



DRONFIELD AND DISTRICT U3A

Protocol for Interest Groups

(For Groups' Managers, Group Co-Ordinators and Facilitators)

Introduction

- 1 The Executive Committee of the DDU3A has agreed the following protocol in order to ensure a consistent approach to the formation, and conduct, of Interest Groups in order that all Members are treated equally.
- 2 This protocol is to be followed by the Group Managers as well as Co-Ordinators and Facilitators in their management of Interest Groups.
- 3 The protocol will be reviewed by the Executive Committee as necessary, at the request of Members or on the direction of the U3A

(Note In preparing this Protocol the Executive Committee has considered information on conduct published by the Third Age Trust and Members can view this information on the U3A Website, at www.u3a.org.uk, that is set out in in the section "Document Downloads" through a series of Advice Sheets covering the conduct of business)

Contacts Procedures

- 4 The Executive Committee has determined that a Groups' Manager(s) is appointed and will be available to advise in respect of any question arising from the formation, or conduct, of an Interest Group.
- 5 In the absence of the Groups' Manager(s) such questions can be addressed to the Business Secretary.
- 6 The names and contact details for these posts, together with that of Treasurer, are published in the DDU3A Newsletter and on the DDU3A web page.

Organisation Procedures

7 Interest Groups are formed by Members, with the approval of the Executive Committee, for the sole benefit of Members (subject to items 10 and 14 below).

8 Group Co-Ordinators shall ask Interest Group members for contact details, and ensure that everyone attending an Interest Group is a member of the DDU3A.

9 If a Group Co-Ordinator is asked whether a non-member can attend a meeting(s) then the Group Co-Ordinator shall consult the Groups Manager(s), subject to 10 below.

10 If a non-member appears at a meeting, to determine whether U3A is for them, then provision is made for attendance on two occasions for this purpose. The Group Co-Ordinator shall record full details of the non-member attending then inform the Executive Committee after the event.

Meetings Procedures

11 The selection of meeting venue shall be determined by the Interest Group, and consideration must be paid to the following items 12-16 in the selection process.

12 Interest Groups shall be as inclusive as possible, and recognition must be paid to the accessibility needs of disabled members where practicable.

13 It is recognised that meetings at the homes of members tend to be inaccessible whereas outside venues could be accessible to all, and a balance should be struck in such arrangements depending upon the needs of members of that Interest Group.

14 It should be noted that liability insurance, provided to all U3A Members by The Third Age Trust, covers the attendance at meetings of a companion/ carer for a disabled person.

15 Similar consideration to the choice of venue, as well as in the conduct of business of the Interest Groups, should be paid to the needs of Members who are hard of hearing.

16 If an outside venue (ie not a home) is to be used for a meeting then on arrival at that venue the relevant Group Co-Ordinator shall ensure that all facilities necessary to conduct the meeting are in place, and if there are any safety/ access concerns that cannot be resolved then the meeting shall be cancelled.

Financial Procedures

17 It is the intention of the Executive Committee that all Interest Groups be self-financing.

18 Group Co-Ordinators shall inform the Groups' Manager(s) of the costs associated with any activity, and also of any reasonable charge for members' attendance at group activities in order to recoup these costs (see also 22 below).

19 Group Co-Ordinators shall not open a specific bank account, nor use a personal bank account, for the purpose of depositing monies collected in the course of Group activities.

20 Group Co-Ordinators shall obtain receipts for all Group purchases and avoid un-recorded cash transactions as far as is possible possible.

21 Group Co-Ordinators shall maintain records of all funds managed on behalf of the Group and make such records available, and transfer funds if appropriate, to the Treasurer.

22 Group Co-Ordinators shall not sign any rental agreement in respect of an outside accommodation venue, but shall forward such agreement to the Groups' Manager(s) for the Executive Committee to endorse.

23 Any incidental costs incurred by an Interest Group, for example resource materials, refreshments, cancellation fees etc., shall be met directly by the Group without recourse to the Treasurer..

Booking Procedures

24 Interest Groups shall make their own arrangements in respect of suitable meeting places, and also for any specific travel and entertainment required by Groups.

25 The Group Co-Ordinator shall determine the availability and cost of any venue or facility (e.g. hire of room or cost of coach hire to a theatre trip).

26 The Group Co-Ordinator shall inform the Groups' Manager(s) of a Group's costs and confirm the Group's ability to meet these costs..

27 The Groups' Manager(s) will consider the application and either give approval to go ahead, having obtained any more detail that might be necessary, or refuse the request with reasons.

28 If approval is given by the Groups Manager then:-

- The Group Coordinator arranges booking (this includes booking means of travel and Trips and Visits venues).
- When booking rooms at Dronfield Town Council managed facilities the Group Coordinator's name and verified signature must first have been confirmed to DTC and the DDU3A Treasurer by the Groups Manager.
- When booking rooms at Dronfield Town Council managed facilities the Group Coordinator must also provide details of the designated person responsible for health and safety in respect of the booking.

29 In all events the Group Co-Ordinator must inform the Groups Manager(s)/Treasurer of all booking agreements, including travel arrangements.

30 The Group Co-Ordinator shall collect payments at the next meeting to cover costs of the agreed bookings, either as cash or cheques payable to “Dronfield and District U3A”. In the case of theatre bookings, or Trips and Visits, such collection might be over an extended period but should be complete well in advance of the event.

31 The Group Co-Ordinator will hand over money/cheques to the Treasurer as soon as possible, either at the next Monthly General Meeting or other earlier suitable occasion.

32 The Treasurer will pay for Dronfield Civic Centre and Peel Centre bookings directly to those venues, for other venues the Treasurer must be provided with an invoice or other appropriate payment details (e.g. name payable to and address)