

Practical Approaches to Increasing Access

In ensuring equality of access Belper & District u3a will take the following steps:

- The Activities Coordinator will have responsibility for liaising with Group Leaders on an ongoing basis to ensure that groups are accessible and that group leaders are aware of what the expectations are and what adjustments may need to be made e.g. relocating a group held within someone's home to a wheelchair accessible venue.
- The Membership Secretary will contact new members who indicate that they have a disability or health related issue that may need additional support and/or adjustment and discuss with them what needs they have and how these could be met – as appropriate.
- General meetings will, as far as possible, be held at a well-lit, fully wheelchair accessible venue, spacious enough to cope with wheelchairs and mobility scooters, with wheelchair accessible toilet and hearing aid loop system, and with a sound system in use.
- Speakers giving visual presentations will be asked to give a good description of the presentation if there is a possibility that people with visual impairment are present.
- If identified, at the monthly members meetings the front row of seats will be reserved for members who have impaired hearing or vision.
- Access will be reviewed by the committee on an ongoing basis with a view to considering any additional adjustments that may need to be made e.g. availability of a hearing loop or access to dementia friends training.
- Group Leaders running groups that require a certain level of fitness and/or mobility will be asked to provide this information to members in advance so that members can decide as to whether the group is suitable for them.
- Group Leaders will liaise with the Activities Coordinators where there are concerns about an individual's ability to participate.
- Belper & District u3a will try to ensure that there are a range of groups available that will provide access to members so that members do not feel excluded from too many interest/activity groups.
- Belper & District u3a will encourage and may require members to bring carers with them to U3A activities, as needed, with no additional cost for the carer. The carer will fall under u3a liability insurance unless they are a professional carer, in which case the individual will be covered by their employer's insurance cover.
- Belper & District u3a has a duty of care to all members and this may mean that difficult decisions have to be taken in assessing an individual's ability to participate either in the U3A as a whole or within individual activities. These decisions will always be taken through discussion with the individual member and his or her carer in order to ensure that a fair and considered decision is taken. This may include developing a risk assessment with the individual regarding their ability to participate.
- Belper & District u3a will seek additional advice and support from u3aPlus, the Regional Trustee, National Office, the national website and external specialist organisations as required.