pm.

We are friendly people of different ages who enjoy putting something back into the community.

We aim to help others, hold fundraising events, share social events and have fun while doing it!

turn over



Appendix 2 (cont)

We support young people; the elderly and the needy.

We are keen to support projects that are connected with sight. This includes Diabetes awareness and collecting unwanted spectacles for recycling.

Lions Clubs are non-political and can respond quickly in emergencies in both the UK and abroad.

Club Members join in Community events and get to know other like-minded people, and have some fun whilst doing so.

Alone we can do something – together we can achieve so much more.

Do you have YOUR own ideas about how your community could be improved?

XYZ Lions Club is always looking for new Members, men & women and is inviting you to our open evening. Come and meet us, without any obligation:

Saturday January 28th at 7.30pm.

The XYZ Inn, The Avenue, XYZ , XY99 9ZX

Please feel free to bring a partner or friend if you wish. Contact us with any questions and for further details.

Please let us know if you can come, or just turn up on the night. See you there?

Phone: Nick 0845 000000

Email: xyz@lions105cw.org.uk

Website: www.xyzlions.org