



Probud Membership Engagement Tactics

The Ashford Probud Club Committee asked a small group of members to review how to improve member engagement and as a result would like to make the following recommendations to its members.

1. This is an ongoing process and therefore a member engagement & recruitment sub committee should be created, made up of an ad hoc group of club members to meet as and when required by the Probud Club Committee.

2. The following priorities have been identified for the club
 - 2.1. **Welcoming New Members -**
 - 2.2. **Retention of Existing Members**
 - 2.3. **Recruitment of New Members**
 - 2.4. **Membership Renewals**

Welcoming New Members - Creating a great experience



It is recommended that we have a standard welcome process which should consist of

1. **A Welcome Pack** containing all the information members should know including;-
 - 1.1. Information on dining booking and coffee mornings.
 - 1.2. Perks such as a birthday drink.
 - 1.3. An updated Privacy document (how we use & store members personal data).
 - 1.4. A consistent Probud name badge (we currently have at least 3 versions).
 - 1.5. A free Probud tie or ladies brooch.
2. **Allocating a Committee member to act as the new members sponsor** so that they always have a personal point of contact and take the time to welcome them for their first few meetings.
3. **Giving new members a chance to introduce themselves at the next meeting.** This can be done by either the new member, the person introducing them to the club or their sponsor saying a few words about them, their family and work background.

Welcoming New Members - Other Recommendations



1. **Where we have had a number of members join at one time**, as we have recently, we should hold a welcome event for them and their partners.
2. We should constantly review our **membership application form** to keep it as simple as possible whilst capturing all relevant information. In particular, capturing previous work experiences as many clubs do, would be very useful.
3. **Review the process of subscription fees** for new members to avoid the cliff edge approach where a new member who joins in December pays a full fee for a part year whereas someone who joins in January doesn't. A pro-rata approach would be more appropriate.



Retention of Existing Members

1. **We need to ask what members want by using electronic (email) & paper questionnaires**
 - 1.1. **How can we welcome new members?** To see if we have missed any ideas?
 - 1.2. **Which Communication methods should we use?** What do you currently use? What would you like Probus to use e.g email, website, Facebook, texts and Whatsapp?
 - 1.3. **How should we use our website?** To communicate with existing members or to attract new members or both?
 - 1.4. **What would you like more of and what would you like less of?** Events such as coffee mornings, lunches, holidays and other outings, would you be interested in gaining new skills e.g. a workshop on technology such as the internet and computer tools?
 - 1.5. **Would you be interested in purchasing Probus merchandise** from the club? such as additional ties, lapel badges or brooches, pens etc.
 - 1.6. **Would you like to use alternative payment methods to cheques?** We would like to gauge opinion on what methods you would like to use.

Other Recommendations for Existing Members



2. **Ensure we only maintain one membership list** as we appear to have a number of versions. This is important not only as “one version of the truth” but various versions on computers and paper are highly likely to breach current Data Protection Regulations.
3. **We should review of our Privacy and Data Protection policy for members** to ensure we are adopting appropriate standards and covering both communication methods and storage of members data e.g. addresses & telephone numbers both digitally on computers and also on paper lists.
4. **Happy Birthday!** The club would like to make sure we wish all members happy birthday at the appropriate luncheon meeting and buy them a birthday drink.

Recruitment of New Members



We are currently below our club membership target of 65 and in addition we need to recruit approximately 5 members a year to cover turnover the committee would like to

1. Ask all members for recruitment ideas.
2. Ask all members, including members who are moving away, or are now too ill to attend, if they can refer any prospective new members.
3. If we decide that we should use our website to attract new members then we may need to make some changes to optimise it to drive new memberships.
4. Create a Recruitment Tactics Plan - A toolbox of ideas we can trial to increase recruitment.



Member Engagement at Renewal Time

How do we make sure we have a slick process for members & the club

Recommendations

1. We should make it as simple as possible for current members to stay involved. For example would Members like to pay by Standing order or Direct Debit?
2. We should send out timely reminders.
3. We should make sure we contact any cancellations to understand why someone is leaving.

Recruitment Tactics - A toolbox of ideas we can trial to increase recruitment.



1. We should brand our communications with clear messaging about our purpose & values and use it in all membership related materials.
2. Put up flyers - we could design and distribute one-pagers and flyers on poster boards at popular meeting spaces within our community, such as our local library branches, community and recreation centres, e.g The Ashford Gateway in Church Rd.
3. Can we approach our own venue Sandyacre to see if they would be happy for us to display a poster or flyers on the club. We could ask them if we could put up a Probus wall plaque.
4. Placing ads in local media, we currently advertise in one of the Village Directory magazines but not all of them, should we continue (it's free) and if so do we need to refresh the design & ensure all of the Village Directories that service the Ashford Area have the ads?
5. Local papers are often looking for stories, how about asking them if they would be interested in reporting about a recent event or holiday with a photograph.

Recruitment Tactics Continued



6. Share Member's Stories with the Media, This is a good way to communicate what we're doing with potential members, e.g. funds raised via the President's Charity.
7. Advertise the club in the local media
 - 7.1. KCC have a dedicated page on their website dedicated to advertising clubs and societies. Why don't we add Ashford Probus club?
 - 7.2. "Ashford for You" is delivered to homes throughout the borough. Can we get a mention?
 - 7.3. "inyourarea.co.uk" is a website that advertises events & clubs based on postcodes, could we advertise Probus. Tenterden Probus club are on the www.mytenterden.co.uk website.
8. Reach out to organisations who give advice to people nearing retirement, e.g. Local Government, the Civil Service, the Police & local employers, do we have contacts among our membership?
9. Partnering with similar organisations, we already have good links with Ashford Rotary, what other organisations could we establish links with to increase membership, run joint events etc.