



## Looking after our members – guidelines, principles, policies and procedures

One of the guiding principles of our U3A is to promote wellbeing and ensure inclusivity for all our members, as much as is possible. At the outset we must all take on board that everyone is responsible not just the committee or other officers. With rights come responsibilities.

Our aim in this document is to offer guidelines and signposting to further information and advice along with other actions that are suggested could be taken.

### Safeguarding our members

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Bishop's Cleeve U3A is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of all its members. All members should show respect and understanding of the rights, safety and welfare of others and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the U3A.

1. The key principles of the policy are as follows:
  - The welfare of the member is, and always must be, paramount to any other consideration
  - U3A events and activities for members will follow and adhere to the national U3A's policy guidelines
  - All participants have a right to be protected from abuse and harm
  - All allegations, suspicions or concerns of abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.
2. The U3A recognises that all members have a right to participate in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment whilst at the same time being protected from abuse, harm and poor practice. The U3A recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved.
3. If you witness or are aware of an incident where you are concerned the welfare of a member has been put at risk, you should, in the first instance inform a member of the committee. If no committee member is available and the matter is clearly serious then you can either:
  - a. Contact the local police or Local Safeguarding Officer
  - b. Call or contact one of the following organisations for advice or help:
    - i. Age UK <tel:08000556112> website [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)
    - ii. Alzheimer's Society <tel:03002221122> website [www.alzheimer.org.uk](http://www.alzheimer.org.uk)
    - iii. Action on elder abuse <tel:0808808141> website [www.eldersbuse.org.uk](http://www.eldersbuse.org.uk)
    - iv. MIND <tel:03001233393> website [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
    - v. Mencap <tel:08088081111> website [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
    - vi. Alcoholics Anonymous <tel:01452418515> website [www.aasevern.org.uk](http://www.aasevern.org.uk)

### Vulnerable Adults

Everybody has different levels of vulnerability and each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time. All members who may be vulnerable have a right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.

In all our activities we will:

- Value, listen and respect members who may be vulnerable.
- Ensure that all members feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse.
- Recognise equality amongst people and relationships.
- Do all we can to help members who may be vulnerable, to be and remain active contributors within U3A and if they are or become unable to participate independently, encourage them to bring a companion/carer with them in order that they can continue to enjoy the benefits of U3A membership.
- Ensure all members are aware of their responsibilities to protect vulnerable adults.

### Inclusivity

There are naturally limitations to what we are all capable of doing – none of us are 21 anymore! The U3A has a member led initiative called U3A Plus which offers sound advice on trying to ensure all members can participate to the fullest extent in all open meetings and interest groups. Although we do not have fully fledged expertise within the organisation, as a self-help and self-led operation, we must all try to help our fellow members to overcome any specific problems that they have. The U3A Plus website ( <http://www.plus.u3a.org.uk> ) has a lot of useful advice for helping members with:

- Vision impairment
- Mobility Problems
- Dementia
- Hearing Impairment

There are many instances and examples of members who car share, offer a guiding elbow, keep seats at the front for those who can't see so well and many more obvious small day to day inputs that can really help. You only need to ask, and usually something can be done to aid your participation.