

TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

INDUCTION

In order to make a new Trustee feel welcome, an induction period (which could take a few months) will allow a new committee member to settle in. Assigning a more experienced Trustee as a mentor will help the process along.

Encouraging new Trustees to ask questions and make suggestions is a useful way of making them feel valued. A fresh pair of eyes can often see new ways of working.

Information must be provided about the advice and support available from the Third Age Trust, the Regional Trustee, Trust Volunteers, any relevant Networks, and or peer support groups as appropriate.

Ensure as far as possible that a new Trustee elected to or invited to take on a specific role or responsibility has a detailed handover from the previous incumbent.

When committee members are elected they take on the role of Trustees of the u3a, they are responsible for the governance of Alnwick u3a including directing how it is managed and run. The Trustees must make sure that Alnwick u3a is carrying out the purpose for which it is set up, and that all resources and funds are used only in furthering its charitable objective. Trustees are collectively responsible for ensuring that Alnwick u3a fulfils its charitable objectives and does not stray beyond them. The central purpose of every u3a is educational. Trustees collectively are also responsible for the safe custody of members' money.

The Trustee code of conduct is an agreement between the organisation and the individual committee member which clarifies the standard of behaviour expected in the performance of their role. Each new Trustee is to be given a copy of **Alnwick u3a Trustee Code of Conduct**.

All u3as are charities whether they are registered with the Charity Commission or not due to the charitable purpose (object clause) that is contained within the constitution. This status means that all committee members are Trustees.

u3a committees are covered by Trustee Indemnity Insurance provided through the Third Age Trust. The insurance protects u3a Trustees both individually and

as a board, against a genuine mistake or error of judgement providing that they have acted responsibly and followed their u3a's constitution. Where this is deemed not to be the case, Trustees risk being held personally responsible and not being covered by indemnity insurance. Trustees should also be aware that even if an allowable claim is made, an excess will apply. The indemnity insurance will not protect against criminal law. In the event of any irregularity at either main committee or group level, the Trustees are potentially liable if they have not taken all reasonable steps to minimise risks. Trustees must follow the requirements of the appropriate regulatory authority for their country in relation to any reporting requirements. It is not possible for an individual Trustee to opt out of collective responsibility. In addition, responsibility must never be given to a Group Leader/Convenor or Group Coordinator to operate a group that is in any way detached from the u3a. Trustees retain overall responsibility of the u3a and its activities. All money collected is the property of the u3a and it must all be accounted for to the membership at the AGM and to the appropriate regulatory authority, as required.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Trustees are expected to read the agenda and all supporting papers prior to the meeting and strive to attend all meetings.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Trustees must declare a conflict or possible conflict of interest at the start of the committee meeting or at the earliest possible opportunity. The Chair will then decide whether to exclude the Trustee from a particular item or even from the whole meeting. In the event the Chair has a conflict of interest, the committee should request the Vice Chair to rule on the matter. If the Vice Chair is unavailable or unable to rule on this matter, then the Chair elected for the meeting should rule on the matter.

POWER TO MAKE DECISIONS

This rests solely with the committee as a body, decisions can only be taken as a result of a majority vote in favour by those members of the committee present at the time. No Trustee has the authority to act in isolation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In order to ensure all Trustees feel comfortable expressing their views and ideas it is essential that everybody always maintains confidentiality outside the

committee. The decisions made by the committee must be minuted and once approved made available to members on request.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

No matter what individual Trustees' opinions or voting choices are, once an item is approved by the committee, all Trustees must accept it as decisive and final and not comment further outside the committee environment. If a Trustee is unable to accept a decision their only recourse, after due consideration, is to resign from the committee.

Alnwick u3a have a list of Policies which should be made available to each new Trustee.

The u3a run a number of online workshops to support Trustees, including 'Running your u3a – Information for Trustees'. More information about these workshops and how to book can be found on the u3a workshops page. All members can also contact the u3a office for information and advice by calling 020 8466 6139 or emailing: u3a.office@u3a.org.uk.

This Revised Policy was formally adopted on 11th April 2024.

Review Date 2nd February 2026.