

PD 10

COACH TRIPS AND SELF DRIVE TRIPS

ORGANISED BY MEMBERS OF THE U3A FOR MEMBERS OF THE U3A

This advice sheet has been prepared to assist anyone who plans to run a coach or self drive trip for Bishops Stortford U3A

The Outings and Events Coordinator is always happy to help if you want to run any ideas past them, and other members who have run trips have lots of experience too.

PLANNING

When a date has been planned, but before booking anything, contact should be made with the **OUTINGS AND EVENTS COORDINATOR** to establish if there are any other trips or events on the chosen day, or very close to it, which could affect the success of the trip.

A trip should be offered for sale on at least **one Monthly Monday meeting**.

However some outings offer priority to members of certain interest groups, generally History Groups and Gardening. It is therefore possible that a trip may be sold out in advance of a Monday Monthly meeting.

The trip should be advertised in the **Diary, Newsmail and Website**, together with cost and details of coach pick ups, or other arrangements such as self drive. **It is the trip organiser's responsibility to contact the Diary Compiler and Newsmail Editor/Webmaster.**

On occasions, the **Outings and Events Coordinator**, will on request, contact those members with email addresses, using Beacon. This is in the event that tight timings have missed the above, or an update is needed.

The Outings and Events Coordinator will use Beacon to outline trip details.

The convention is to prefix an outing with an X under the list of Groups. **The Beacon Administrator** can assist with any advice or training requirements.

The **Trip Organiser** can then fill in details of participants on **Beacon**. This also acts as a check that attendees are members. It is also useful to BSU3A to track whether those joining the trip are members just for outings, or whether they also participate in one or more of the groups. It also means that if the **Trip Organiser** so wishes, they can send out a reminder of pick up points and timings a few days before the outing to the around 75% of members, who we have email addresses for.

COACH COMPANIES COSTINGS AND DEPARTURE POINTS

The coach companies we currently use are Lodges and Dons of Dunmow.

Modern coaches are 49/53 seats although Dons have a 36 seater which is useful when the larger coaches are not viable, either for limits on numbers at the venue or that a larger coach cannot be filled.

It is a good idea to contact the coach company as soon as you have planned a trip as they can make a provisional booking. They can also advise on pick up timings as they have experience of traffic conditions by time of day.

Once you have established the costs i.e. coach hire, driver's tip, Trip Organiser's flat rate expenses, this figure should be divided by 40, or 45 if you are very confident.

This amount should be added to any applicable entrance fee and/or any refreshments that you plan to provide giving you a price per person to sell the trip.

Driver's tip is recommended at £50 for a simple trip or perhaps the theatre and £60 for a longer more complicated trip. It is at your discretion. This advice may change as fees and prices increase.

Tips for holidays are at the discretion of the Trip Organiser.

The Organiser should take a flat rate of £10 for any out of pocket expenses covering postage, phone calls, stationery and occasional transport. No receipts are required.

If the Organiser's expenses are more than this, then receipts must be provided to the Treasurer.

PICK UP POINTS are at the Organiser's discretion but should be kept to a minimum.

Our main departure points are the rear car park of Sainsbury's Thorley adjacent to Freidburg avenue, which can be used subject to the Manager's permission.

The current contact is via prl.thorley@sainsburys.co.uk

Do not expect to receive a reply but it will be noted.

Also popular is the Silver Leys Rugby ground at the top of Hadham Road and BSU3A do make a donation in this respect, for pick-ups and parking which should be on the left as you enter. Again do contact a responsible person via their website.

Other pick ups may include the Causeway in front of the castle or opposite dependant on the direction of travel, and any other ones at the discretion of the Organiser.

Dunmow Road/ Manor Links is not ideal as narrowing of the road prevents cars overtaking and motorists can become rather aggressive!

SALE OF TRIP AT MONTHLY MEETING

It is suggested that you arrive at least 15 minutes before opening to enable your board and table to be set up. We normally set up on the left hand-side of the hall as you enter and the back in front of the stage, but not in the far left corner as lunch groups traditionally set up there.

It is helpful to use some illustrations of the trip to create some impact in what is usually a very busy hall.

The organiser may find it helpful to have another person to assist for example in checking that cheques are filled in correctly and other detail.

A sign-up sheet should be produced for the meeting where name, landline phone number, and mobile number as well if possible, should be taken, together with departure point. In case of **Emergency on the Day**, the trip participant should also take the down the mobile phone number of the Organiser.

When Organiser fills in participants on Beacon (the Trips Coordinator having set up the outing as a group) it will automatically cross check that participants are members.

PAYMENT must be made at time of booking by cheque made payable to Bishops Stortford U3A. We request cheque payment as it provides us with an audit trail of names and payments.

Cash payments of the exact amount can only be taken at the Organiser's discretion for example for new members.

A person may be put on a waiting list if payment cannot be made at the time of booking. Bookings are a firm commitment and refunds can only be made if the place can be sold on.

As soon as you know the trip is viable (ie 40/45 people have signed up) confirmation should be made with the coach company and venue(s), tour guide etc.

Cheques should be tallied and forwarded to the Treasurer for banking, with details of the trip.

Prior to the trip the Organiser needs to contact the Treasurer for outgoing payments in good time as these require a second authorisation.

Traditionally this has been by cheque, usually on the day, but it can be by BACS bank transfer, if venue is willing, **subject to Treasurer's agreement**, or by Organiser's personal card, which the Treasurer will then reimburse. Sometimes the venue may prefer a card payment, as BACS payments can get lost in their system.

Cash will be required for Driver's tip, Organiser's flat rate £10 expenses, and any refunds.

Self Drive those accepting lifts are required to give the driver the applicable amount in cash as defined on the website, **PD4**.

INSURANCE

We are automatically covered by Third Age Trust public liability for day trips.

Tour Operators liability is covered for a short study trip which involves overnight accommodation. (see TAT Keeping it legal, you will need to set up an account)

For longer trips eg holidays, participants should have their own insurance.

ON THE DAY

Have a checklist of all participants and check everyone onto the coach by name and at the final departure it is advisable to do a head count. If someone doesn't arrive at their chosen departure point, **it is their responsibility. Times stated are coach leaving times so participants should arrive at least 5 to 10 minutes before the departure time.**

The Organiser may telephone latecomers or wait a few minutes at their discretion but there will be others who are waiting and journey timings to be met.

Once on your way introduce yourself, the driver and the coach company and the plan for the day.

It is not advisable on Health and Safety grounds to walk down the length of the coach when it is moving to handout any refunds. Some coach companies do not allow this. Organisers have handed out small envelopes when boarding, or named envelopes passed back through the coach (there may be different amounts of refund dependant on whether participant is traveling coach only or attending the venue)

You should ask the coach driver to give a brief **Health and Safety notice.**

Pass your mobile phone number down the coach so that if anyone has an accident/incident or is unwell they can contact you. They may hopefully already have a note of your number from the time of booking, but it is sensible to do this again.

You should exchange numbers with the driver in case you need to contact him during the day.

Before reaching the destination give out **again** the time the coach is leaving the venue. You may find it helpful to build in a margin of about 10 minutes earlier than actual time to allow for any latecomers.

Do take photos but within the enhanced **Data Protection** rules. Ask permission first, and secondly for photos to be used on BSU3A Facebook page, magazine or any other illustrative materials. No individual is to be identified by name.

On the return do a head count.

Just prior to the first drop off it is customary to thank the coach driver over the microphone and present him with his tip in an envelope.

REFUNDS

Working on the figure of 40/45 and you sell more places, this money is divided up from £1 upwards between the members travelling to the nearest £ and given back during the outward journey.

Any small surplus is retained in the U3A account.

AFTERWARDS

Post photos on BSU3A Facebook page. If you have a problem contact Webmaster.

Prepare an account statement **Income /Expenditure form PD 10 a** to download from BSU3A website) and submit to the Treasurer.

Any accidents/incidents that occur should be reported to the main committee.

Accident Report Forms PD9 can be downloaded from the BSU3A website and should be taken on the day. As a Group we have to advise the Third Age Trust, if appropriate, in accordance with the insurance arrangements.

NOTE: This document has been produced as a guide to Trips Organisers, not all points will be relevant and most of them you would do automatically. The aim is to make organising and running a trip as smooth as possible so that you can enjoy the day.

The Outings and Events Coordinator is happy to help at any time and can be contacted by phone or email. *Revised: April 2020*