

# Accessibility Policy for Great Glen U3A

## 1. Statement

Great Glen 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). Great Glen 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 Great Glen U3A's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

## 2. Aims of Policy

The policy takes into account the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and the need for Great Glen U3A to avoid discriminating directly or indirectly against members with disabilities and/or health related needs.

This policy has been written to ensure that Great Glen 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 also identifies the parameters of the adjustments that can be made. Great Glen 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.

## 3. Practical approaches to increasing Access

In order to ensure equality of access, Great Glen U3A will take the following steps:

- Appoint an Accessibility and Welfare Officer to serve as a point of reference and a focus for supporting members with disabilities and/or health related issues that may need additional support and/or adjustment. The Accessibility and Welfare Officer will liaise with Group Leaders on an ongoing basis to ensure groups are accessible and that Group Leaders are aware of what the expectations are and what adjustments may need to be made. This is a volunteer role. The Accessibility and Welfare Officer will invite members and prospective members to notify us of any disabilities or health needs they may have and how these could be met.
- Ensure, as far as possible, that face to face Monthly Meetings are held in venues which are well lit and fully wheelchair accessible, with a sound system in use. Front row seats will be saved, if requested, for members with impaired hearing or vision. Access will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to consider any additional reasonable adjustments that may need to be made. A database of venues and the facilities offered by each venue to accommodate different needs will be maintained.
- Allow members to bring carers to our meetings and activities without requiring carers to become members. NB. It is for members needing the support of a carer to make their own arrangements. 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.

- Try to ensure that there is a range of groups available that will provide access to members so that members do not feel excluded from too many interest/activity groups.

#### 4. Dealing with accessibility

- Great Glen 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 his or her 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.
- Any members or prospective members who consider that they have not been afforded the support implied in this policy should in the first instance raise the matter with the Accessibility and Welfare Officer. If they remain dissatisfied, they should contact the Chairman of the Committee of Trustees.
- Great Glen U3A will seek additional advice and support from U3APlus, the Regional Trustee, National Office, the national website and external specialist organisations as required.


#### 5. Availability and changes to this policy

This policy is available on the Great Glen U3A website. The policy may change from time to time. If we make any material changes, we will make members aware of this through the newsletter.

#### 6. Contact

If you have any queries about this policy, please contact us at [chairman@greatglenu3a.co.uk](mailto:chairman@greatglenu3a.co.uk) or by contacting any other committee member.

**This policy was adopted on:** 1 September 2020

**Signed:** 

**Committee Role:** Chairman

**Print Name:** R R MANSFIELD

**Policy Review Date:** September 2021