

Epping Forest u3a
Group Convenors' Handbook

May 2023

Contents

What is the u3a?

What is a Group Convenor?

Starting a Group: What Kind of Group?

Running a Group: Initial Considerations

Risk Assessments and Compliance

Preparing an Entry for the Prospectus

General Management of a Group

Group Membership and Management

Use of Paid Tutors

Shared Groups

Risk Assessments and Compliance with Policies and Regulations

Sustaining a Group

Appendix 1: Epping Forest u3a and the Third Age Trust

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Appendix 3: Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Appendix 4: Accessibility Policy

Appendix 5: Data Protection Policy

Appendix 6: Privacy Policy

Appendix 7: Insurance

Appendix 8: Incident Report Form

Appendix 9: Venue Risk Assessment Form

Appendix 10: Home-Based Activities Risk Assessment

Appendix 11: Walking Group Risk Assessment

Appendix 12: Remote Activities Assessment

Appendix 13: Group Member Joining Form

What is the u3a?

The University of the Third Age (u3a) was developed in the United Kingdom in 1982. It was established to provide learning and recreational activities and experiences for people who were no longer in full-time employment. The organisation had originated in France around ten years earlier where its learning activities were largely provided by a network on universities and spun off from their degree courses. The “founding fathers” of the UK version, Peter Laslett, Eric Midwinter and Michael Young, decided to adopt a different business model that comprised a national umbrella body set up as an independent charity (called the Third Age Trust) and a network of affiliated local charities around the UK.

The u3a was established with an ethos of inclusivity for all and a mission to create a wide range of learning and recreational activities to enrich the lives of its members. Each local charity would be run by volunteers, drawn from its membership, and costs would be kept as low as possible. Each u3a would establish an Executive Committee whose members would also be Trustees of the charity. The national body, the Third Age Trust, would operate as an advisory source on legal and operational matters and provide insurance cover for all affiliated local charities. Each local u3a, however, would be responsible for managing its own affairs.

What is Epping Forest u3a?

It is one of the local u3a charities. There are now over 1,000 across the UK. It covers the area of Epping Forest. It offers a wide range of activities for its Members that take the form of interest groups based on academic and non-academic subjects. Some groups pursue indoor activities and other pursue outdoor activities. There are also various ad hoc events organised by Members that include local social meetings, visits to galleries and museums, trips to the cinema and theatre, outings to places of interest in London, Essex and beyond and short breaks.

All Groups are run by Members. Members who run Groups within Epping Forest u3a as Group Convenors. Some Groups meet outdoors, others inside hired venues and others in Members' homes.

This Handbook has been developed to offer guidance on a range of issues for Group Convenors and also Members who wish to start their own Group. The main point of contact for Group Convenors and prospective Group Convenors on any Groups' matters is the Groups' Coordinator who is a Member of the Executive Committee of Epping Forest u3a.

What is a Group Convenor?

“Groups” and “Events”

There are other activities, generically labelled as “Events”, that include trips to the art galleries and museums, cinema, and theatre and social outings and excursions to places of interest. There are also social events organised locally by the Epping Forest u3a Executive Committee. In these instances, the organisers serve as booking agents and the events are open to all Members on an ad hoc and usually “first come, first served” basis.

“Group” activities, in comparison, usually involve the registration of Members to attend a schedule of meetings at predetermined times and venues to pursue a specific activity. Some Groups do not require advance membership registration but usually are still held on a regularly scheduled basis in the same location.

Role of Group Convenor

Group Convenors are Members of Epping Forest u3a who take responsibility for running a specified activity in a Group format. Event Organisers take charge of bookings for events that are open on an ad hoc basis for all Members.

Group Convenors are the primary point of contact with the Executive Committee and with Members in respect of the Group they run. Usually (although not always) Group Convenors are the Member who created specific Groups.

The Group Convenor is responsible for establishing the aims and purposes of the Group and the activity on which it centres its interest.

Convenors take responsibility for recruiting other Members to their Group. A new Group and any new information about an existing Group will usually be published in the *Newsletter*, on the website and on the Rolling News Presentation shown in Theydon Bois Village Hall at each Main Monthly Meeting.

Group Convenors can liaise with the Groups’ Coordinator in relation to providing information about their Group for the Prospectus and for any publicity. Help will be provided by the Groups’ Coordinator on the Executive Committee in relation to advertising the Group and completing its Prospectus entry. The Groups’ Coordinator is a general source of help and support for Group Convenors.

Location of Group Meetings

The Group Convenor will usually decide on the location of their Group’s meetings. Some Groups are held in Members’ homes and others take place in other venues that usually need to be booked in advance.

Where a Group is held in a Member’s home, it is usually the Group Convenor that plays host to the Group’s meetings. In some Groups, however, other Members will share the hosting duties.

When a Group is held in a hired venue, Group Convenors must notify the Hall Bookings Assistant of the times they wish to hold their meetings so that the facilities they need are booked in advance.

Some Groups take place in outdoor locations and settings and the Group Convenor takes responsibility for identifying these and notifying the Group's Members when and where they should arrive and where the Group will finish up if it is on the move.

Use of Resources, Equipment and Materials

When a Group involves the use of resources, equipment or materials, the Group Convenor must advise Members what they will need to bring with them and what will be supplied centrally. If a Group Convenor offers to provide equipment and/or materials for their Group's Members to use, he/she may discuss with the Groups' Coordinator whether the Executive Committee might be able to provide any financial support for these items.

The Group Convenor will also be responsible for completion of advance assessments about their Group which link to various policies and codes of practice Epping Forest u3a is required by law or by the Third Age Trust, to have in place relating to its activities. The key policies, codes of practice and other relevant documents are all contained in the Appendices of this Handbook.

Starting a Group: What Kind of Group?

Groups can start in several ways.

A Member might suggest an idea for a new activity on a specific topic of interest on which he or she has some knowledge or experience. They should present their idea to the Groups' Coordinator for further consideration. There is a Suggestions Box that Members may use to post their ideas for new Groups which is placed in the foyer of Theydon Bois Village Hall at every Main Monthly meeting, held usually on the first Monday of each month.

The next decision will probably be to choose what type of group to run. This does not mean simply choosing a study topic or activity, it also means describing how you envisage group meetings being structured. In other words, a decision is needed about the format of the group.

For anyone thinking about launching a new Group at Epping Forest u3a and who wonders what format it might take, there are numerous options. These are listed in Box 1.

Instructional Groups

Some Groups adopt an Instruction-based format in which the Group Convenor always takes the lead and delivers academic tuition or guides the Group through its regular activities. Groups that deal with specialist topics and will usually be run by a Convenor who is qualified in that topic or activity.

Groups that are exercise based, such as Keep Fit or Yoga, will generally need to be led by a Group Convenor who is qualified to give this kind of instruction. Groups that teach specific game skills, such as beginners bridge, will likewise need a Group Convenor with the relevant level of knowledge and skill to teach others.

Some Groups might be proposed with the idea that a professional tutor will be hired to lead it. This might happen with activities where specialised instruction is needed that is given by a suitably qualified person and when such a person is not available among the membership of Epping Forest u3a. The use of Paid Tutors is discussed in more detail later in the Handbook.

Discussion Groups

Many of our Groups are Discussion based. This means that Members meet to discuss a specific topic. A protocol might be agreed in which the Group Convenor takes the lead before opening it up to others to comment and contribute. Alternatively, Members might take turns to lead the discussion. Or some other arrangement might be agreed. In the end, these decisions, in the case of Discussion groups are taken collectively by Members.

Shared Practice Groups

Some Groups are meetings involve Shared Practice activities between people with established skills who simply wish to engage with others to exchange ideas or practice their skills further. Some arts and crafts groups and language groups operate on this basis. (In contrast, language groups for beginners will tend to adopt a format of Convenor-led tuition.)

Outdoor Recreational Groups

Groups of this kind frequently involve walking. Walks might be accompanied by other activities such as Bird Watching or Photography. These activities might be primarily organised by the Group Convenor and/or might involve collective agreement among Members.

Hybrid Formats

Some groups combine the different features outlined above. For instance, a group might decide to combine discussion meetings with outings. An example of this arrangement might be an Archaeology group or an Art History group that arranges outings to galleries, museums or sites on one occasion with follow-up meetings to discuss what Members have seen.

Other groups might combine skills practice sessions with instruction sessions. Groups that concern specific crafts such as embroidery, flower arranging, pottery and so on could run some meetings in which Members get hands-on practice in those skills and other sessions in which they watch demonstrations by experts.

There are many other possible combinations. Current and potential new Group Convenors are welcome to discuss different options with the Groups Coordinator and other Committee Members.

Blended Learning

The 2020-2021 coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic accelerated a development that had already been given some close consideration by the Third Age Trust, the national organising body of the u3a movement across the United Kingdom. Essentially, “blended learning” comprises the joint use of face-to-face meetings and video-conferencing to run various activities.

When face-to-face meetings were prohibited during the pandemic, many u3as, including Epping Forest, used video-conferencing as a platform for twice-monthly presentations and talks and for local u3a announcements and notices. Some of Epping Forest’s Group Convenors also used this platform, primarily the version provided by Google’s Zoom, to keep in touch with Members.

The return to face-to-face meetings does not mean that video-conferencing needs to be totally abandoned. It is possible that some Groups might still wish to use Zoom, for example, to run some of their meetings. They might also consider providing Zoom links for Members that are unable to attend meetings in person.

Blended learning is not a requirement and its use is not mandated. It does, however, represent an additional tool that could be used in future under appropriate circumstances.

Box 1. Group Format Types

[1] Instructional Groups

Taught sessions led by a Convenor who has expertise in the activity which requires someone to lead Members, e.g., card and board game beginners, exercise groups, language groups, science talks, specialist skills groups.

[2] Discussion Groups

Discussions that may be led by the Convenor and by other members with a special interest in the topic or activity such current affairs, history, literature.

[3] Shared Practice Groups

Indoor groups centre on playing games or skills-based activities involving members with pre-existing skills and experience in the activity, e.g., advanced level bridge and other card or board games, arts and crafts, language practice groups for those with intermediate or better knowledge of a language, sports activities for established players.

[4] Outdoor Recreational Groups

Groups that evolve over time as Members work out a format that best suits all of them, e.g., outdoor groups such as bird watching, outdoor photography, walking.

[5] Hybrid Groups

These groups might combine two or more of the above methods.

Feedback and Flexibility

Group Convenors should always adopt a position of listening to feedback from Members and be willing to adopt new ideas if they keep the Group's activities fresh and interesting.

Once a Group has started, it is important for Convenors to obtain feedback from Members about how the activity is going for them. It is useful to get feedback from them about their initial expectations of the Group and whether these have been met.

As covered later, the u3a operates under an ethos of inclusivity and Members are expected to contribute to its activities as well as take part in them. Members' thoughts should be sounded out about a Group's aims and objectives, its purpose and how effectively it delivers to Members' expectations.

A Group might (and should be prepared to) change its direction or format on the basis of this feedback.

Group Convenors should find out about Members and, in particular, whether any of them have special expertise or experience of the activity that defines the Group. This expertise might then be drawn upon in exploring ways in which the Group's activities can evolve over time.

Running a Group: Initial Considerations

The Groups' Coordinator will discuss ideas about how their proposed Group will run with any potential new Group Convenors. The topics covered in such early discussions will cover decisions about:

- where the Group will run;
- how often it will meet;
- the length of each meeting;
- the optimal size of the Group;
- whether Members must pre-register;
- use of any equipment or materials and their availability and cost.

Usually, it will be the responsibility of the Group Convenor to explain the content and format of their Group to new Members. On some occasions, the Group Convenor may have only a general idea about what the Group will do, but the precise details of its format will be discussed and agreed further among Members.

All this information will be needed for the *Prospectus* and more detail is provided about this later. It is also important for explaining to Members what to expect of a Group.

Compliance Process

At this early stage, an initial “compliance audit” will be conducted by the Groups' Coordinator in relation to various policies with which all Epping Forest u3a activities must be compliant. After this, the Group Coordinator will also consider whether a Group raises any “risk issues” and, if so, how to proceed next. For many Groups, risk assessments will not apply, but for a few they will. Full guidance on this can be obtained from the Groups Coordinator. Further information is also provided later in this Handbook.

Policies and Forms

Epping forest u3a has signed up to a number of operational policies with their own codes of practice. These policies are summarised in this section (see Box 2). Full details can be found in the Appendices. Further advice on the use of these policies is available from the Groups' Coordinator.

Box 2. Epping Forest u3a: Activities Related Policies and Forms

Policies

Safeguarding Policy (Appendix 2)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Appendix 3)

Accessibility Policy (Appendix 4)

Data Protection Policy (Appendix 5)

Privacy Policy (Appendix 6)

Safeguarding Policy (see also Appendix 2)

Epping Forest u3a undertakes to act responsibly when instances or allegations of actual abuse or neglect come to their attention involving Members of our charity

Epping Forest U3A believes that everyone is entitled: to privacy; to be treated with dignity and respect; to lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so; to choose how they live their lives; to the protection of the law; and to have their human and civil rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.

If the Executive Committee or other Member of EFU3A become aware of possible or actual abuse or neglect relating to another Member, it should ensure that the safety of the adult at risk is secured as a first priority.

In a Group activity setting, any evidence of this sort that comes to light can be reported to the Groups' Coordinator in the first instance who will then follow the appropriate procedures with the Executive Committee and then with the National Office of the Third Age Trust.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (see also Appendix 3)

Epping Forest u3a undertakes not to show discrimination in its treatment of its registered Members or acceptance of new Members in relation to any of the "protected characteristics": ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race; age; disability; religion or belief (including the absence of belief); marital or civil partnership status; sexual orientation; pregnancy; gender reassignment; political belief.

In relation to Groups' activities, due consideration will be given to the needs of those with disabilities, including parking, disabled toilets, wheelchair access and availability of hearing loops in hired premises. While such considerations can be made by indoor groups held in members' homes, it is not expected that private homes should be altered specifically for these purposes.

There should be no discrimination against Members wishing to join a Group based on any of the "protected characteristics".

Accessibility Policy (see also Appendix 4)

This Policy draws specific attention to the needs of Members with special needs and disabilities.

Members might have hearing or visual impairments which make it difficult for them to hear or see what is happening at events and meetings.

Members might also have physical disabilities that affect their mobility or cognitive impairments.

Epping Forest u3a undertakes to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, to take these special needs of Members into account in the context of its activities.

It might not always be possible to cater to these needs, but every effort will be made to do so.

For those Groups held in hired premises, a central venue assessment is undertaken to ensure that any venue used by Epping Forest u3a does have accessibility compliance.

Data Protection Policy (see also Appendix 5)

Group Convenors may collect and keep data about their Group's Members.

Under the terms of this policy, however, only data that are directly relevant to running the Group should be held, that is, to communicate with the Group's Members about future meetings or events or to notify them about changes to arrangements.

These records will generally consist of Members' names, postal address and/or email address, and telephone number. Other data might be held as necessary, for example, which might relate to another policy such as Accessibility, or about a Member's special needs, or that provides information about an emergency point of contact for the Member in the event that they have an accident or are taken ill.

Members should know which data are being held about them, why it is needed and how it will be used. They should be invited to give their consent to the data being held by the Group Convenor.

The Executive Committee may request access to the names of Members of EFu3a's Groups for auditing purposes. Where this happens, a Group's Members should be informed in advance.

All data about Members must be held in secure place and not shared with anyone else.

If a Group Convenor takes any photographs of its members, then their permission must be granted in advance and they should be told where the images will be used. These images should not be used anywhere else without Members' permission.

Privacy Policy (see also Appendix 6)

Epping Forest u3a is committed to transparency in the way it collects and uses Members' personal data.

This policy can be conceived as operating alongside Data Protection Policy. There is some overlap in their broad principles.

Epping Forest u3a normally holds data concerning a members' name, their home address, email address, telephone number, and subscription preferences. Information may be taken about next-of-kin for Members who book places for organised events and excursions.

Group Convenors might hold personal data, such as a Member's name, their home address, email and telephone number.

As noted earlier, permission should be obtained from a Group's Members to hold such information.

Assurances should be given about why the data are being held.

At the Group level, these data are essential to enable Group Convenors to notify their Members about future meetings and any changes to normal arrangements.

At the level of the charity, Membership profile data may be used to determine if there is a need to create a more diverse Membership

All personal data should be held securely with assurances given that no one else will be allowed to have sight of the data.

These personal data should only be held for as long as they are needed for their originally stated purpose.

Final Points about Compliance

Group Convenors are not expected to learn these policies verbatim.

Some of them represents broad principles and values embraced by the national u3a movement. Others represent more specific sets of rules, often underpinned by legislation, with which all charities must be compliant.

If Group Convenors experience any ambiguity or uncertainty about these principles and regulations, they should consult with the Groups' Coordinator.

Risk Assessments and Compliance

All activities taking place under the auspices of “Epping Forest u3a” must be compliant with existing charity laws and regulations, with the rules and restrictions set by the Third Age Trust (which are generally determined by the requirements of the Trust’s insurers), and with the general ethos and principles of the University of the Third Age movement.

These rules apply both to new Groups and established ones. There are a number of assessments to be considered under this heading and some forms that relate to these rules are provided in this Handbook. Other advice and relevant checklists and forms can be obtained from other sources on which further information is provided later in this Handbook.

Box 3 below lists some of the key assessments and also indicates the Appendices in which further details are available.

Box 3. Forms

Accidents: Incident Report Form (Appendix 8)
Venue Risk Assessment (Appendix 9)
Home-based Activities Risk Assessment (Appendix 10)
Walking Group Risk Assessment (Appendix 11)
Remote Activities Assessment Form (Appendix 12)

Dealing with Accidents and Problems

Incidents

Occasionally incidents can occur involving Members while taking part in specific activities under the auspices of Epping Forest u3a. These incidents should be reported to the Executive Committee so that further appropriate action can be taken.

If Members are hurt or injured, there is a protocol that needs to be followed. It may be necessary to notify their next-of-kin. All Members are invited to supply information about this when they join Epping Forest u3a. It is also required that all Event Organisers should obtain this information about Members booked onto their outings and that Group Convenors should collect this information about their Group’s Members.

Further advice about dealing with these incidents for Group Convenors can be obtained from the Groups’ Coordinator.

In the case of an accident which results in injury or damage to property, a Group Convenor should complete an accident or Incident Report form (which can be obtained from the Groups’ Coordinator). In the absence of this, please send a detailed report of the incident to the Executive Committee (to the Chair, Vice-Chair or Groups Coordinator), including any relevant witness statements. A copy of the Incident Report Form is provided in Appendix 8 of this Handbook.

Personal accident insurance is **not** provided by the Third Age Trust.

If damage is caused to a property by a Member of the Group, take full details, as in future it may be the subject of an insurance claim.

Should you have a difficult Member whose behaviour is regularly disturbing to other Members of the Group, report this to the Groups' Coordinator for help. Do not take action yourself.

If a Group experiences a serious problem with someone in a session, it is acceptable to ask a troublesome Member to leave. Any incidents of this kind should be reported to the Groups' Coordinator as soon as possible after the meeting has finished.

If a Group has a Member who is not able to cope independently, inform the Groups' Coordinator.

Venue Risk Assessment Form

This form must be completed for any venue that has been hired for the purposes of Epping Forest u3a activities.

This assessment will generally be undertaken by an Executive Committee member and will suffice for all Groups held in that location.

Any new Groups should confirm that this exercise has been conducted for the venue they will use.

The full form is in Appendix 9 for information.

Home-Based Risk Assessment Form

This risk assessment is designed specifically for groups run in members' homes. It is short and easy to complete. The form is largely self-explanatory. This assessment advises Group Convenors to check for obstructions to entrances/exits and walkways used by Members, to check for trip or falling hazards such as trailing leads and cables or slippery surfaces, and to ensure there is enough space and seating for everyone. If you answer 'no' to any check item, you should consider whether you have taken any steps to reduce the potential hazard or other consequences.

See Appendix 10 for the full form.

Walking Group Risk Assessment Form

This risk assessment applies to any outdoor walking activity and other groups that take place outside and include walking as part of its activities. The risk assessment devised for our Walking Groups and other Groups that involve walking as a key activity is based on the one used by The Ramblers.

It comprises checklists for completion before the Group launches. While different walking routes may offer different kinds of scenery, it is not expected that these risk assessments should be conducted before every walk, assuming that one walk is very similar to another in terms of difficulty and potential risks it might present to those taking part.

If new elements are introduced to one or more walks that significantly alter their difficulty or risk levels, then new risk assessments will need to be carried out.

The full form is shown in Appendix 10.

Remote Activities Checklist

This risk assessment is relevant to any Groups that run physical activities remotely (i.e., over a video link). It does not apply to Groups of a more academic nature.

In conducting this risk assessment, the Group Convenor must be assured that the members taking part have their fitness checked in advance to ensure that this is an activity that is safe for them. They must also make sure they have adequate space to undertake the activity in their own home or other space they are using.

The form provides an instructive checklist for Group Convenors. This risk assessment must be completed before any such activity takes place for the first time.

The form can be found in Appendix 11.

Other Risk Assessment Information

Epping Forest u3a offers a wide range of activities to its Members. It is always seeking to expand the portfolio its activities. Different activities require different types of risk assessment and may also have to comply with specific conventions and protocols, rules and regulations. It is not our aim to provide assessment forms for everything we do that may present specific risks.

Guidance has been given by the Third Age Trust, our national governing body that is responsible, for organising indemnity insurance against accidents or other incidents that occur and adversely affect Members during their participation in u3a authorised activities.

According to the Trust those seeking guidance on risk assessments for their Group should refer to the rules and regulations and related checks and balances or risk assessments provided by the National Governing Body for that activity.

There is a website operated by the National Governing Bodies organisation that provides an extensive list of sporting and recreational activities and web addresses for their individual National Governing Body (or Bodies, where there more than one) that offers a one-stop shop that covers a wide range of activities (see: www.sportandrecreation.org.uk).

There are activities run within our u3a that do not appear on the National Governing Bodies list. Ad hoc online searches can usually provide information about these. Examples include various national bodies covering activities such as Tai Chi/Qigong (The British Tai Chi Association; Tai Chi for Great Britain; British Council for Chinese Martial Arts; Tai Chi & Qigong Union for Great Britain) and Yoga (British Wheel of Yoga; Yoga Alliance; Independent Yoga Network).

The key point to recognise is that these assessments are only required for activities in which there could be any kind of risk to Members.

Qualifying activities will usually comprise physical activities in sports and exercise fields and other recreational pursuits such as cycling and walking.

Any arts and crafts groups that use equipment or materials that could cause harm if incorrectly used will also need to be checked out in advance for the risks they present and the steps that will be taken by the Group Convenor to mitigate against these risks.

In all cases, where Group Convenors are uncertain about how to proceed, they should contact the Groups' Coordinator for further advice and information.

Preparing a Group's Entry for the *Prospectus*

All Groups must have an entry in the *Prospectus*. The *Prospectus* is distributed to all Members of Epping Forest u3a. It provides a comprehensive list of all activities including those that are organised as Groups and other ad hoc events, excursions and outings where the organiser acts as a booking agent.

It is important to provide information about each Group concerning:

- [1] the name(s) of the Group Convenor(s);
- [2] a contact telephone number and email/postal address;
- [3] information about when and where the Group will meet;
- [4] whether advance registration of Group Membership is required;
- [5] whether Members will need any special materials or equipment and whether Members must supply these items themselves (see also the next section on General Management of a Group);
- [6] further brief text information should also be provided that describes how the Group normally works or in the case of a new Group how it is envisaged it will work.

The *Prospectus* is renewed every two years. The Groups Coordinator will contact Group Convenors for their *Prospectus* entries.

If a Group changes in a significant way, such as a change of Group Convenor, a change in the address and contact details of the Convenor, a change in venue or times of meetings, the Group Convenor must contact the Groups Coordinator or Groups Assistant with this information.

These details will be required for the *Prospectus*. Box 4 on the next page illustrates typical entries in the *Prospectus* for guidance about typical entry content and format.

Box 4: Examples of Group Profiles in the Prospectus

<p>Current Affairs</p> <p>Convenor: Barrie Gunter Telephone: 0208-502-2892 Email: barriegunter220@gmail.com Location: Loughton Time: 10.00am-12 noon Day: Thursdays Frequency: Once a month, throughout the year Registration: Pre-registration required Resource Needs: None</p> <p>Members review recent news stories and the way they have been covered by different news media. Group meetings are restricted to 10 to 12 people to facilitate open discussion and to ensure everyone has an opportunity to contribute. One Member will usually start the discussion by raising a specific news story that has triggered their interest. Other Members then react with their own opinions on the story. Several stories from current or recent news agendas are usually covered in this way. Members agree an informal code of etiquette which means that there is tolerance of varied views and different standpoints on specific stories and the events or issues they concern.</p>	<p>Friday Art</p> <p>Convenors: Joan Simpson and Anne Walker Telephone: 01992-522464 or 0208-418-0966 Email: anne.walker26@gmail.com Location: Theydon Bois Village Hall Time: 9.00am-12.30pm Day: Fridays Frequency: Weekly Registration: Pre-registration required Resource Needs: Members must bring their own equipment and materials</p> <p>The Group follows monthly themes and uses occasional still life sets. Various techniques and exploratory methods are demonstrated. Members produce their own pictures but may use different materials and forms of arts. Members are free to pursue their own artistic styles and interests. They learn from observing the work of other Members and discussing art techniques and styles with each other. Although there is no formal teaching, some practical help is given to novices in terms of how to use specific materials and different forms of painting and drawing.</p>
<p>Bridge – Gentle Duplicate</p> <p>Convenor: David Gilbert Telephone: 0208-508-5829 Email: davids.gilbert@sky.com Location: Theydon Bois Village Hall Time: 1.30pm-5.00pm Day: Tuesdays Frequency: Alternate weeks, throughout the year Registration: No pre-registration required Resource Needs: None, all playing materials provided</p> <p>The Group plays Duplicate Bridge in a relaxed and stress-free environment. It aims to cater to bridge players of all standards, except absolute beginners, who simply want to enjoy the game and have some friendly social interaction with other players. Pairs play each other and move around the room through the session with everyone playing the same set of hands. Scores are usually calculated overnight and circulated to players via email the next day with some analysis of one of the played hands. New members are always welcome. No need to have a partner. Some separate coaching can be provided by the Convener either to aid general improvement or to cover specific aspects of the game.</p>	<p>Snap and Stroll</p> <p>Convenor: John Carnera Telephone: 0208-418-9873 Email: carnera@btinternet.com Location: Various locations around London and surrounding areas. Time: Various times. Day: Various days. Frequency: Once a month, throughout the year, subject to the weather. Registration: Pre-registration required Resource Needs: Members must bring their own cameras.</p> <p>This Group enjoys walks around different routes in and around London and makes periodic stops to take photographs of the surroundings. The photography component is as important as the strolling. Enough time is allowed for Members to take as many photographs as they want. Members are advised about future walks via email. Participants must be able to walk several miles at a gentle pace.</p>

General Management of a Group

Group Convenors should provide sufficient information from the start to enable Members to make an informed decision about joining a Group. As noted above, some of this information is used for the Group's entry in the *Prospectus*. Most of all, Members need to know *where* a Group will meet, how *frequently* and at *what times*.

Use of Specialist Facilities, Equipment and Materials

Further information might also be needed when explaining to Members how a particular Group will work in practice. If a Group activity requires Members to use specific equipment or materials, these details should be explained along with any additional associated costs that will be incurred. A few examples will help to illustrate the kinds of details Group Convenors might need to consider.

Indoor Groups that are more “academic” in nature such as Literature Groups will usually have chosen or required readings for Members to study that the Group will then discuss. The Group Convenor might determine what these are or there could be an agreement reached by Members collectively about the texts the Group will study over the year ahead. Members will then need to acquire their own copies which they will do at their own expense.

Language Groups might also use specific source texts. These will usually incur specific purchase costs. Other online sources might be used that are free. These could include online language-to-language translation applications. Once again, a Group Convenor might carry some advance homework on sources or the Group might do so together.

Arts and crafts groups might provide some equipment and materials but others do not and Members must provide their own. Arts/crafts in the form of painting, pottery and sculpting require specialised materials and equipment and the details and costs of obtaining these should be considered in advance. The same applies to activities such as Flower Arranging and various forms of Needlework.

Indoor activities that involve games will need the supply of those games or specific materials associated with these activities, such as decks of cards and scoring materials for various card games.

Decisions will be needed about who will supply these materials. Will Members bring their own or will the Convenor supply everything that is needed? What costs will be incurred? Might Epping Forest u3a ever be able to provide some support with this? There may be occasions when Groups that generate significant profits might be able to use these to purchase materials, but these would then become assets owned by Repping Forest u3a even though available for use by the Group's Members.

Indoor sports activities, such as Badminton, Squash, Snooker, Table Tennis, Walking Netball and many others, require playing equipment. Will these be provided by an outside source, such as a sports club with which the u3a has an arrangement or will the Convenor provide them or will Members have to bring their own? With some venues, it might be necessary for Members to acquire club membership at their own expense to enter the premises. Whichever solution is

reached, costs factors to Members will need to be calculated to give them an idea about the expenses joining this Group will incur.

Indoor exercise activities, which could include various forms of Dancing, General Keep Fit, Pilates, Tai Chi and Yoga, must also specify whether Members should bring along specific materials or items of equipment of their own (e.g., mats or specific exercise devices), or whether these will be provided.

Outdoor Groups involving sports such as Bowling, Golf, Tennis and various other organised and competitive activities will probably be feasible only through arrangements with external facilities suppliers. The use of such facilities, however, may still incur costs such as payments to the suppliers that will be incurred for each meeting and possibly also requirements that participants acquire specific clothing or playing equipment/materials that they must bring along with them (e.g., their own tennis racquets).

Outdoor Walking Groups should specify the kind of clothing and footwear Members should wear. Advice might also be provided about whether Members should bring along their own refreshments, unless refreshment stops have been pre-scheduled along the walking route.

As a general point about equipment and materials for Groups, Epping Forest u3a will not generally pay for these items and their costs cannot be met out of Members' annual subscriptions which are ring-fenced for other fixed costs such as annual payments to the Third Age Trust (to cover insurance and other services), production of the monthly *Newsletter*, monthly meetings for Members with invited speakers and other essential running costs.

Despite the points made above, Epping Forest u3a has from time to time been able to award grants to specific Groups, especially if they are very popular, to cover some running costs, if its financial circumstances allow.

As noted previously, Groups that make significant profits could elect to have some of these spent on equipment and materials, although a different decision might be to reduce venue contribution costs to individual members.

Any grants of this kind tend to be exceptional awards and they are made on the understanding that any equipment or materials that are purchased remain the property of Epping Forest u3a and must be returned to the u3a when the Group no longer needs them.

For further information about this, Group Convenors should contact the Groups Coordinator or, in their absence, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Epping Forest u3a.

Financial Aspects of Managing Groups

Members' annual subscription fees are not used to pay for the expenses incurred by running Groups. The costs of specialist equipment and materials must usually be borne by the Group itself. This means that Members must purchase these items individually or collectively.

Most indoor Groups are run from Members' homes. The hosts will most often be the Convenors of Groups although other Members might also offer to co-host on an agreed cyclical basis. Hosts provide their homes on a voluntary basis free of charge.

It is expected, however, that Members will reimburse hosts for the costs of any refreshments provided at Group meetings. A charge in the range of 30p to 50 per Member is usually made. These payments are made directly to the host.

Some indoor Groups are run in hired premises. These are Groups with larger memberships or which require additional space because of the nature of their activities. Any Groups needing to use hired premises must get this arrangement authorised by the Executive Committee, via the Groups Coordinator.

Premises' bookings are supported by the Executive Committee. Group Convenors should liaise with the Hall Bookings Assistant in relation to their requirements and he/she will find out what is available among the premises we would normally use. Each booking is then finalised by the Treasurer who will handle the payments to the premises' provider.

Group Convenors are not authorised to make their own bookings of premises or to make payments for these bookings under the auspices of Epping Forest u3a. Nor must they ask a third party to make such a booking on behalf of Epping Forest u3a.

Only the Executive Committee Members or designated assistants acting with the full authorisation of the Executive Committee are authorised to make venue bookings for any Epping Forest u3a meetings, but only Committee members may sign for payments for these bookings and authorisation of these payments is primarily the responsibility of the Treasurer.

Groups are expected to cover premises' hire costs by themselves in full. Rates can vary between premises and depending upon the length of each meeting. Sometimes, bookings can be made "by the hour" but in some venues time must be booked in longer blocks.

In Theydon Bois Village Hall, bookings must be made for a minimum duration of four hours. If a Group seeks bookings for just one hour, that still leaves three hours for which Epping Forest u3a must pay. This means that if other activities cannot be found to occupy the remaining time, the Group that has booked the Village Hall may be asked to cover the total cost even for the time it is not using. The Executive Committee has the final say on the payments a Group must make.

Judgements must therefore be made about a Group's needs and how these can best be catered for, while at the same time weighing up the cost of hire of specific premises given their individual terms and conditions.

Epping Forest u3a also makes advance assessments of venues to ensure their compliance with relevant regulations for accessibility and health and safety. No venue may be used without the full authorisation of the Executive Committee once it has had the opportunity to make these advance checks.

Given that many Members might drive to a venue, the parking capacity of the venue and parking availability of the surrounding area also needs to be assessed.

Some venues can be prohibitively expensive. When this is the case, Groups might need to settle for a venue that is not their first choice.

To reiterate the main point about premises bookings, Groups and their Members must aim to cover in full the hire costs of the premises they use.

Managing Payments collected at Group Meetings

All Groups that run in hired premises are asked to collect Members' contributions towards hire costs either in advance or at each meeting. Hence, if a Group meets at a venue for which there is a charge of £10 per hour, the Group's Members must share this cost between them. At Epping Forest u3a the charge per Member tends not to exceed £1.50 per meeting, but there are occasions when it could exceed this.

For small amounts that are collected as contributions towards hired premises costs, on a meeting-by-meeting basis, cash payments should be taken by the Convenor. These should then be periodically passed on to the Treasurer for payment into the Epping Forest u3a's bank account.

Epping Forest u3a has now adopted a policy of advance payments by groups from hall bookings which provides better control of group's finances and insures against losses. There may be some exceptions to this general rule, but these must be authorised by the Executive Committee that may adopt a more flexible payment policy initially for new Groups as they build up their membership.

Group Convenors should maintain a record of attendance at meetings to enable the Committee to monitor hall attendance levels.

Where payments in arrears have been agreed with a Group by the Executive Committee, the Group Convenor must agree a system of payments with the Treasurer. This agreement will cover the amount per meeting paid by each Group Member and the repayment schedule.

For all payments by cheque, cheques must be made payable to "Epping Forest u3a".

It is important that Group Convenors understand that all Members' contributions in respect of "in arrears" payments for hall hire belong to Epping Forest u3a. These monies should not be used to pay for any other Group's expenses without authorisation from the Executive Committee.

As indicated earlier, Group Convenors can ask their Members to make separate contributions towards the cost of any refreshments organised for them. A charge per Member in the range of 30p to 50p is usually deemed about right to ensure that the provider of the refreshments is not out of pocket. These monies do not have to be paid to the Treasurer but may be retained by whomever paid for the refreshments.

The broad principle in respect of Groups using hired premises is that they should attempt to break even. That is, the payments obtained from Members must match the cost of venue hire. This is not a precise science and it can be difficult for some Groups to meet this specific target. Profits and losses are tolerated but only within a limited range.

Management of Loss-Making Groups

When Groups using hired premises make a loss, that is, when the sums collected from Members do not cover the hire costs, the Executive Committee will contact the Group Convenor to discuss options. Such losses generally occur for those Groups that pay in arrears for the premises that Epping Forest u3a hired for their use. The movement towards a standard system of advance payments for hall hire is designed to reduce the probability of these losses.

There is no profit motive at Epping Forest u3a and our Groups are not expected to make profits but nor are they expected to make losses. Breaking even is not always easy to achieve and there will be some degree of latitude given to loss-making Groups. If losses are small, they will be tolerated for a time and must be authorised by the Executive Committee. Where losses are substantial, however, Groups will be expected to “make good” by moving towards break-even point at the earliest opportunity.

There are cost-saving options that Group Convenors can consider in this context. These include:

- [1] Asking Members to pay more at each meeting;
- [2] Recruiting more Members to spread the costs;
- [3] Having fewer or shorter meetings;
- [4] Moving to cheaper premises;
- [5] Moving to meetings into Members’ homes, if that is feasible.

Group Membership Management

Preparation for First Meeting

The first meeting will be used to introduce Members to the format of the Group. How this meeting is played out will vary from one type of Group to another. With Groups based on Group Convenor-led instruction, it might be useful to prepare an initial handout that will outline the topics that will be examined or covered or taught.

For more academic subjects, there may be additional reading that could be recommended to Members. With language groups, there may be a core text that is used. Some Group Convenors provide handouts for each meeting. Ultimately, these are decisions for each Group Convenor.

In Groups that will engage Members in discussion, an agreement will be reached concerning how these discussions will be run. Will the Convenor take the lead every time? Will Members take turns to lead any discussion? Will topics for discussion be drawn from a hat?

With Groups based on a skill, for example in arts and crafts, the Convenor and Members will agree on the format. This might take the form of Convenor-led activity or Members might individually or jointly carry out specific tasks. Each Group must work out the format that works best for them. There may also be instructional manuals that Members could acquire and which are central to the Group's activities and even provide a structure for the meetings.

With outdoor Groups such as Walking Groups, the Convenor should provide advance information about where each walk will start and finish. Members should be given an estimation of how long this walk might take. Reassurances must be given that slower walkers will not be left behind. Further information about the difficulty of the terrain and physical environment. Advice should also be given about appropriate footwear and other clothing, although this might vary seasonally and with weather forecasts.

Groups might set upper limits on the number of Members who can join and take part at any one time. Pre-registration might be necessary. Other Groups might advertise meetings and operate on an "open" basis, allowing any Members of Epping Forest u3a to turn up but with advice that capacity is limited and once it is full latecomers will be turned away. There will always be space limitation and Group Convenors will need to think carefully about how they handle Members who turn up late to find the venue is full. It is important to remember that we have policies that encourage inclusiveness values and it is important not to alienate Members who fail to gain access to an activity. Advance announcements might indicate that this could happen.

Managing Initial Contact with Group Members

For Groups with specified membership limits and for which Members must pre-register, it is important that Group Convenors re-contact Members if the Group does take a seasonal break in order to find out if they intend to return.

One other standard practice that needs to be observed for the first meeting of the Group during each new Membership year is to ask Members to bring their new Membership cards along to

prove they have re-joined Epping Forest u3a and paid their membership subscription for the year ahead.

Membership checks should also be made for any new Members who join at different points in the year. Most Members will re-join annually at the beginning of each new Membership Year. With Epping Forest u3a, this is now usually in September each year. Thus, all Group Convenors should run these checks at that time of the year whether they have taken a summer break or continued to meet continuously throughout the year.

With Groups that require pre-registration, Group Convenors will need to take down personal contact details about Members to be able to communicate with them about future meetings and perhaps also to check on their well-being if they have been absent for some time. It is important here to be mindful of Data Protection Policy which summarises our charity's obligations under General Data Protection Regulation and also the Privacy Policy which also concerns the rationale for holding persona data and the way it is used.

Under these regulations, the personal data about individuals must only be held for essential purposes associated with the operation of activities to which they have signed up. In a Groups' context, therefore, it will be legitimate to maintain data containing Members' names, telephone numbers and email addresses. These data should be maintained with Members' permission which should be an informed decision on their part having been told the purposes for which the data will be used.

The Group Convenor must make undertakings to keep these data in a secure place, to use the data only for specific Group-related purposes and not to share the data with anyone else. If any Member leaves the Group, their personal data must be deleted.

Box 5 summarises the initial details Group Convenors should collect from their Members at the start of each new Membership Year or at other times of the year when new Members join. A standard form (Group Member Joining Gorm) for this purpose is provided and is shown in Appendix 12.

Box 5: Group Member Information

Member's Name Telephone Number Email Address Next of Kin Name Next of Kin Telephone Number and/or Email Address

Exceptions to Normal Membership Status

When Members do turn up, they must initially offer evidence of their membership of Epping Forest u3a. Ordinarily, only Members of our u3a are permitted to attend any of our activities. There are three exceptions to this rule:

[1] When someone is a Member of another u3a that has an authorised “shared groups” arrangement with Epping Forest u3a in respect of a specific Group and then they should show their membership card for the other u3a;

[2] when a Member brings along a registered carer who accompanies them wherever they go (*but see further advice in Box 6 below and the following section on Vulnerable Adults and the Accessibility Policy in Appendix 4*);

[3] when a Member brings along someone who is thinking about becoming a member and wishes to attend a “taster session” for a Group which has specific interest to them. Only one taster session is permitted per individual per activity.

Box 6. Epping Forest u3a Members and Companion Carers

Membership of the u3a is open to everybody in their “third age”, namely those no longer in full-time employment and with no child-rearing responsibilities.

All u3as are *self-help, co-operative organisations run entirely by the members for the members* and therefore it is important that individuals are able to take full responsibility for their own participation in u3a interest groups and events.

Should the situation arise when a Member no longer feels confident that he/she can participate fully without needing help, it will be necessary for that person to be accompanied by a companion/carers who will be covered by the liability insurance provided by The Third Age Trust whilst in attendance.

Even if you have Members who are willing to help you cannot allow them to take responsibility for another Member’s care as this could be deemed to be outside our insurance cover if any injury or damage resulted.

Managing 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

Dealing with Non-Members

If any Member asks whether a non-member can attend a Group's meeting and the Group Convenor is not sure how to respond, they should contact the Groups' Coordinator for further advice.

If a non-member turns up without advance permission to do so under any of the exceptions listed above, Group Convenors should advise the Executive Committee, usually via the Groups' Coordinator, to confirm whether they have been granted permission to do so. This might be necessary in the case of activities held in hired premises. Where Group meetings are held in the Group Convenor's own home, they can refuse entry to anyone they wish.

Sometimes, Members will turn up having forgotten to renew their membership. If they do not have a current valid membership card showing proof of payment of their annual subscription, they might be permitted to stay for that meeting, but should be told that they must re-join Epping Forest u3a if they wish to continue attending the activity.

Dealing with Member Non-Attendance

All Groups that require pre-registration should keep a list of registered Members of their Group. This applies both to Groups run in hired premises and in Members' homes. Copies of these data, but without Members' contact details, should be forwarded also to the Groups' Coordinator.

Groups in hired premises should normally also keep a register of attendance because monies must be collected towards venue hire charges. Data on monies collected and member attendance should be sent to the Treasurer and also forwarded to the Groups' Coordinator. The money collected should be handed over or sent to the Treasurer.

If any Member misses a number of meetings, try to find out why. It is good etiquette to invite Members from the start of a new session or year to notify their Group Convenor if they know they will not be able to attend future meetings. Sometimes, Group Convenors have a rule whereby when Members fail to turn up for three consecutive meetings without apology or explanation, their membership of the Group is voided. Their place in the Group can then be opened up to a new Member. This practice is relevant specifically to Groups that require Members to pre-register.

Use of Paid Tutors

Over many years, there has been discussion across the u3a about the use of paid tutors for interest groups and other regularly held activities. It has become accepted practice to pay speakers at u3a's monthly meetings or other occasional events.

One reason for doing this is to encourage the u3a to be more outward thinking. The payment of tutors for specific and regularly held interest group meetings, in contrast, can give rise to complicated issues relating to employment law and income tax liabilities.

All local u3a charities have traditionally been run by volunteers found among their memberships. As such, these charities avoid acquiring the status of being "employees". This simplifies their taxation status and financial management. It also reinforces the ethos which embraces its core values and principles such as keeping costs to Members as low as possible and drawing upon the volunteering spirit of its Members in running all aspects of each u3a charity.

The Third Age Trust has issued advice to all its 1,000+ local affiliated u3as to avoid the use of paid tutors wherever possible. This is the policy adopted by Epping Forest u3a, together with the following advisories.

First of all, u3as should aim to find Members to take responsibility for running its interest groups. It is permissible for more than one Member to share this workload if one Member does not wish to take it on alone.

Within Epping Forest u3a, the Executive Committee will advertise interest Members have expressed in starting a new group and then invite Members to come forward not only to join it but also to run it.

Second, if no members of the u3a can be found, those interested in joining a group with a specified interest could find out whether a neighbouring u3a already runs such a group. In the case of Epping Forest u3a, Members should then contact the Groups' Coordinator on the Executive Committee to explore whether an arrangement can be reached with that neighbouring u3a to gain access to a specific group for Members.

These arrangements have been made in the past whereby Epping Forest u3a has opened up its Groups to other u3as and other u3a's have allowed Epping Forest's Members to join their Groups.

Third, if the above solutions fail to produce the desired end result, and notwithstanding the cautious policy about their use, finding a paid tutor for the Group could still be considered. It is likely also that the Group might have to operate independently and entirely outside the auspices of the Epping Forest u3a.

If this course of action is followed, the Group would not be listed as an Epping Forest u3a group in its Prospectus or on its website and would not qualify for insurance cover from the Third Age Trust.

Although the use of paid tutors is discouraged, it might be allowed under special circumstances under the auspices of Epping Forest u3a. If there is a considerable demand for a specific Group among our Members and the Executive Committee takes the view that it would add significant

value to the portfolio of activities offered by Epping Forest u3a, the use of paid tuition might be approved. A number of conditions would then need to be satisfied.

The use of a paid tutor would be approved only once it was established that no volunteer tutor from among Epping Forest u3a's membership could be found for the activity being considered.

The paid tutor would need to be registered as a sole trader under which status he/she would be independently responsible for their own income tax affairs. There must be no sense in which the paid tutor could be conceived to be a paid employee of Epping Forest u3a.

Members of the Group using the paid tutor would be responsible for all the paid tutor's costs and any venue hire costs associated with the activity on which the tutor is taking the lead.

No money would exchange hands between Epping Forest u3a and the paid tutor. Although the Executive Committee would assist with booking a venue, all costs associated with it would have to be covered by the Group.

Further advice for any Group Convenor considering the use of a paid tutor is to consult the HMRC Employment Status Indicator (<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/calcs/esi.htm>). If the result of this check clarifies that the paid tutor would not be classified as an "employee" of Epping Forest u3a, it will be safe to proceed to use this tutor. If the outcome indicates he/she would be regarded as an "employee", then the Group would not be allowed to proceed with a paid tutor under the auspices of our u3a.

Shared Groups

Epping Forest u3a's Groups are normally open exclusively to Members of our u3a. This means that only paid-up Members of Epping Forest u3a may join its Groups and they must show a valid and current Membership Card as evidence of their membership. There are three exceptions to this general rule, and one of these is Shared Groups (see the next section for more information about Groups' membership).

Groups may be shared between Members of different u3as. Epping Forest u3a occupies an area that is populated with other local u3a charities. There are over 50 u3as in Essex alone. There are several u3as that have a geographical overlap with our u3a. From time to time, we share Groups across adjacent or nearby u3as.

When Epping Forest u3a opens up one of its Groups to Members of another u3a this means that Members of that u3a may join the Group. This arrangement might be reciprocated with the other u3a opening up some of its groups to Epping Forest u3a members.

If any Group Convenor decides they would like to open up their Group to Members of other u3as, they should first contact the Groups' Coordinator about doing this. The proposal will then be put to the Executive Committee and an agreement will need to be reached internally about how this would happen.

Occasionally, another u3a might approach Epping Forest u3a to inquire about whether it might consider opening one of its Groups to their members. Then, the Committee would contact the relevant Group Convenor to find out whether they would be willing to do this. The final decision then will rest with the Group Convenor.

With all Shared Groups arrangements, there must be a formal agreement in writing between the Executive Committees of the u3as involved.

The original "ownership" of the Group must be clearly established. If the Group originated in Epping Forest u3a, then it would continue to be classed as an Epping Forest Group and control over the Group would reside fully within Epping Forest u3a.

The Group Convenor would still determine when the Group was "full". If, by opening up to other u3as, the Group became oversubscribed, it might be agreed upfront with the other u3a that Epping Forest u3a Members would be given priority. This might mean that Group Members from other u3as would have to step down.

All these details would need to be agreed between the participating u3as at the outset at Executive Committee level.

Members of other u3as that join an Epping Forest "shared group" will not also be eligible to join other Epping Forest Groups, unless they are also paid-up Members of Epping Forest u3a or those Groups also have a "shared group arrangement" with another u3a.

All matters relating to such Groups will be controlled and determined by Epping Forest u3a.

Group Convenors may not enter into such shared groups arrangements unilaterally without going through the Executive Committee.

If any Groups have been found to have done this, such arrangements could be required to end immediately unless a satisfactory formal agreement could be reached. Any of the Group's Members who belong only to another u3a would be required to join Epping Forest u3a if they wished to continue attending that Group's meetings.

Sustaining a Group

Groups will tend to come and go. Some Groups last for many years and others run for relatively short durations. Their lifespan depends upon the level of interest in specific activities and also on the efforts made by Convenors and Members to keep a Group fresh and interesting.

Group Convenors might reach a point, after running a Group for many years, when they decide to stand down. When this happens, Groups often come to an end but this does not have to happen. The u3a is a movement that has been built on the volunteering contributions of Members.

When an incumbent Group Convenor stands down, the Executive Committee will try to sustain the Group by finding a new Convenor.

When a Group Convenor can no longer continue to run an activity, he/she should inform the Groups' Coordinator. There may be many reasons for this. These can include leaving the area, other personal priorities, or inability to continue for health reasons. All Convenors are volunteers and therefore they can end their service to the charity at any time.

It is helpful if any Group Convenor who is contemplating standing down can inform the Committee as soon as they can about this decision. They might then ask if any of the Group's current Members would be willing to take it over going forward. If no one steps forward, the Committee will advertise for a new Group Convenor. If this is unsuccessful then sadly the Group will be closed down.

Advertisements and notices are usually placed in the monthly *Newsletter*, on the Newsreel shown at monthly Main Meetings, on notice boards in Theydon Bois Village Hall and on the website. The Committee will also make a direct appeal to its remaining Members for someone to step forward to take over running the Group.

The Groups' Coordinator will provide initial support to a new Convenor. It is also acceptable for more than one Member to offer to share the running of the Group. One Member will need to be nominated, nonetheless, as the main point of contact for the Group, with their name being included in the Group's entry in the Prospectus.

Support from the Third Age Trust

The Third Age Trust is the national umbrella organisation to which each local u3a charity, such as Epping Forest u3a, is affiliated. It has a national network of volunteers, including National Subject Advisors, who can provide advice on how to set up and run Groups. These advisors cover a wide range of activity fields, including academic subjects, cultural activities, skills-based activities, recreational activities and outdoor pursuits. They are available to help Members set up new groups on specific topics. Around 80 subject areas are covered. Up-to-date lists of Subject Advisors together with their contact details are also published in every edition of *Third Age Matters*, copies of which are made available for Members to peruse at our u3a's Main Monthly Meetings. Further details can also be found on the national u3a website (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/volunteers>).

The Epping Forest u3a Website

Epping Forest u3a's own website is another resource that is made available to our Groups. It can be used by Groups to present information about their own activities.

There is also a "Frequently Asked Questions" link on the website that was designed to help Group Convenors.

Group Convenors should contact the Technology Officer to find out more about how to use the website.

Appendix 1

Epping Forest u3a and the Third Age Trust

Epping Forest u3a is an independent charity that is affiliated to the Third Age Trust (TAT). Each year part of each Member's annual subscription is paid to the Trust. There are a number of services and benefits our u3a can access through this affiliation.

Third Age Matters. This is the national u3a's quarterly magazine that Members can order through the Trust.

Web Site Host. The TAT uses a centralised website building system through which local u3as can build their own websites. It is maintained and backed up by the Trust.

Resources. Local u3as can take advantage of legal advice, support about running a u3a, and specialist advice about starting up and running different types of interest groups and other activities.

Lectures. The Third Age Trust organises lectures online and offline that Members can sign up to attend.

Summer Schools. The National Office of The Third Age Trust organises these residential meetings in which member of other u3as give talks and run workshops on a wide range of topics.

Insurance: All activities organised by Epping Forest u3a are insured through the Third Age Trust. This means that all activities offered under the auspices of Epping Forest u3a must be compliant with regulations and rules stipulated by the insurers.

Appendix 2

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

This Policy and Procedure is written to enable the Committee to act appropriately whenever possible or where instances, or allegations of, actual abuse or neglect comes to their attention.

Epping Forest U3A recognises that some people are potentially at risk of abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect can take place in a person's own home, in the home of a carer, family member or friend, and within any form of institution e.g. hospitals, residential care or nursing home.

Where abuse or neglect is suspected Epping Forest U3A will aim to respond to the situation in a way which is caring, effective and enabling. Epping Forest U3A also recognises that abuse and neglect can be perpetrated by volunteers, other users of services, relatives, friends and neighbours. Epping Forest U3A acknowledges that the reasons for abuse and neglect occurring may not be fully understood and vary with each incident, often dependant on risk factors

Epping Forest U3A will neither condone nor tolerate any form of abuse or neglect and believes that all people should be able and, where necessary enabled, to live in an environment which is safe.

In all situations, Epping Forest U3A believes that everyone is entitled to:

- privacy
- be treated with dignity and respect
- lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so
- choose how they live their lives
- the protection of the law
- have their human and civil rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.

It is not appropriate for Epping Forest U3A to take the lead role in any Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, but should refer this to Advice and Volunteer Manager in National Office who will contact the appropriate local authority.

Epping Forest U3A will monitor the implementation of this policy and procedure annually through its Executive

Committee. *See page 3 for adoption of the policy by Epping Forest U3A*

Procedure

1. Epping Forest U3A recognises that it has a responsibility to ensure that its Executive Committee (and Charity Trustees), Group Convenors (who run the EFU3A's Study Groups), Event Organisers (who organise other events open to all Members), other Special Volunteers (who assist the Executive Committee with events) and Ordinary Members are made aware of EFU3A's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. This policy shall be published on the EFU3A web site. Notification of its existence will be provided in the monthly Newsletter which goes to all Members

2. Epping Forest U3A will support the alleged victims and the alleged perpetrators of any abuse as well as any volunteer who becomes aware of the abuse in so far as this does not compromise any Safeguarding Enquiry or investigation into the allegation or place other adults at risk.
3. While Epping Forest U3A will make every effort to respect the confidentiality of any information that is disclosed under this Policy and Procedure, this cannot be guaranteed. Information will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with GDPR 2018 but confidentiality is not absolute and information may have to be shared, on a 'need-to-know' basis only, to prevent:
 - Danger to a person's life
 - Danger to a person's health
 - Danger to others
 - Danger to the communityor to prevent or to facilitate the investigation of a serious crime.
4. This Policy, Procedure and Appendices will be reviewed every 3 years from their date of adoption. The names and details of the Executive Committee/Trustees should be amended when any change of Trustee takes place. *See Appendix 2 for Trustee details and the updating process.*

Courses of Action

- If the Executive Committee or other Member of EFU3A becomes aware of possible or actual abuse or neglect, it should ensure that the safety of the adult at risk is secured as a first priority.
- An Executive Committee member (in this instance the Vice-Chair of EFu3a) will have responsibility to receive and collate reports of any such cases. This Executive Committee member shall be designated as the Safeguarding Officer. Any Member of EFu3a who becomes aware of incidents of this kind shall report them to this officer of the Executive Committee in the first instance or to any other member of the Executive Committee in that officer's absence.
- Once notification of any instance of possible or actual abuse has been received by the Executive Committee, they should, as soon as possible, record the details of the abuse using SAP1, see Appendix 2 and advise the Advice and Volunteer Manager at u3a's National Office who will provide further guidance.
- The Executive Committee, having been advised of the possible or actual abuse, should satisfy themselves that the adult at risk is safe, and that the alleged perpetrator, if known, does not pose a threat to any other adult at risk.
- The Safeguarding Officer, working with the Advice and Volunteer Manager at National Office, and, where necessary, in consultation with other members of the EFu3a Executive Committee, will decide whether or not to refer the possible or actual abuse to the local authority and/or the Police. When a crime may have been committed, the Police must be contacted as soon as possible. If the decision is to not refer, the reasons for this must be recorded on form SAP1

- As far as possible, the adult at risk's wishes will be respected as to whether or not to refer any concerns to the local authority as a Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. However, it may be necessary to override these in the best interests of other adults at risk.
- The committee then completes SAP1 with the guidance of the Advice and Volunteering Manager.
- Completed SAP1s will be held in a designated file for a minimum of 2 years from the date of the last completed SAP1 on the adult at risk.
- Confidentiality is adhered at all times, therefore the contents of the form will not be provided to any third parties.

Safeguarding Policy: Appendix 1**SAFEGUARDING ADULT DISCLOSURE/SUSPICION RECORDING PROFORMA**

Adult at Risk			
Surname:		Forename:	
Gender:	Ethnicity:	Date of Birth:	Marital Status:
Home address:			
Post Code:			
Disclosure/Suspicion Date and Time:		Location of Disclosure/Suspicion:	
Who Received Disclosure/Had Suspicion:			
Type of Alleged Abuse:		Location of Alleged Abuse:	
Description of Alleged Abuse:			
Name:			
Signature:		Post:	Date:

Committee Member informed:		
Name:	Post:	Date & Time:
Committee decision:		
	No further action:	Referral on:
	Yes/No	Yes/No
Date		
Action Date:		
Reason for Decision:		
Date Record to be Destroyed:		
Chairman Signature:	Date:	Time:

Information contained in this document should only be used for the purposes of implementing and monitoring Epping Forest U3A's Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures and service monitoring. The information must not be copied, transmitted or in any way divulged without the permission of Epping Forest U3A.

Safeguarding Policy: Appendix 2

Contact details for the members of the Epping Forest U3A Executive Committee:

Surname, First name	Tel number	Mobile number	Email address

Amendments to contact details for the members of the Epping Forest U3A Executive Committee:

Committee details will normally change after an AGM and the above committee roles are those held by the current Executive Committee.

on dd/mm/year *by Name*

Committee role

(Print name)

Signature: _____

Safeguarding Policy: Appendix 3

If someone discloses abuse to you:

Do:

- Stay calm and try not to show shock or disbelief
- Listen carefully to what they are saying
- Be sympathetic (I'm sorry that this has happened to you') • Be aware of the possibility that medical evidence might be needed
- Tell the person that:
They did the right thing to tell you
You are treating the information seriously. It was not their fault
You are going to inform the appropriate person
You/ will take steps to protect and support them
- Record and report the disclosure in line with the Procedure

Do Not:

- Press the person for more details; this will be done at a later date
- Stop someone who is freely recalling significant events (Don't say 'hold on, we'll come back to that later'; they may not tell you or anybody else again)
- Do not promise to keep secrets; you cannot keep this kind of information to yourself
- Make promises you cannot keep (Such as 'This will never happen to you again')
- Contact the alleged abuser
- Be judgemental
- Pass on the information other than to those with a legitimate 'need-to-know' under this Policy and Procedure

In your record of the disclosure:

You should aim to:

- Note what people actually said, using their own words and phrases
- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about
- Note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time of the abuse or the disclosure
- Separate factual information from your own and others opinions
- Use pen or biro with black ink so that the report can be photocopied if needed

And be aware that your report may be required later as part of a legal action or disciplinary procedure.

Safeguarding Policy: Appendix 4 Key Definitions:

1. *Adult at risk:*

is any person, who is over 18 years of age and who has need for care and support, is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or risk of it.

2. *Abuse:*

is the “violation of a person’s human and civil rights by any other person(s). It may be a single or repeated act(s), physical verbal, psychological, sexual, institutional, discriminatory or financial, an act of neglect or failure to act”

3. *Types of abuse:*

- a) *Physical abuse* – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- b) *Domestic violence* – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.
- c) *Sexual abuse* – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- d) *Psychological abuse* – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- e) *Financial or material abuse* – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- f) *Modern slavery* – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- g) *Discriminatory abuse* – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- h) *Organisational abuse* – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- i) *Neglect and acts of omission* – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

- j) *Self-neglect* – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Recommended agencies:

- a) Their Local Authority, Social Services, GP Surgery, Police, etc.
- b) *Action on Elder Abuse* (AEA) is a confidential support and advice for older people who have been abused or people who know an older person who may be suffering abuse.
Available weekdays 9am - 5pm on freephone 0808 808 8141.
- c) *Voice UK* is a national charity supporting people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable people who have experienced crime or abuse. They also support their families, carers and professional workers.
Voice runs a helpline 0808 802 8686.

Appendix 3

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Statement

Epping Forest U3A is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of each U3A draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning). Epping Forest U3A recognise that some people are particularly likely to experience discrimination and harassment and are committed to making sure that the U3A is as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

Aims of this policy

This policy has been drawn up to comply with the Equality Act 2010. The Act stipulates that organisations must not treat someone unfairly on the basis of what it calls ‘protected characteristics’, which are:

- ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- age
- disability
- religion or belief (including the absence of belief)
- marital or civil partnership status
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy
- gender reassignment
- political belief

Epping Forest U3A will strive to ensure that members do not experience discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristics. This will include ensuring equal access to groups and behaviour between members and by Epping Forest U3A Committee Members and group leaders. The Equality Act states that organisations must consider what ‘**reasonable adjustments**’ can be made in order to accommodate those who may have particular needs. Epping Forest U3A Committee will review the reasonable adjustments needed for all members and individual members with particular needs on an ongoing basis. Where necessary, the Committee will seek guidance and additional support from the U3APlus sub-committee and/or National Office.

Practical approaches to inclusion

Epping Forest U3A will make sure all new members are aware of our policies and procedures in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and accessibility as well as the Member Code of Conduct. Epping Forest U3A will make reasonable adjustments and take practical steps to ensure a wide range of people can participate in our activities and meetings. This may include:

- Consideration given to the time of day of meetings and their location.
- Consideration of venues for meetings including:
 - Accessible to wheelchair users
 - Access to PA system and a hearing loop
 - Parking and disabled parking available

- Disabled toilet facilities available
- **Publicity:**
 - Using a variety of methods and platforms to communicate externally and raise the profile of the U3A.
 - Make communications available to those who don't have access to the internet
 - Use a range of images that reflect the local community
- **Recruiting new members:**
 - Doing outreach sessions and contacting agencies working with community groups who may be harder to reach
 - Encouraging members who are representative of the groups who are underrepresented within the U3A i.e. men or younger members to assist with the recruitment process
 - Managing growth so that we ensure that new members can be accommodated
- **Monitoring:**
 - Epping Forest U3A will monitor member numbers i.e. the numbers of members who join, re-join and leave each year in order to identify any trends in membership.
 - Epping Forest U3A committee will review the diversity of the membership on an ongoing basis and will seek to ensure that the U3A remains attractive and accessible to all.
- **Tasks and Roles:**
 - Ensure a range of people get their voices heard by encouraging more members to take on roles such as leading groups.
 - The U3A will appoint an Accessibility Officer whose role it will be to ensure that both new and existing members can access the members meetings and groups that they would like to join and consider what reasonable adjustments may be needed to ensure this.
 - The Groups Coordinator will ensure that new Group Leaders are made aware of issues in relation to accessibility and what steps they may need to take in meeting access requirements. Each group will be reviewed on an individual basis as certain groups may require a certain level of fitness or mobility and members need to be made aware of this in advance.
 - Epping Forest U3A will offer induction and training around equality, diversity and inclusion to Committee Members and Group Leaders on an ongoing basis.

Code of Conduct

Epping Forest U3A has a member code of conduct. The code of conduct outlines that members should abide by the U3As policies and procedures as well as treating each other with dignity and respect. This would include not acting in a way that would be deemed discriminatory or offensive.

Dealing with discrimination and harassment

Where Epping Forest U3A Committee become aware of any discriminatory practice or harassment, the committee will seek to address this through consultation with all parties concerned and, where necessary, through invoking formal procedures.

If any member of Epping Forest U3A feels they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory behaviour or harassment, this should be reported to the Committee. Any matters of concern

will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision will be made, in line with the U3As constitution and formal procedures, as to what steps will be taken to address the issue.

Definitions

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, when or whom they were born, or because of other characteristics. Promoting equality is about behaving in a way that tackles inequalities, aiming to ensure that all members are treated fairly, and do not experience discrimination.

Promoting diversity is about recognising that everyone is different and creating an environment that values members and ensuring that the U3A Movement is as accessible as possible to different groups within the community.

Inclusion is about positively striving to meet the needs of different people and taking practical steps to ensure members feel respected.

Direct Discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably because of their ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race, age, disability, religion or belief (including the absence of belief), marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender reassignment, political belief

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement is applied equally to all groups of people but has a disproportionately adverse effect on one particular group.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to 'protected characteristics' that has the purpose or effect of violating a members dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment is also unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has that same purpose or effect.

Victimisation occurs when a member is treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances because he or she has made a complaint or an allegation of discrimination, harassment or bullying or given information regarding such a complaint or allegation.

Appendix 4

Accessibility Policy for u3as in England, Scotland and Wales

Statement

Epping Forest U3A is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of each U3A draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning). Epping Forest U3A is committed ensuring that the U3A is as inclusive and accessible as possible for those in their third age who meet the criteria for membership. This policy document should be read alongside Epping Forest U3A's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Aims of the Policy

This policy has been drawn up to ensure that Epping Forest U3A takes steps to review accessibility needs for individual members and makes reasonable adjustments, where possible, to accommodate the needs of members with disabilities and/or health related needs. The policy takes into account the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and the need for Epping Forest U3A to avoid discriminating directly or indirectly against members with disabilities and/or health related needs. The policy will act as a reference point for Committee Members, Group Leaders and individual members in terms of the steps Epping Forest U3A will take. The policy will also identify the parameters of the adjustments that can be made. Epping Forest U3A is a membership charity and not a service provider, therefore whilst reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals can participate and can attend with carers to support their needs, there will be certain needs that the U3A will not be able to accommodate due to the level of care that an individual may need.

Practical Approaches to Increasing Access

In ensuring equality of access Epping Forest U3A will take the following steps:

- An Accessibility Officer will be identified from amongst the membership. This will be a volunteer role/committee member role.
- The Accessibility Officer will have responsibility for liaising with Group Convenors on an ongoing basis to ensure that groups are accessible and that Group Convenors 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 Accessibility Officer 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.

- 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.
- Committee members and Group Convenors will receive an induction and/or training designed to support them in having an awareness of and facilitating access.
- 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 Convenors will liaise with the Accessibility Officer where there are concerns about an individual's ability to participate.
- Epping Forest 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.
- Epping Forest 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.
- Epping Forest U3A will maintain a database of venues and the facilities offered by each venue to accommodate different needs.
- Epping Forest 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 their 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.
- Epping Forest U3A will seek additional advice and support from U3APlus, the Regional Trustee, National Office, the national website and external specialist organisations as required.

This policy was adopted on:

Policy review date:

Appendix 5

Data Protection Policy for Epping Forest U3A

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to the work of Epping Forest U3A. The policy sets out the requirements that Epping Forest U3A has to collect and process information for membership purposes. The policy details how personal information will be collected, stored and managed in line with data protection principles and the General Data Protection Regulation. The policy is reviewed on an ongoing basis by Epping Forest U3A committee members to ensure that Epping Forest U3A remains compliant. This policy should be read in tandem with Epping Forest U3A's Privacy Policy.

Why this policy exists

This data protection policy ensures Epping Forest U3A:

- Complies with data protection law and follows good practice
- Protects the rights of members
- Is open about how it stores and processes members data
- Protects itself from the risks of a data breach

General guidelines for committee members and group convenors

- The only people able to access data covered by this policy should be those who need to communicate with or provide a service to Epping Forest U3A members.
- Epping Forest U3A will provide induction training to committee members and group convenors to help them understand their responsibilities when handling data.
- Committee members and group convenors should keep all data secure, by taking sensible precautions and following the guidelines below.
- Strong passwords must be used, and they should never be shared.
- Data should not be shared outside of the U3A unless with prior consent and/or for specific and agreed reasons. Examples would include Gift Aid information provided to HMRC or information provided to the distribution company for the Trust publications.
- Member information should be refreshed periodically to ensure accuracy, via the membership renewal process or when policy is changed.
- Additional support will be available from the Third Age Trust where uncertainties or incidents regarding data protection arise.

Data protection principles

The General Data Protection Regulation identifies key data protection principles:

- Principle 1 - Personal data shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner
- Principle 2 - Personal data must be collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes; further processing for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or

historical research purposes or statistical purposes shall not be considered to be incompatible with the initial purposes.

- Principle 3 - The collection of personal data must be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed;
- Principle 4 – Personal data held should be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date; every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that personal data that are inaccurate, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay;
- Principle 5 – Personal data must be kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed; personal data may be stored for longer periods insofar as the personal data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes subject to implementation of the appropriate technical and organisational measures required by the GDPR in order to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals;
- Principle 6 - Personal data must be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

Lawful, fair and transparent data processing

Epping Forest U3A requests personal information from potential members and members for membership applications and for sending communications regarding members' involvement with the U3A. Members will be informed as to why the information is being requested and what the information will be used for. The lawful basis for obtaining member information is due to the legitimate interest relationship that the U3A has with individual members. In addition, members will be asked to provide consent for specific processing purposes such as the taking of photographs. Epping Forest U3A members will be informed as to who they need to contact should they wish for their data not to be used for specific purposes for which they have provided consent. Where these requests are received, they will be acted upon promptly and the member will be informed as to when the action has been taken.

Processed for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes

Members will be informed as to how their information will be used and the Committee of Epping Forest U3A will seek to ensure that member information is not used inappropriately. Appropriate use of information provided by members will include:

- Communicating with members about Epping Forest U3A events and activities
- Group convenors communicating with group members about specific group activities
- Member information will be provided to the distribution company that sends out the Trust publication – Third Age Matters. Members will be informed and have a choice as to whether or not they wish to receive the publication.
- Sending members information about Third Age Trust events and activities
- Communicating with members about their membership and/or renewal of their membership

- Communicating with members about specific issues that may have arisen during the course of their membership

Epping Forest U3A will ensure that group convenors are made aware of what would be considered appropriate and inappropriate communication. Inappropriate communication would include sending U3A members marketing and/or promotional materials from external service providers.

Epping Forest U3A will ensure that members' information is managed in such a way as to not infringe an individual members rights which include:

- The right to be informed
- The right of access
- The right to rectification
- The right to erasure
- The right to restrict processing
- The right to data portability
- The right to object

Adequate, relevant and limited data processing

Members of Epping Forest U3A will only be asked to provide information that is relevant for membership purposes. This will include:

- Name
- Postal address
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Gift Aid entitlement

Where additional information may be required such as health related information this will be obtained with the consent of the member who will be informed as to why this information is required and the purpose that it will be used for.

Where Epping Forest U3A organises a trip or activity that requires next of kin information to be provided, a legitimate interest assessment will have been completed in order to request this information. Members will be made aware that the assessment has been completed.

Photographs

Photographs are classified as personal data. Where group photographs are being taken members will be asked to step out of shot if they don't wish to be in the photograph. Otherwise consent will be obtained from members in order for photographs to be taken and members will be informed as to where photographs will be displayed. Should a member wish at any time to remove their consent and to have their photograph removed then they should contact Epping Forest U3A to advise that they no longer wish their photograph to be displayed.

Accuracy of data and keeping data up-to-date

Epping Forest U3A has a responsibility to ensure members' information is kept up to date. Members will be informed to let the membership secretary know if any of their personal information changes. In addition, on an annual basis, the membership renewal process will provide an opportunity for members to inform Epping Forest U3A as to any changes in their personal information.

Accountability and governance

Epping Forest U3A Committee are responsible for ensuring that the U3A remains compliant with data protection requirements and can evidence that it has. Where consent is required for specific purposes then evidence of this consent (either electronic or paper) will be obtained and retained securely. Epping Forest U3A Committee will ensure that new members joining the Committee receive an induction into the requirements of GDPR and the implications for their role. Epping Forest U3A will also ensure that group convenors are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the data they hold and process. Committee Members will stay up to date with guidance and practice within the U3A movement and will seek advice from the Third Age Trust National Office should any uncertainties arise. Epping Forest U3A Committee will review data protection requirements on an ongoing basis as well as reviewing who has access to data and how data is stored and deleted. When Committee Members and Group Convenors relinquish their roles, they will be asked to either pass on data to those who need it and/or delete data.

Secure Processing

Epping Forest U3A Committee Members have a responsibility to ensure that data is both securely held and processed. This will include:

- Committee members using strong passwords
- Committee members not sharing passwords
- Restricting access of sharing member information to those on the Committee who need to communicate with members on a regular basis
- Using password protection on laptops and PCs that contain personal information
- Using password protection, a membership database or secure cloud systems when sharing data between committee members and/or group conveners
- Paying for firewall security to be put onto Committee Members' laptops or other devices.

Subject Access Request

U3A members are entitled to request access to the information that is held by Epping Forest U3A. The request needs to be received in the form of a written request to the Membership Secretary of Epping Forest U3A. On receipt of the request, the request will be formally acknowledged and dealt with expediently (the legislation requires that information should generally be provided within one month) unless there are exceptional circumstances as to why the request cannot be granted. Epping Forest U3A will provide a written response detailing all

information held on the member. A record shall be kept of the date of the request and the date of the response.

Data Breach Notification

Were a data breach to occur action will be taken to minimise the harm. This will include ensuring that all Epping Forest U3A Committee Members are made aware that a breach has taken place and how the breach occurred. The Committee shall then seek to rectify the cause of the breach as soon as possible to prevent any further breaches. The Chair of Epping Forest U3A will contact National Office as soon as possible after the breach has occurred to notify of the breach. A discussion will take place between the Chair and National Office as to the seriousness of the breach, action to be taken and, where necessary, the Information Commissioner's Office would be notified. The Committee shall also contact the relevant U3A members to inform them of the data breach and actions taken to resolve the breach.

Where a U3A member feels that there has been a breach by the U3A, a committee member will ask the member to provide an outline of the breach. If the initial contact is by telephone, the committee member will ask the U3A member to follow this up with an email or a letter detailing their concern. The alleged breach will then be investigated by members of the committee who are not in any way implicated in the breach. Where the committee needs support or if the breach is serious, they should notify National Office. The U3A member should also be informed that they can report their concerns to National Office if they don't feel satisfied with the response from the U3A. Breach matters will be subject to a full investigation, records will be kept and all those involved notified of the outcome.

Appendix 6

Privacy Policy

Epping Forest U3A treats your privacy rights seriously. This privacy policy sets out how we will deal with your ‘personal information’, that is, information that could identify, or is related to the identity of, an individual.

What personal information do we collect?

When you express an interest in becoming a member of Epping Forest u3a you will be asked to provide certain information. This includes:

- your name
- home address
- email address
- telephone number
- your subscription preferences
- add any other that you as for

How do we collect this personal information?

All the information collected is obtained directly from you. This is usually at the point of your initial registration. The information will be collected via membership forms. The lawful basis for collecting and storing your information is due to the legitimate interest that Epping Forest U3A has in communicating with you as a member/contractual relationship that you, as a member, have with the U3A. In order to inform you about the groups, activities and events that you can access as a member we need to store and process a certain amount of personal data.

How do we use your personal information?

We use your personal information:

- To provide our U3A activities and services to you
- For administration, planning and management of our U3A
- To communicate with you about your group activities
- To monitor, develop and improve the provision of our U3A activity
- If you have subscribed to Third Ages Matters your information will be sent to them.

We’ll send you messages by email, post, other digital methods and telephone to advise you of U3A activities.

Who do we share your personal information with?

We may disclose information about you, including your personal information

- Internally - to committee members and group conveners – as required to facilitate your participation in our U3A activities;
- Externally – for products or services such as direct mailing for the Trust magazine – Third Age Matters. The magazine is distributed by a third-party processor and your information is shared with the distribution company via a secure online portal.
- If we have a statutory duty to disclose it for legal and/or regulatory reasons. In this instance we will seek to obtain your consent. Information would be shared without

consent where there were serious safety concerns and it was felt to be in your or the U3As best interests to disclose information.

How long do we keep your personal information?

We need to keep your information so that we can provide our services to you. The exceptions to this are instances where there may be financial, legal or insurance circumstances that require information to be held for longer whilst the issues are investigated or resolved. Where this is the case member/s will be informed as to how long the information will be held for and when it is deleted.

How your information can be updated or corrected.

To ensure the information we hold is accurate and up to date, member's need to inform the U3A as to any changes to their personal information. You can do this by contacting the membership secretary whose contact details are in the newsletter. On an annual basis you will have the opportunity to update your information, as required, via the membership renewal process. Should you wish to view the information that the U3A holds on you, you can make this request by contacting the membership secretary – as detailed above. There may be certain circumstances where we are not able to comply with this request. This would include where the information may contain references to other individuals or for legal, investigative or security reasons. Otherwise, we will usually respond within one month of the request being made.

How do we store your personal information?

Epping Forest U3A has in place a range of security safeguards to protect your personal information against loss or theft, as well as unauthorised access, disclosure, copying, use or modification. Security measures are in place. Your membership information is held on a secure site and accessed by Committee Members.

Availability and changes to this policy

This policy is available on the Epping Forest U3A web site or hard copies can be obtained from the Secretary. This policy may change from time to time. Members will be informed via the newsletter and the monthly meetings when any material changes are made to Epping Forest U3As policies and procedures.

Contact

If you have any queries about this policy, need it in an alternative format, or have any complaints about our privacy practices, please contact any of the Committee whose details are listed in the newsletter.

Appendix 7

Insurance

PUBLIC & PRODUCTS LIABILITY

AVIVA INSURANCE LIMITED - POLICY NUMBER 24988677CCI

This cover indemnifies all U3A members against all sums you could become legally liable to pay as a result of:

- Accidental injury to or death of any person.
- Accidental loss or damage to material property not belonging to you, which arises or is caused in connection with the 'business' of U3As.

Principal exclusions

- The use of motor vehicles in circumstances which require compulsory insurance under the Road Traffic Act.
- Any craft with an engine designed to travel in or through water, air or space.
- Loss or damage to property in the control of the insured.
- Extreme sports.

Limits

Public Liability - £5,000,000 for any one incident

Products Liability - £5,000,000 all insured events in any one period.

Professional Indemnity - £100,000.

Excess

£250 per claim.

PUBLIC & PRODUCTS LIABILITY EXCESS LAYER

ACE EUROPEAN GROUP - POLICY NUMBER UKCASO 09446113

This policy provides a top-up of £5,000,000.

MONEY COVER

AVIVA INSURANCE LIMITED – POLICY NUMBER 24988677CCI

This policy covers U3A cash held in members' homes, hired premises and in transit.

Principal exclusions

- Fraud and dishonesty.
- Loss from unattended vehicles.
- Shortages or errors.
- Loss resulting from the use of a key or combination code from premises outside normal hours.

Limit

£1,000.

Excess

Zero.

ALL RISKS EQUIPMENT INSURANCE

AVIVA INSURANCE LIMITED – POLICY NUMBER 24988677CCI

This policy provides cover for loss or damage to property owned by a U3A, excluding wear and tear depreciation and gradual deterioration, wherever it is held and in transit, providing due diligence is observed and reasonable precautions are taken to ensure it is stored securely.

Principal exclusions

- Unexplained loss.
- No signs of forced entry.

Limit

£25,000.

Excess

£100.

HOME CONTENTS COVER

AVIVA INSURANCE LIMITED – POLICY NUMBER 24988677CCI

This covers damage to the property of any U3A member whilst their home is being used to host a U3A interest group/meeting.

Principal exclusions

- As above.

Limit

£25,000.

Excess

£100.

CHARITY INDEMNITY INSURANCE

AVIVA INSURANCE LIMITED – POLICY NUMBER 24988861CCI

This cover provides:

- Indemnity for the legal liability of a trustee or the charity for loss which results from a wrongful act when carrying out the duties of a trustee.
- Investigation costs.
- Indemnity for the legal liability of a trustee or the charity for the physical destruction of or damage to documents.
- Indemnity for any reasonable cost incurred as a result of restoring or replacing the documents.

Principal exclusions

- Circumstances which you should have known about.
- Dishonesty and fraud.
- An insured person who has gained personal profit to which they were not entitled.

Limit

£500,000 any one U3A in aggregate in a year and £3,000,000 in aggregate for all U3A claims in a year.

Excess

£250.

TOUR OPERATORS' LIABILITY INSURANCE

CATLIN POLICY NUMBER TOL499004

This policy has been taken out to provide cover for a group convenor who wishes to organise a short study trip which involves overnight accommodation.

It consists of:

Public and Products Liability – which provides indemnity against the legal liability for accidental injury to third parties or loss or damage to their material property arising in connection with the product/event.

Limit

£2,000,000 any one event.

Principal exclusions

- The use of vehicles which require compulsory motor insurance under the Road Traffic Act.
- Any craft with an engine designed to travel in or through water, air or space.

Legal Defence – which provides indemnity for costs arising and costs awarded in connection with the defence of proceedings brought or an appeal against a conviction relating to an alleged offence in the course of the business in respect of Part 11 of the Consumer Protection Act, the Trade Descriptions Act 1968 and the Package, Travel, Package Holiday and Package Tour regulations 1992, where there has been no actual injury or damage.

Limit

£100,000.

Principal exclusions

- Fines or penalties.
- Compensation ordered or awarded by a court.
- Deliberate act or omission.
- Where injury or loss of or damage to property has occurred.

Emergency legal assistance – which provides indemnity to the insured in respect of costs and expenses incurred in providing emergency assistance to the passenger where such passenger suffers bodily injury or in the event of the death of the passenger, the passenger's legal personal representatives.

Limit

£5,000.

Professional indemnity – which provides indemnity to the insured for the legal liability for damages and claimants' costs and expenses in respect of claims arising for breach of professional duty by reason of neglect, error or omission occurring or committed in good faith. This also includes the cover required for 'packages' as

defined in the Package Holiday Package Tour and Package Travel Regulations 1992.

Limit

£1,000,000.

Principal exclusions

- Any claim arising from insolvency or bankruptcy of the insured or any tour operator or supplier of services.
- Dishonesty, fraudulent act or mission.
- Any claim or expenses resulting from the use of any mechanically propelled vehicle, aircraft or watercraft.

Excess

£250 (all sections).

Appendix 8

Incident Report Form

Please note that this form is to be filled in by a member of the committee, a group convenor, or the property owner and should be retained on file by the U3A committee in case of a claim and for a period of three years even if a claim appears unlikely.

A YOUR DETAILS

U3A	
Name	Position
Email	Telephone
Address	
Postcode	

B INCIDENT DETAILS

Date of incident	Time of incident
Where did the incident occur?	
Please state the reason for the injured person or damaged property being there	

Please describe the circumstances of the incident
Attach a sketch or photograph(s) if appropriate

Incident Report Form

C PARTICULARS OF PERSON(S) INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT (continue on a blank page if necessary)

Name	Email
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Was he/she a member of your U3A on the date of the incident?	
Name	Email
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Was he/she a member of your U3A on the date of the incident?	

Sections D and E are to be completed for any incident involving injury.

D PARTICULARS OF THE INJURED PERSON(S) (continue on a blank page if necessary)

Name	Email
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Was he/she a member of your U3A on the date of the incident?	
Name	Email
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Was he/she a member of your U3A on the date of the incident?	

E DETAILS OF INJURY

Describe the injury/injuries
Immediate action taken
Treatment at the scene
Admission to hospital
Ongoing medical treatment

Section F is to be completed for any incident involving damage to property

F DETAILS OF DAMAGED PROPERTY

Describe damage caused	
Estimated cost of repair or replacement	
Name of owner of damaged property	
Email	Telephone
Address	
Postcode	

The remaining sections are to be completed for all incidents

G NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS OF ANY WITNESSES TO THE INCIDENT

H DECLARATION

I/We declare that to the best of my/our knowledge and belief all the foregoing particulars are true and correct in all respects.	
Signed	Dated

Appendix 9

Venue Risk Assessment Form

U3A Name	
Interest Group	
Date	Location/Postcode
Description of Activity	

Check		Yes (<input type="checkbox"/>)
1	Emergency Exits unobstructed	
2	Emergency Exits unlocked	
3	Fire Extinguishers in place	
4	Toilet facilities open, clean, paper available etc	
5	Walkways free from trip hazards	
6	Kitchen facilities accessible & clean	
7	Kettle leads in good condition, free from wear and fraying, plug securely attached	
8	Refreshment items available	
9	First Aid equipment accessible	
10	Safety Briefing given a. Emergency exits b. Assembly point c. What to do if fire discovered d. What to do if the alarm sounds e. Accident / injury reporting f. Toilet and washing facility location	
11	Other (specify)	
12	Other (specify)	

Notes

Exceptional Circumstances

There may be reasons why additional conditions may have to be taken into consideration when completing this risk assessment.

When completing a risk assessment in exceptional circumstances you need to consider how this will impact on the activity, what additional measures or changes you will need to make for each identified hazard in order to reduce risks involved in running the activity. These changes will need to be incorporated into the assessment of how hazards can be reduced or avoided to respond appropriately to the exceptional circumstances you are facing.

Notes for exceptional circumstances:

Signed	Dated
---------------	--------------

Appendix 10

Home-Based Risk Assessment Checklist

Epping Forest u3a

Group Name.....Group Convenor/Leader.....

Description of Group Activity

Risk Types	Risk Assessment Checklist	Yes	No	N/A	If 'No', what actions will you take to mitigate this risk?
General	Is there enough space for members in attendance?				
	Are there any trip hazards or anything that might make members trip/fall?				
	Are all walkways that members have access to kept free from obstruction?				
	Are there enough seats for members in attendance?				
	Can everyone access the meeting room?				
	Have you taken a register of members in attendance?				
Risk Types	Risk Assessment Checklist	Yes	No	N/A	If 'No', what actions will you take to mitigate this risk?
Electrical	Have you made sure there are no trailing leads or cables to prevent members from tripping or falling?				
	Have all cables in use for this activity been inspected to make sure they are fit for use?				
Fire safety	Are all exits unobstructed?				
	Is there a working smoke alarm?				
Well-being	Are light refreshments available to all members?				
	Have members been made aware of any pets?				

The last section of the checklist is for any additional hazards that you might identify. There may not be any, so you could leave this section blank.

Other identified risks	What will you do to mitigate these risks

Signed	Dated
--------	-------

Appendix 11

Walking Groups Risk Assessment Checklist

U3A Name	
Interest Group	
Date	Walk Name
Distance	Terrain Type

Before the walk		Yes (✓)
1	Provision of information to prospective walkers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Location b) Distance c) Timing d) Linear / Circular Route e) Terrain f) Height and climbs involved g) Level of fitness required h) Identification of any ‘break off’ points (e.g. if members feel unable to continue) i) Appropriate footwear & clothing j) Toilet / refreshment facilities en route k) What to bring – food / drink / compass / map / mobile phone l) Dogs permitted? m) Meeting point n) Public transport options o) Car parking facilities p) Need of walkers to bring emergency telephone numbers for next of kin and relevant medical details 	

On the day		Yes (✓)
1	Check first aid kit & emergency blanket. Identify any first aiders.	
2	Briefing before starting out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Route b) Duration c) Terrain d) Known Hazards 	

	e) Emergency Arrangements – illness, exhaustion, accident, weather problems, terrain problems, lost contact with group f) Be prepared to advise inadequately equipped walkers not to go but they must make the final decision	
3	Appoint a backmarker	

ring the walk		Yes (✓)
1	Stay at the front but make sure you can always see the backmarker	
2	Set an appropriate pace for the level of walk	
3	Check the route frequently	
4	Periodically count the number in the group	
5	Other(specify)	

Exceptional Circumstances

There may be reasons why additional conditions may have to be taken into consideration when completing this risk assessment.

When completing a risk assessment in exceptional circumstances you need to consider how this will impact on the activity, what additional measures or changes you will need to make for each identified hazard in order to reduce risks involved in running the activity. These changes will need to be incorporated into the assessment of how hazards can be reduced or avoided to respond appropriately to the exceptional circumstances you are facing.

Notes for exceptional circumstances:

Signed

Dated

FURTHER NOTES

Appendix 12

Remote Activity Risk Assessment

U3A Name	
Interest Group	
Date	Location/Postcode
Description of Activity	

In exceptional circumstances some exercise activities are being run remotely. This poses additional hazards for participants as Group Convenors may not be able to see if a participant is having problems or issues with their fitness levels for certain activities. Further, there is the risk that someone could hurt themselves whilst taking part in the class and if home alone they may be unable to raise the alarm. It is advisable therefore to conduct a remote activity assessment in addition to any standard risk assessments you have carried out for the activity. Consider also if it is advisable for anyone who has not taken part before to commence this activity during the current situation.

Before the activity	Yes (ü)
<div style="display: flex;"> <div style="width: 30px; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 10px;"></div> <div> <p>Asses the following with participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> q) Level of fitness required r) Taken part in this activity previously and have no health problems from doing so s) Mindful not to overdo things and stay well within the limits of what is comfortable for their ability and fitness level t) Appropriate clothing & footwear </div> </div>	

On the day	Yes (ü)
<div style="display: flex;"> <div style="width: 30px; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 10px;"></div> <div> <p>Before starting and during the activity group leaders and participants should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g) Inspect area prior to start of session, remove/isolate any hazards h) Keep a telephone close by if they have any difficulties i) Arrange a safe and comfortable chair to sit in (if appropriate) j) Check at intervals if members feel able to continue k) Have in place a verbal or texted check-in for all participants to ensure at the end that everyone completed the group activity safely </div> </div>	

Signed	Dated
---------------	--------------

Appendix 13

Group Member Joining Form

Group Member Joining Form

Could you please provide the following personal details about yourself?

This information will be kept in a secure location and will not be shared with anyone else without your permission. It will be destroyed immediately when you leave the Group.

Your Name.....

Your Telephone Number.....

Your Email Address.....

Your Epping Forest u3a Membership Number.....

Name and Telephone Number of Next of Kin or person we can contact in the event of an emergency (below)

Name.....

Telephone Number.....