

# **Group Leader's Guide**

## **Holmes Chapel & District u3a**

This guide is the property of Holmes Chapel and District u3a and should not be copied without the express permission of Holmes Chapel and District u3a.

Updated: January 2023

Terry Dykes and David Wilcox

Reviewed and Revised: Barbara Reeves and Keith Stevens

Approved by Committee: 05 April 2023

## Table of Contents

Introduction	4
u3a Principles	5
Holmes Chapel & District Code of Conduct	5
Background to Our u3a	6
Communication	6
What does a Group Leader do?	7
Venues and Risk Assessment	8
Accidents and Incidents	9
Managing Members	9
Finance and your Group	10
Inclusion	12
Safeguarding	12
Data Protection	12
Emergency Contact Information	13
The role of Group Co-ordinator	14
Ideas for a New Group	14
Members Enrolment into Groups:	15
Appointing New Group Leaders	16
Scout HQ and u3a Office	17
Appendix 1 - Risk Assessment Template	18
Appendix 2 - Disclaimer	19
Appendix 3 - Accident Reporting Form	20
Appendix 4 – Procedure for Dealing with Non-Attendance at Group Meetings	22
Appendix 5 - Expenses Form	25
Appendix 6 - Registration Guidelines 2022	26

## **Introduction**

Thank you for undertaking the role of Group Leader (GL) within our u3a, which we hope you find both interesting and rewarding.

The Group Leader plays an essential role in enabling our u3a to offer activities to our members; indeed, for many u3a members, the Group Leader is the main contact they have with the organisation.

This Handbook has been produced to provide you with a range of important information to help you fulfil your role safely and effectively. It takes account of the rules and procedures that have been agreed by the u3a Committee and the Third Age Trust.

As you may already know our u3a (like all other u3as) is a registered charity and, as such, we are at all times required to comply with a number of legal and statutory provisions.

These legally enforceable provisions have been incorporated into our constitution, policies, rules and procedures. They are there to ensure that both collectively as an organisation and, where applicable, as individuals we are made aware of these responsibilities.

In later sections of this guide, you will find detailed information about your role, the procedures that specifically impact upon your tasks, and the functions of our IT systems.

If these requirements change, you will be consulted and made aware of all such changes, and provided, as appropriate, with additional documentary information and, where necessary, workshop training.

The main purpose of these procedures is to ensure that we can effectively operate groups, control our financial dealings and protect members' personal information. Where these goals affect the Group Leader, we will always endeavour to make any such rules and procedures both simple and effective so that, as far as possible, they minimise the day-to-day impact on your role.

The Handbook is provided on-line, which means it is easy to replace updated sections or add additional new information.

## **u3a Principles**

The u3a movement is non-religious and non-political and has three principles

### **The Third Age Principle**

- Membership of a u3a is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full-time employment has ceased.
- Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a u3a.
- Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a u3a can do so.

### **The Self-help Learning Principle**

- Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; by the members, for the members.
- No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.
- There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all u3a members.\*

### **The Mutual Aid Principle**

- Each u3a is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the u3a movement.
- No payments are made to members for services rendered to any u3a.
- Each u3a is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.
- Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the u3a movement.

\*It is a u3a principle that teachers/tutors are not paid. At Holmes Chapel & District, the Committee has agreed to pay tutors only when qualified instruction is considered necessary for health and safety reasons. Such tutors may not be members of any u3a.

## **Holmes Chapel & District u3a Code of Conduct**

Members of Holmes Chapel & District u3a must, as stated in the membership application form:

- Abide by the Principles of the u3a movement.
- Always act in the best interests of the u3a and never do anything to bring the u3a into disrepute.
- Abide by the terms and conditions of the constitution.
- Treat fellow members with respect and courtesy at all times.
- Comply with and support the decisions of the elected committee
- Advise the Committee of any change in your personal details

## **Background to our u3a**

The u3a movement originated in France and arrived in the UK in 1982. Within the UK there are over 1,000 u3as with over 400,000 members.

Our u3a came into being after the first Holmes Chapel Parish Plan survey, around 2010, which identified a low level of social/interest groups at that time. The formation of a local u3a was suggested.

During 2010, a u3a Foundation Committee was established to identify the requirements for the formation of a u3a and the potential activity venues within the area. In April 2011 our u3a went "Live".

Since that time, we have grown rapidly. As of April 2023 we have 780 members and more than 70 vibrant activity groups, including an Out and About group attending theatre performances and visiting local attractions. In addition, we offer regular workshops.

Organizationally, our u3a is run by a Committee, with the active support of Group Leaders, Deputy Group Leaders, and a large number of members who take on many tasks, some long-term, others on an ad hoc basis. We are all volunteers.

## **Communication**

We endeavour to maintain good communications across areas of our u3a - to and from members, Group Leaders and Committee members.

We circulate a monthly newsletter to all members and hold monthly meetings at local venues where, in addition to invited speakers, members have the opportunity to gather and talk directly to Committee members. Details of upcoming monthly meetings and a copy of the most recent newsletter can also be found on our website.

Some of our members (albeit a small minority) are not able to access email or our website content and we take steps to ensure that other means of access are provided. The Newsletter team hand-delivers important information of a timely nature.

The Group Leader also provides a vital communication channel, both within the group and also to and from group members and the u3a Committee.

## **What does a Group Leader do?**

As the title suggests, a Group Leader leads an activity group.

In some cases, this will mean actually determining, preparing and delivering direct input and leadership to support the Group's activities. You will be the "expert" or "teacher" passing on to members the benefits of your skills and knowledge.

However, not all Group Leaders will be equipped to act as the "expert" or "teacher" because the activity requires a specially trained and/or certified instructor to lead members safely throughout the activity. As an example, Zumba, because of its high physical energy content and the need to be aware of potential health/injury risks if undertaken incorrectly, needs to be led by a qualified instructor.

In both the above cases the administrative aspects of the role of Group Leader remain your responsibility. These additional tasks ensure that the Group is organised and operates in line with the requirements agreed by the u3a Committee and help ensure the protection and safety of participating members.

Please remember: The Group Co-ordinator is always available to support you in these roles.

Among your responsibilities are:

- deciding the venue to be used by the group.
- carrying out and reporting a Risk Assessment of the venue before any formal contractual agreement is made with the venue. (Appendix 1)
- liaising with the Group Co-ordinator to make the formal agreement regarding the venue hire.
- maintaining the Group's web page.
- maintaining contact with members of the group.
- maintaining a register of members attendance at group activities.
- advising and reminding group members periodically as to the venue's fire and evacuation routes and assembly points.
- discussing and agreeing with group members what costs (if any), in addition to venue hire, need to be accounted for within members fees.
- following on from the previous point, the Group Leader, in discussion with the group members, will need to agree the frequency with which fees are to be paid by members.

- collecting and banking of monies collected.
- setting up and subsequent tidying away of any venue equipment and facilities used in the group's activities.
- recording any incidents relating to accident or the likelihood of an accident.
- reporting to the Group Co-ordinator if a member decides to leave the group or is unable to attend the group for a lengthy period.
- Reporting to the Group Co-ordinator any incidents resulting from frictions or tensions within the group that the Group Leader feels unable to deal with and that call for intervention from the Committee, for example, breach of u3a Principles or our u3a Code of Conduct.
- reporting if a member dies or becomes seriously ill (and so unable to attend group activities for a period)

The Group Leader, however, does not have to do everything alone.

It is recognised that, as Group Leader, you might of course need some help to complete all these tasks. Some of the above tasks could therefore be delegated to another member of the Group who is willing to take on the role - and who has appropriate knowledge/skills.

It does still, however, remain the overall responsibility of the Group Leader to supervise these members activities - for example when someone volunteers to set up and clear away the venue used for the group's activities.

Where delegation is thought to be appropriate, please first discuss and agree any such actions with the Group Co-ordinator before they are adopted.

There are, however, some duties which must remain the direct responsibility of the Group Leader - the collection and banking of money, accident reporting, maintaining the group register, and managing members who persistently fail to attend group meetings.

### **Venues and Risk Assessment**

Whilst the Group Co-ordinator can help with information regarding potential local meeting venues, the selection of a venue is entirely down to the Group Leader to determine.

In choosing a venue the Group Leader will need to consider a number of things:

- What is the maximum number of members envisaged for the group?
- Is the venue large enough to accommodate the maximum numbers expected and any requisite equipment needed?

- Is the venue located within easy travelling distance of members?
- Is the venue accessible to people with mobility issues or other challenges?
- Are there easily accessible toilet/washing facilities at the venue?
- Is there adequate car parking available, or is there public transport servicing the venue?

Group Leaders will need to carry out and record a Risk Assessment for the proposed venue to confirm with the Group Co-ordinator and feed back to prospective members of the group. This will help members to decide if they feel able to attend the group sessions or events in the chosen venue. You will be guided through the process by following the questions contained in the u3a Risk Assessment form (Appendix 1, also available on our web site: Log in – More – u3a Forms – Risk Assessment Template). The completed assessment can be included as a linked pdf document on the Group web page.

Group Leaders should also make their members aware of their own responsibilities by drawing their attention to the Holmes Chapel and District u3a Disclaimer (Appendix 2, also available on our web site: Log in – Policies and Guidelines – Disclaimer). It can be included as a linked pdf document on the Group web page.

### **Accidents and Incidents**

No matter how well a Risk Assessment has been carried out, an accident or potentially dangerous incident can occur during a group activity.

If any such accident/dangerous incident does occur during one of your group meetings it is essential that, as soon as any necessary medical/first aid responder is arranged and attends, the Group Leader reports the occurrence to the Group Co-ordinator as soon as possible and completes the accident/incident form.

The Accident/Incident Form with accompanying action flow chart is available as Appendix 3 a and b, also available on our web site: Log in – More – u3a Forms – Accident Form).

### **Managing Members**

When group members consistently fail to attend meetings this effectively blocks potential members on the waiting list from joining the group. In addition, many groups have to pay the costs of room hire or tutors and it imposes an additional burden on the attending members to cover these costs if the non-attendees do not pay. (Note: all members accepted into a group are expected to pay any fees, regardless of whether they attend.) Under certain circumstances, it may become necessary to remove non-attending (dormant)

members from the group. The procedure is explained in Appendix 4 – Procedure for Dealing with Non-Attendance at Group Meetings and can be found on our web site under the Policies and Guidelines tab.

## **Finance and your Group**

As a registered charity, we have to ensure that in all financial matters we are transparent and follow at all times the rules and procedures agreed by the u3a Committee. These rules are basically good housekeeping and have been developed to make matters as simple as possible for Group Leaders to follow.

The Finance Policy can be found on the web site under the Policies and Guidelines tab. Section 4 is the most pertinent section.

## **Group activity costs**

All groups must be “self-financing”, meaning that each group is responsible for covering all costs associated with the running of the group activities.

These costs could include, for example:

- Venue costs - the hiring of a room.
- Equipment costs - the hiring/use of specialised equipment that cannot be provided from amongst the u3a’s range of Assets.
- Consumables, for example photocopying/printing of material, provided by the Group Leader. Note: The Third Age Trust provides us with copyright cover for fair use copying.
- Instructor costs\* - the cost of providing a qualified instructor to lead the group’s activities (including any associated travel costs).
- Visiting Speakers/Artists\* - if the group wishes to invite a speaker/performer to attend a group activity session then all associated costs including travel costs would need to be funded by the group.
- In the case of the “Out and About” group, meeting the costs should include transport costs for members of the group to attend venues/performances and the cost of entrance/performance tickets.

*\* These costs need to be referred in advance to the Treasurer who will be responsible for their review and payment.*

Therefore, when starting a new group or recommencing activities in an existing group, you will need to establish these costs and decide how these fees are to be collected from group members.

Some groups prefer to budget and immediately collect group members fees for the whole year (notionally from September to the following August) based upon the number of times the group will meet and the various costs associated with those meetings.

Other groups prefer to budget and collect group members' fees over a number of shorter periods - say every three months.

Still others may decide to agree the budget and then collect fees from members at each individual session as it occurs.

However your group chooses to budget and collect it is important that:

- all costs have been identified and are fully covered by the fees collected from group members.
- an accurate list of all participating members is maintained of the amount(s) and dates they have paid fees.

Group Leaders are members of the group and pay fees

- all members who have applied to and been accepted into a group are responsible for payment of fees whether or not they attend; otherwise, the group may have a deficit.
- all monies collected are paid into the u3a Bank Account as soon as possible. Following the closure of the Barclays Branch in Holmes Chapel, cash and cheques can be paid in at the Post Office. Each group will be provided with an individually numbered deposit card for paying in cash and a "paying in" book and deposit envelopes for paying in any cheques. A small (£20) "float" can be retained within the group, for example for refreshments at the start of the next year.

### **Under- or Over-funded Groups**

For accounting purposes, each group should be self-financing and aim to break even by the end of the year, i.e. by 31 August (which is a long-standing practice). Existing group members are responsible for any deficit, which should not be assigned to new members of the group starting in the following September. Likewise, any new members should not be beneficiaries to any surplus accumulated by the previous year's group members.

Most groups manage to "balance the books" and break even, or come very close. If a group creates a surplus, members can of course decide to spend it as they choose before 31 August.

In cases where Group Leaders can forecast a deficit, or intentionally create a surplus that they wish to spend in the next group year, they should contact the

Treasurer and the Group Coordinator at the earliest opportunity to arrange appropriate management. The u3a Committee has agreed to consider roll-over of these funds if a request is made to the Treasurer.

### **Travel expenses**

Normally, travel expenses for Group Leaders are covered only if the Group Leaders travel on u3a business approved by the Committee. In such cases you should contact the Treasurer, in advance, to discuss and agree the costs involved. If approved, the Treasurer, will require the completion and submission of an expense claim form (Appendix 4, which can also be downloaded from the u3a web site: Login > More >u3a Forms > Expenses Form).

### **Inclusion**

Our u3a aims to be inclusive in all aspects of our activities. As a Group Leader it is important that you try to make your group activities, wherever possible, accessible to all potential members who have life challenges or limitations. Where members of our u3a need to be accompanied by carers in order to be able to participate in an activity, the carers too will be covered by our insurance, provided that they do not attend that u3a activity other than as a carer (unless of course they are also members of our u3a). It is important that you be aware of any particular personal requirements so as to be able to maintain communication and inclusivity with all members. For those members who cannot access our web site and email functions, you could ask for someone within your group to act as a "buddy" to ensure that information is received by all members. You can find our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy on our web site under the Policy and Guidelines tab.

### **Safeguarding**

Our u3a has a duty of care towards all members but does not hold any statutory authority. Matters of concern will be reported to the relevant safeguarding authorities and charity regulatory authorities, as appropriate. Safeguarding includes incidents of abuse between members, concerns regarding abuse or neglect that a U3A member may be experiencing outside of the U3A, health related issues, or previous or pending criminal convictions. Any concern should be reported immediately to the Group Co-ordinator who will bring the matter to the Committee for action. You can find our Safeguarding Policy on our web site under the Policy and Guidelines tab.

### **Data Protection**

Like all members of our u3a you will be given access to the u3a Web system that we use to hold members' records and other important documents, records and information. Our u3a Members give their personal details with the understanding that these will be protected and not shared with any other non-designated third party without their prior consent. You can find our Data Protection and Privacy Policies on our web site under the Data Protection and Privacy tab.

As a Group Leader your access to the system will be extended and will also include:

- Access to the Group's web page where information about the Group, its activities, meeting dates, times, venue, etc. are held and can be then viewed by Members interested in joining your Group.
- Access to lists of the members wishing to join your Group and members who have already joined your Group, together with their preferred method of contact (in some cases including telephone numbers).
- Access to information about the Group finances is currently available only for Out & About and Theatre Groups. For other Groups a request to the Treasurer would be necessary to get a listing of income and costs in the Group year.
- Access to the u3a based email facility whereby you can easily contact group members via email, allowing you to choose to send emails to an individual group member or all members at the same time.
- Access to relevant u3a standard documentation such as User Guides and Policies.

Group Leaders will be given details and step-by-step guides (with illustrations) that explain the use of u3a Web activities.

## **Emergency Contact Information**

As Group Leader, you should encourage group members to inform you of any health-related issue that may affect their ability to participate in the Group or impact their safety or the safety of others.

If members have not already done so, you should encourage them to provide emergency contact information (name and telephone number of family member or friend) in case they are taken ill or suffer an accident while participating in a trip or activity.

According to Holmes Chapel & District u3a Data Protection Policy, Clause 1.7, a member's agreement to provide such information will authorise the Group

Leader to disclose that information should it become necessary, for example to health-care professionals who might be called to attend and to family or friend.

## **The role of Group Co-ordinator**

The Group Co-ordinator provides support and guidance to all Group Leaders. This encompasses such matters as:

- Establishing the viability of setting up a new Group.
- Making formal making contractual arrangements with venue providers once the Group Leader has completed the Risk Assessment.
- Creating each year an 'outline' Group web page that you, as the Group Leader, will then complete with the specific information relating to your Group activities - such as setting the dates and times when the Group will meet.
- Providing the first point of contact for Group Leaders who have identified an issue/problem that they are unable to resolve themselves- for example help with trying to accommodate u3a members with life challenges/limitations, resolving conflicts within the group. Such issues may be referred to the Committee.
- Working with Group Leaders to determine annual group enrolment status and procedure.
- Reviewing with Group Leaders ideas to further improve existing procedures or the functionality of the web site, or ideas for new groups, which will be referred onwards to the u3a Committee.
- Arranging workshops with Group Leaders to introduce new procedures or requirements. Group Leaders are expected to be willing to attend any such training activities, subject to these being made available at mutually convenient times.

## **Ideas for a New Group**

Ideas for a new Group can come from a number of sources; members of an existing Group wanting to do something else, a member's bright idea for a new Group, or even an idea put forward based on something seen or heard about at another u3a.

Irrespective of the source of a suggested new Group, as an initial step, the Group Co-ordinator needs to be given some firm evidence that:

- a new Group would be supported by members joining
- a Group Leader can be identified who has indicated willingness to serve in that capacity.

The Group Co-ordinator will then determine the actual level of interest across the wider u3a membership, talk to the potential new Group Leader, and assist with setting up the group.

### **Members Enrolment into Groups:**

Whilst group activities in some cases continue throughout the year, our u3a year notionally runs from September to August.

In 2022 the Committee approved new guidelines for group enrolment that offer a simple, flexible, and adaptable system for all our members, both current and new. You will find the full document "Registration Guidelines 2022" at the end of this guide - Appendix 5 and on our website under the Policies and Guidelines tab.

Groups will be classed as either "automatic rollover" or "periodic registration".

This classification is not set in stone, but will change depending largely on member mobility within groups, so that one year a group might roll over but another year the group would be assigned to open registration.

The system allows Group Leaders, Group Members and the Group Coordinator to work together to ensure that all Group Members are "active" in the group and offer those on waiting lists a chance to participate.

Criteria for automatic rollover are:

- Registration groups (these are effectively expressions of interest and have no number limits).
- Home-based groups.
- Groups with vacancies.
- Groups where Members have achieved a certain skill or knowledge level where it would not be appropriate to apply periodic registration as this could create a skill imbalance within the groups.

Criteria for periodic registration are:

- Groups that are full and have waiting lists, with no prospect of forming a new group from the waiting list. Exception: one group is full but there is another group of the same type with vacancies at a different time.

**Note** : Members on a Waiting List are listed in the order of their applications and must also be allocated free spaces on a group in the order that they were put on the Waiting List.

The **only** exception to this rule is if a Group Leader feels that an applicant could not take part in their group activity, for whatever reason, and their

application needs to be withdrawn. However, this must be discussed with the applicant before any change is made.

It is important that we encourage members to use the web site, although you do have limited capability to add members manually to your group. This should only be done in **exceptional circumstances**, such as where the member does not have internet access or is physically incapable of using a computer device.

### **Appointing New Group Leaders**

Group Leaders are essential to providing activity groups within our u3a.

It is recognised that it would be counter-productive to place any unnecessary obstacles that might deter a prospective Group Leader from coming forward and volunteering.

In the past we have experienced some issues around the willingness and ability of potential Group Leaders to work with the u3a web software and follow the associated procedures that have been established within that software.

It is, therefore, a balancing act. On the one hand we need to provide accurate and complete information about the role of Group Leader; on the other hand, we need to offer potential solutions to overcome such reluctance. One of the primary ways that obstacles can be easily overcome is to make use of the skills and willingness of potential Group members to take on some tasks of the Group Leader.

The suggested process is as follows:

1. A suggestion is received for the formation of a new interest group and a new Group Leader is required.
2. Initial contact with the person put forward as potentially being willing to serve as the Group Leader. This would be "low key" and probably done by the Group Co-Ordinator, preferably in person (face to face) but possibly via the telephone. Before this meeting, a copy of the up-dated Group Leader's Guide would be given to the prospective Group Leader (if they had not already reviewed a copy online on our u3a website).
3. If this meeting is successful (i.e., both parties feel able to take matters further with regards the understanding and willingness of the volunteer to take on the role of Group Leader) then the Group Co-ordinator takes forward the interest amongst the membership.
4. If the level of interest is such that a new interest group is viable, the new Group activity is posted on u3a Web and members are able to request enrolment in the usual way.
5. At the same time as (d) above, the Group Co-ordinator makes available to the proposed new Group Leader copies of the updated u3a Website Guide document so that they can review the contents in detail. There

should then be a follow-up discussion, where the new Group Leader can ask questions and seek clarification.

6. For the first four meetings of any new interest group either the Group Co-ordinator or an experienced existing Group Leader would keep close contact with the new Group Leader to field any issues and give reassurance and advice.
7. Thereafter, all Group Leaders should be invited to attend at least one “workshop” per year (more if new procedures/system changes require it).

As a minimum, Group Leaders should meet with the Group Co-ordinator to review and discuss any problems and suggestions for change originating from within the existing Group Leader cohort.

## **Scout HQ and u3a Office**

Holmes Chapel & District u3a has an agreement with First Holmes Chapel Scouts to use an office in Scout HQ. This agreement can be found on our web site under the Policies and Guidelines tab. As part of that agreement, we have a volunteer liaison team of u3a members. The Group Co-ordinator will introduce you.

Group Leaders who meet in Scout HQ will be given a key to the building and a code to the office if they need to use the office, store equipment there, or use any of the assets stored there. It is important that Group Leaders do not give the key or the code to anyone other than a designated deputy on days they are unable to attend Group meetings.

All visits to the office must be recorded. There is a sign-in book on the desk in the office.

The Group Co-ordinator will give Group Leaders a list of assets that they are able to borrow for meetings, e.g. a laptop, projector, screen. All assets must be signed out, returned promptly, and signed back in. This is a separate sign-in book from the visits record.

## **Resources**

The Group Leaders’s first points of contact for all support and information are the Group Coordinator, contact [groups@holmeschapelu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@holmeschapelu3a.org.uk) and our web site <https://www.holmeschapelu3a.org.uk/>

In addition, there is a wealth of information on the web sites of the Third Age Trust and the North-West Region of the u3a:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice> - general advice and policies

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects> - a network of subject advisors

<https://u3asites.org.uk/north-west/home> - local activities and advice

# Appendix 1 - Risk Assessment Template

<b>Holmes Chapel &amp; District Interest Group Risk Assessment</b>		
<b>Group Leader and date</b>	<a href="#">Here</a>	
<b>The activity</b>	<a href="#">Group name here</a>	
Nature and Description of Activity:	<a href="#">One or two line description here</a>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider current Government and Public Health advice in relation to your location, and the feasibility of carrying out this activity safely, adhering to required social distancing standards</li> <li>• Consider if your activity involves the sharing of any equipment or shared spaces and arrange to have anti-viral cleaning materials available.</li> <li>• Where necessary, inspect prior to starting activity to ensure that adequate social distancing, if required, can be maintained throughout, and to remove/isolate any hazards.</li> <li>• Ensure that travel arrangements meet the necessary requirements</li> <li>• Consider the general hazards related to this type of activity, and the impact that accommodating Covid-19 requirements may have on the way it is organised.</li> <li>• Record the outcome(s) of these considerations in writing prior to the activity and share them with the participants so they can complete their personal checklist in line with the information in your checklist.</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Type your responses here</a>	
<b>Overall comments and conclusions from your review</b> <a href="#">Comments here</a>		
<b>The venue</b>	<a href="#">Type venue name and location here</a>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility for members with limited mobility</li> <li>• Fire and emergency escape routes</li> <li>• Fire Alarm</li> <li>• Designated assembly point</li> <li>• Is u3a responsible for laying out seating?</li> <li>• If there is a kitchen               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is it adequate and hygienic?</li> <li>○ Are cleaning materials available?</li> <li>○ Has kettle been visually safety checked?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is u3a responsible for cleaning?</li> <li>• Are toilet facilities adequate and accessible?</li> <li>• Is there a first-aid box? Where is it located?</li> <li>• Is there an emergency contact number posted? If not, who will you contact?</li> <li>• Has the venue itself stipulated any special requirements?</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Type your discussion here</a>	

## Appendix 2 - Disclaimer

### *Holmes Chapel & District u3a*

#### Disclaimer

Members are advised that, when they take part in any u3a activity, either indoor or outdoor, they do so entirely at their own risk and responsibility. This applies to their well-being, their safety, and their belongings, in all venues, including a Group Leader's or group member's home. The Group Leader is a volunteer, providing only guidance and advice, and enabling the activity to take place. The Group Leader is in no way responsible for you as a member, or for your possessions. Members must tell the Group Leader in advance of any medical issue that might impede their ability to participate, or that might impact on the safety or well-being of themselves or the group.

#### Emergency Contact Details

Please ensure that your emergency contact details are correct in your personal details on the u3a website. Emergency contact details should not be your home number. They should be for another family member and not a partner, especially if both partners are in the same group or trip.

#### Activity Registration

Make sure you register for the activity, so that the Group Leader knows that you will turn up and will have access to your details on the day. Members who fail to register may be turned away if they arrive for a pre-registered activity without a confirmed place.

#### Specific Hazards

Group members should make themselves aware of the specific hazards of their chosen activity in any given venue or location, whether indoors or outdoors. Group members should be prepared to deal with these hazards both in terms of their own physical abilities and equipment and clothing

This particularly applies to the walking groups, where there will be considerable variation in the walk difficulty and the terrain, as well as in the distance. The relevant website walk page will provide the details on distance, elevation, number of stiles etc. Group Leaders have the right to refuse to accept anyone as a member of their group who, in their opinion, is ill-equipped or at risk for any reason.

The use of walking poles is optional, but certainly on more difficult terrain is recommended to provide stability and minimise the risk of falls.

#### Weather Conditions

Of specific relevance to walking groups are weather conditions. Walking in very wintry conditions requires care with slips and trips while walking in very hot sunny weather requires specific precautions: walkers *must* bring adequate water to drink – rehydration is essential; the use of sunscreen is strongly recommended; wear a suitable hat to protect the head. Group Leaders may opt to cancel a walk if the ambient temperature is likely to exceed 25C during the walk. Alternatively, based on the weather forecast, they may decide to start a walk earlier to avoid the higher temperatures expected later in the day.

#### Car-sharing

This can be used as a means of reducing car usage and fuel consumption, and to simplify parking arrangements at walk venues. Car-sharing is undertaken as an arrangement between the driver and other members, and should a car-related accident occur, it will be dealt with via car insurance, not u3a insurance cover. Members who provide transport for other members to and from the start of a walk, e.g., a pub, must be aware of the responsibility that they incur. Drivers offering car-share should consider their personal well-being and capability especially after a potentially tiring walk so that any risk to themselves and their passengers is minimised. They should ensure that their vehicle is road worthy. Members who accept lifts do so at their own risk. Any payment for transport is a matter between the individuals involved.

KTS v1 30.04.21 Revised 03.05.21 BR Com v2 06.05.21

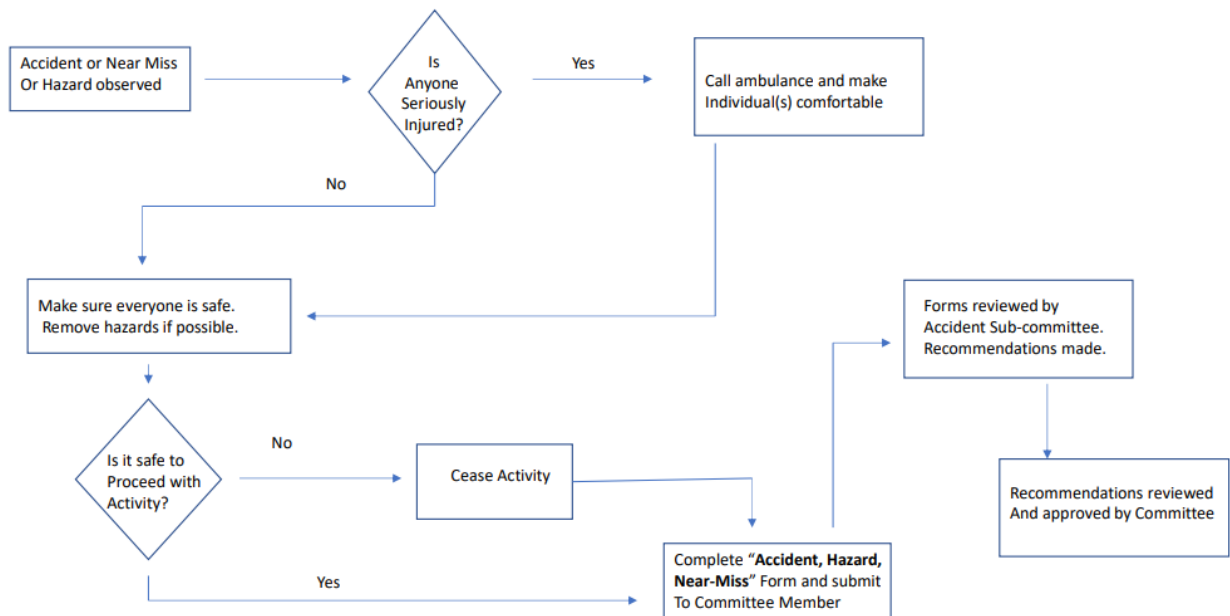
Up-dated PDS 12.08.22 and 15.08.22; TD 17.08.2022; BR 24.08.22: v.3.1, approved by Committee by email

Appendix 3a - Accident reporting Form

<b>ACCIDENT REPORT FORM -</b>		<b>U3A</b>
Name of Injured party/address/telephone number :		
Name/address/telephone number of others involved :		
Date/Time of Accident :	Location :	
Nature of Accident/Circumstances :		
Injury Details/Property Damage :		
Name/address/telephone number of person causing injury/damage :		
Witnessed by :		
Address :		
Telephone number :		
Action Taken :		
Was any specialised assistance required at the scene? If so give details.		
Was medical advice sought afterwards? If so give details.		
Name of Group Leader ..... Telephone number.....		
Signed .....(injured party) Signed ..... (group leader)		
Date .....		

# Flow Chart

## Accident, Hazard and Near Miss Reporting



## **Appendix 4 - Procedure for Dealing with Non-Attendance at Group Meetings**

Process drafted by Geoff Anderson, Groups Coordinator, May 2022  
And approved by Committee at its meeting on 01 June 2022

### 1. Background

Many groups can only cope with a limited number of members at one time. Where demand exceeds the number available our policy is to form a new group if numbers on the waiting list are sufficient, and we can find a Group Leader for the new group. This can be arranged by the Group Coordinator, supported by the Group Leader.

Where the numbers on the waiting list are insufficient to form a viable new group, the individuals concerned will remain on the waiting list until a place becomes available in the existing group. When group members consistently fail to turn up this effectively blocks potential members on the waiting list from joining the group and it may become necessary under certain circumstances to remove these members from the group.

In addition, many groups have to pay the costs of room hire or tutors and it imposes an additional burden on the attending members to cover these costs if the non-attendees don't pay. However, in the event of a member being ill and unable to participate and has advised the group leader of this then the member should not be required to pay until he / she is able to return, and their group place should be secured. The member payments should make a modest allowance for this possible gap in income, however any more serious shortfall in income attributed to an unexpected long absence due to this cause should be made up from central funds.

This procedure discusses how the process should be handled in a sensitive but fair manner.

### 2. Procedure

- a. Group Leaders, along with the Group Coordinator, should ensure that their group waiting list size is not restricted, in order to register the details of everyone interested in joining the group. The Group Coordinator should also take prompt action to try to form a new group once he /she is advised by the Group Leader that the waiting list is sufficiently large to make a new group viable.
- b. If there is a waiting list for a group, but the numbers are insufficient to form a new group, the Group Leader should focus on, if and how these potential new members could join the group. This could be by replacing existing members, who continuously fail

- to turn up to meetings and have not given good reasons to the Group Leader, with people from the waiting list.
- c. If a member has not attended for three consecutive meetings and has not contacted the Group Leader, a letter should be sent by the Group Leader along the lines of DRAFT LETTER 1 below. This should apply whether or not there is a waiting list.
  - d. If no response has been received within approximately two to three weeks, a second letter should be sent along the lines of DRAFT LETTER 2. An exception to this could be considered if the group is a paying group where the non-attendee does not respond to the letter but continues to pay. In this case, the group leader should attempt to contact the member by telephone. This could be handled by the Group Coordinator if necessary.
  - e. If no suitable response has been received from the member following DRAFT LETTER 2, that member should be removed from the group list and the place offered to whoever is top of the waiting list if there is one.
  - f. It is possible that communications to members via the website mailing system can get lost or end up in email junk, etc. The Group Leader should ensure that the letters are getting through by hand delivering or telephoning if necessary.
  - g. It would help to clarify members' expectations if the Group Leader sends a welcome letter to all the members of the group when they join, explaining that repeated non-attendance could result in the member's place in the group being lost.
  - h. In the event of extenuating circumstances not addressed in this guidance, any group member losing his / her place because of non-attendance can appeal firstly to the Group Leader and if not satisfied with the outcome, to the Committee. Group Leaders should allow sufficient time for an appeal before offering a place to someone from the waiting list.

## **DRAFT LETTER 1**

Hi .....

I am contacting you because we haven't seen you at the group meetings or have had any contact from you for quite a while now. We just want to check that you are well and whether you wish to continue with the group. We realise that people can have various reasons for not being able to attend and the purpose of this letter is to find out if you have any issues we can help with or whether you simply wish to leave the group.

Could you please reply to this as soon as possible to let me know what you intend doing, or, alternatively, we would be delighted to see you at our next meeting. My phone number is at the bottom of this note in case you wish to discuss this.

Kind regards

Group Leader

Tel....

## **DRAFT LETTER 2**

Hi....

I wrote to you on .... about your continued membership of the group. Unfortunately, we have not heard from you nor seen you at any of our meetings. We have a limit on our group membership numbers and have people on the waiting list. So that we can be seen to be fair to everyone, our guidance requires me to remove your name from the membership list unless you contact me or turn up at our next meeting. This is to enable someone from the waiting list to have an opportunity to join.

Kind regards

Group leader

Tel....



# Holmes Chapel & District U3A

## Expenses Claim Form

No	Description	Amount		Receipt required? (Y/N)
		£	p	

Total claimed £   p

*I, the Claimant, certify that the expenditure above was wholly incurred on behalf of Holmes Chapel & District U3A*

<b>Claimant</b>	<i>Signature</i>		<i>Date</i>	
	<i>Name</i>			

<b>Approved</b>	<i>Signature</i>		<i>Date</i>	
	<i>Name</i>			

<b>Paid (Treasurer)</b>	<i>Signature</i>		<i>Date</i>	
	<i>Name</i>			

*If you would prefer to be paid by direct bank transfer, please provide the following information:*

<b>Sort Code</b>			-			-		
<b>Account Number</b>								
<b>Account Name</b>								

## **Appendix 6 - Registration Guidelines 2022**

Drafted by Geoff Anderson, Groups Coordinator

And approved by Committee, with minor revisions, at its meeting on 01 June 2022

### **Preamble**

U3a has been split between those members who prefer to have their group membership roll over year on year and those who believe that the membership should be cleared every year and members should re-apply for places, thereby allowing new members to join. Both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses. Members, however can feel very strongly on this issue and discussions have been heated in the past. This document does not go over these arguments again.

A sub- group has recommended a way forward, but this failed to receive consensus at the May 2022 committee meeting. Group leaders need guidance now and as a result, a request was made to come up with a compromise. This guideline outlines a middle routine which groups are categorised into two types; one which rolls over continuously and the other where the membership gets cleared periodically and new applications sought.

This of course attracts the criticism that that we would become a two tier u3a but there are only three options and the first two have already been discarded. We therefore need to ensure that this third option gives members what they want. The target is to achieve a system which is;

1. Simple to understand and implement
2. Seen to be fair to all members, both current and new
3. Flexible and adaptable
4. Democratic in that group leaders can challenge and possibly overturn the categorisation.

### **Basis of Scheme**

1. Groups will be classed as either **Automatic Rollover** with current membership retained or will pause at predetermined end dates shown on their webpages and either close forever(one -off workshops etc) or have the membership cleared and new applications invited (**Periodic Registration**) This process is described below.
2. All Registration Groups will be classed as Automatic Roll over as they are in effect a list of members expressing an interest in the topic who can be invited via the registration group to participate in specific events such as walks, Out and About, etc.
3. All groups will have a waiting list at least the same size as the group so that even if the group is full, it is always possible to determine the extent of the interest in the group and assess whether the number waiting is sufficient to form a new group. Forming a new group to accommodate people on the waiting list should always be the preferred option. Group leaders should identify in the group description, the approximate number needed to make a viable new group. If a new group can be formed, it is expected that a member of the existing group will for a brief time function as a Group Helper, assisting the

group with the administration until a new Group Leader is elected from within the membership of the new group.

4. Dormant members will be continuously moved to the bottom of the waiting list after missing 3 consecutive meetings without a valid explanation and the top individual from the waiting list will take his / her place. This applies to both categories of group. This would create some more opportunities for allowing new members into groups. More specific guidance for group leaders on managing members who consistently fail to turn up to meetings is now available in a separate "Dormant Member" guidance note.
5. Prior to the annual u3a Showcase Event, the Group Coordinator will issue a categorisation of groups based on the information available. Group Leaders will be invited to request a joint review of their categorisation with the Group Coordinator if they feel the categorisation is not appropriate. In doing so, Group Leaders shall ensure that the designation is in the interests of both existing and potential new members.
6. Group leaders of Automatic Roll-over groups will write to all members (and optionally to those on the waiting list) annually possibly prior to the u3a Showcase Event to ask them whether they wish to continue their membership of the group.

A draft model letter is shown in Appendix 1 below. Those indicating a desire not to continue, or those who do not reply following a reminder shall be removed from the group and applicants from the waiting list will replace them.

#### **Criteria for automatic rollover:**

1. Registration groups (these are effectively expressions of interest and have no number limits)
2. Private home-based groups.
3. Groups with vacancies
4. Members having achieved a certain skill or knowledge level where it wouldn't be appropriate to apply periodic registration as this could create a skill imbalance within the group(s).

#### **Criteria for periodic registration:**

1. Group full and no prospect of forming a new group from waiting list. Exception: The same activity is available in another Group at a different time
2. Insufficient numbers on waiting list to form a new group, or no volunteer for group leader from waiting list. Exception: The same activity is available in another Group at a different time

**Model Letter to Group re Continued Membership**

Dear member

As we are about to commence a new season of the .... group, I am writing to you to determine whether you wish to continue your membership. Can you therefore reply within two weeks to let me know whether you wish to continue? If you do, that will be great, and I welcome your continued interest.

If you respond advising that you do not wish to continue as a member, or do not reply, I will remove your name from the group and you will no longer receive communications from me. This will free up a place for someone who may wish to join. Kind regards.

.....