



## **Dulwich & District u3a Guidance Note on Environmental Issues**

### **1 Context**

National u3a has recently issued a template of an Environmental Policy for all u3as to consider adopting. Given the widespread concern amongst u3a members and wider society about climate change, Dulwich & District u3a is adopting this policy as a guidance note and will encourage our groups and members to reflect on the way their activities may impact on climate change, biodiversity loss and the environment.

### **2 Aims of this Guidance Note**

The aims of this Guidance Note are:

- To support our trustees to put processes and guidelines in place to ensure our u3a is run in a way that actively aims to limit its impact on the environment.
- For members to take opportunities to inform themselves about environmental issues and the ways in which human activities contribute to waste, pollution and global warming.
- For members to consider ways in which they can minimise their own adverse impact on the environment.

### **3 Rationale**

This Guidance Note has been drawn up to provide suggestions on how we might introduce environmental guidelines within our activities in order to make a positive contribution to sustainability and the environment, and also to help mitigate climate change. More specifically, the measures listed below can help Dulwich and District u3a to:

- Address the concerns of members with regard to environmental issues.
- Encourage communication and dialogue on environmental issues within our u3a.
- Encourage a culture of awareness and a sense of responsibility within the membership with respect to sustainability and environmental issues.
- Provide information to members on how they might reduce their adverse impact on the environment.
- Minimise any adverse environmental impact of organised u3a activities.

## 4 Practical Measures

The following are suggestions to raise awareness and to minimise adverse environmental impact:

- Appoint a member as an Environmental Officer to monitor environmental issues arising within the u3a.
- Arrange speakers on environmental topics for some monthly meetings.
- Wherever possible incorporate environmental concerns into our planning and decision making.
- Consider the impact of activities which take place outside in natural ecosystems (e.g. walking and nature groups) and how they could be made more sustainable.
- Encourage the formation of climate and environmental groups within our u3a.
- Check, in an appropriate manner, whether venues operate environmentally responsible policies (e.g. using local suppliers) and encourage them to do so.
- Consider the environmental impact when planning food to serve (e.g. serving more plant-based food).
- Ensure as far as possible that refreshments are served in an environmentally friendly manner (e.g. using crockery rather than disposable cups and plates).
- Minimise waste and encourage reuse and recycling.
- Encourage travel to meetings and events by walking, car sharing and public transport where available.
- Consider conducting a survey of members to seek their views on climate and the environment and suggestions for measures which might be taken by the u3a.
- Make this guidance note available on our website and draw our members' attention to it.
- Include our "Green Tips" initiative in our newsletters on a regular basis.

Please note that all trustees and group convenors have an important part to play in supporting these measures during the activities of the u3a.

## 5 Definitions

- Environmental issues: These are the often-negative effects of human activity on the natural world, including climate change, pollution, drought and biodiversity loss.
- Environmental protection: The practice of working to slow, halt or reverse this.
- Climate Change: The UN defines climate change as referring to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Some of these shifts may be natural but, since the 1800s, these are primarily due to humans burning fossil fuels.

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