



# **Guildford Area U3A**

## **Guidelines for Group Leaders**

**<https://u3asites.org.uk/guildford>**

## SUMMARY

### Your First Group Meeting

- The caretaker's phone number is usually published on the outside of the buildings if your venue is not open.
- Make a note of the **postcode**, as you will need it if you have any reason to call the emergency services.
- Welcome your group members.
- Record the members' registration numbers, from a current membership card or confirmatory email.
- After about three meetings, ensure that the group members list on Beacon is updated or send a list of names and membership numbers to the Membership Secretary for entry into Beacon.

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Welcome, and thank you for starting up a new group or taking over an existing group for Guildford Area U3A. Groups, or Interest Groups, are the life blood of U3As. There are as many ways of approaching the establishment and running of the groups as there are people to run them. You may have been a U3A member for a long time, or you may be very new. This document tries to provide you with some of the information that you may need, on the basis of the experience and practice of many U3As, and is passed on in the hope that it may be useful. It also points you in the right direction for more information that may help you. We wish you every happiness and success with your venture.

## **Guildford Area U3A (GU3A) is a Registered Charity No: 296975**

The U3A was set up to be an educational self-help group for the retired or semi-retired. It draws on the wealth of knowledge and experience of its members, to set up study groups and common interest groups, and to organise recreational activities. Originally set up across the country in the 1980s, Guildford is one of the biggest U3As. We have over 100 groups, covering a wide range of subjects. We are all affiliated to The Third Age Trust (<https://www.u3a.org.uk>) who provide us with insurance, licences and other up to date information and advice.

There are two main committees:

The **Executive Committee** and the **Programme Planning Committee**. Details of membership of these are on the GU3A website and in the front of the prospectus.

## **Group Co-ordinators**

You may have some questions about how to proceed as a group leader. Hopefully this document will answer most of these. For any questions, your first port of call is your Group Co-ordinator, and you can find their name and contact details on our website - on the Welcome Page, click link for Programme Planning Committee. These details are also in the annual Prospectus.

The Group Co-ordinator plays an essential and invaluable role in advising and helping new groups to be set up. The usual responsibilities will be:

- Co-ordinating support for new groups or groups that may be in difficulties.
- Being the focus for pooling ideas between group leaders on all aspects of group co-ordination.
- Canvassing for new group leaders.
- Liaising with the Committee on all aspects of faculty groups.

## **Being a Group Leader**

### **Starting up a new group**

We always welcome a new group, as long as there is someone volunteering to run it. Anyone wishing to start a new group should talk to the appropriate Group Co-ordinator in the first instance. New groups will normally start in the autumn term and setting up a new group can be a lengthy process.

- A venue may be required, contact details need to be added to the website and included in the prospectus.
- We start the process in the early spring each year, with group leaders submitting the information for the following year's prospectus.
- Venues need to be booked – all done by just one very busy person!
- By May we have a draft prospectus and then the final document is finished in time to be sent out to all members in July, with their subscription renewal notices.
- It is possible to add new groups at other times, but it is preferable that they appear in the prospectus so information must be made available for this timetable. Prospectus information is also on the GU3A website and this is updated as and when necessary.
- We have two forms that need to be completed:

- Group leader details
  - Group description, dates, venue, and other details
- These forms are available from Group Co-ordinators and should be returned to them once complete. They will then be forwarded to the Prospectus Secretary.

### **Taking over an Existing Group**

There are various reasons for changing a group leader mid-year, but it can be done quite easily.

- If you are already a member of the group then you can learn a lot from the outgoing group leader.
- If you are new to the group then it is worth visiting to see how it runs and to talk to both group leader and members.
- The group leader details form, as above, needs to be completed and returned to your Group Co-ordinator and the Prospectus Secretary, so that details can go on the website and be ready for the next prospectus.

### **Venues**

As a large U3A, with many large groups, hiring venues is an important part of managing the process. However, there is a significant cost to hiring, with rates varying dependent on the venue.

- Please do not hire a hall in your own name.
- If you need a hall for any reason, please contact our Venue Secretary, Jane Robertson (07889 966026, [venues@guildfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:venues@guildfordu3a.org.uk)) and your Group Co-ordinator.
- Only halls booked by the U3A for meetings with fully paid up members are covered by our insurance.
- If you have a problem with your venue then please tell your Group Co-ordinator and Jane Robertson, who will endeavour to get any problems resolved.
- It is always worthwhile making friends with the venue caretaker, as this may make it easier to sort out small problems.
- If you have to cancel a meeting, and will not be using the venue that was booked, then please contact Jane Robertson as it may be possible to recoup the cost of hire.

Certain dates each year are excluded from groups' programme of meetings. If your group meeting coincides with the Annual Lecture, the AGM, New Members' Meeting, or Group Leaders' Meeting, then groups are asked not to meet at those times in order to allow your members to attend those events. Bank Holidays are also excluded dates.

When you go to your venue for the first time:

- Make sure to check the fire and safety regulations.
- Remember to take your mobile phone with you, as it may be necessary to phone the caretaker, or someone else, if there is a problem.
- The caretaker's phone number is usually published on the outside of the buildings.
- Make a note too of the postcode, as you will need it if you have any reason to call the emergency services.
- All our venues' postcodes are on the back outside cover of the prospectus.
- Remember, too, that you can call 112 as well as 999 to contact the emergency services.

- Most of the venues that we use have some parking availability, but this is not always generous.
- If there are numerous activities going on at the venue then parking will often be a challenge.
- In order to avoid problems, please encourage your group members to car share whenever possible or use public transport. Bus passes for free bus travel are available from Guildford Library or online from Surrey County Council.
- There are details about bus routes across Guildford for accessing our venues on the Guildford U3A website (Locations page) or the Surrey County Council website.
- Some of our very small groups meet in private venues, usually someone's house.
- You need to think about access, parking and space indoors when considering if this is a suitable option for your group.

### **Equipment**

- If your group needs to use equipment, such as laptops, projectors, PA systems, CD/DVD players, etc, then we have quite a lot available for group leaders to borrow. Alternatively, you can use your own equipment if you have it.
- Most equipment is held by Bernie Cohen (01483 823898, [profbernie@gmail.com](mailto:profbernie@gmail.com)), Moira MacQuaide (01483 452376, [moira.macquaide@gmail.com](mailto:moira.macquaide@gmail.com)), Harry Wickens (01483 531436, [harrywickensu3@gmail.com](mailto:harrywickensu3@gmail.com)) or Justin Jackson (01483 429473, [justingjackson@hotmail.com](mailto:justingjackson@hotmail.com)).
- They can advise on booking out pieces of equipment or advise on how to acquire what is needed.
- At present only one venue, St Catherine's, is requiring PAT (portable appliance testing) tested equipment for U3A meetings.
- For these, all groups must use PAT tested equipment, including extension cables (n.b. laptops that can run off battery for the length of the meeting do not require testing).
- If there are any problems with U3A equipment then please notify one of the above as soon as possible.
- If your group is considering the option of running hybrid meetings, with some members face-to-face in the venue and others joining via Zoom, then please let your Group Co-ordinator know so that the Committee is kept up to date. There may be a member in your group who is able to give some support in managing the technology.

### **Learning Resources**

- U3A Headquarters, The Third Age Trust (TAT), has a resource centre to help group leaders with materials for their groups, although not all topics are covered. You can contact them at [resource.centre@u3a.org.uk](mailto:resource.centre@u3a.org.uk) or on 020 8315 0199.
- They also have central subject specialists, though again, not for all subjects, and some excellent Advice Sheets, which give tips on managing your group.
- You need to register on the Third Age Trust website (u3a.org.uk) and then download the relevant documents.
- It might be worth exploring with other local U3As to see if resources and expertise could be shared.

The Guildford U3A website also contains a range of information.

### **Finances**

- All our members pay an annual subscription and this pays for hiring venues, our contribution to central funds (TAT), stationery, printing and postage, and some other costs. Group leaders never need to pay for a venue.
- If you incur any costs for your group, such as photocopying or materials, for example like a craft group, please recoup these from the members of the group.
- £1 per year per group member is usually enough to cover photocopying expenses.
- It is Guildford U3A's guideline to charge 20p for coffee/tea and biscuits if your class runs for two hours, and this will pay for supplies. You can organise the refreshments yourself, but most groups run a rota, the members taking it in turn. Most groups find that they have a surplus sooner or later; options in this case could include either offering refreshments free of charge for a while or supplying more extravagant biscuits – or even cake! Classes that run for less than two hours do not usually stop for refreshments.
- Most venues have cups and saucers or mugs that can be used, washed up and replaced - most venues have dishwashers. However, if you wish to use disposable cups instead then contact Roxane Phillips, our “cup monitor” ([froxanephillips@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:froxanephillips@yahoo.co.uk), 01483 822181), who can supply these and they are paid for through central funds. Some groups may opt for members to bring their own mugs and take them home to wash.
- Insurance is provided through U3A/TAT and there should be no need for any further insurance cover for groups, apart from some paid tutors who hold their own professional insurance cover. It is U3A policy not to pay for tutors other than in exceptional circumstances.
- All group leaders and group members must be paid up members of Guildford U3A for the relevant year.
- Licensing is covered by Guildford U3A, via TAT, for photocopying and copyright (CLA), public recorded music (PPL) & Public Video Screening Licence (PCS). Further details from the GU3A Secretary or direct from the Third Age Trust website.
- Never open a bank account in your group's name or apply for grants.
- Never put members' money into your personal bank account.
- If you need to use your own credit card to pay for group events then contact our Treasurer for advice.
- If you collect cash for activities then keep a record of who has paid what.

### **Group Members**

- Group leaders should produce a register of group members, showing names and meeting dates, so that attendance can be monitored and used in case of fire or other accident – this can be produced using Beacon (see section below).
- This does not need to show contact details, which should be kept separately.
- However, it could include members' postcodes to make it easier for arranging car-sharing.
- The first time you meet them each year, ask to see your members' GU3A membership

cards (from 2020 these have been sent by email), or the email confirming their membership. It is not necessary to ask to see them at every group meeting. You can also ask to see them at Group Enrolment Day (when it is run) if they have brought the cards with them.

- If anyone asks to come to your group meeting for a taster session, or to bring a guest, then that is fine as a one-off, but only the once, please.
- Being a member of a different U3A **does not** entitle anyone to come to Guildford U3A groups, but they can be a member of more than one U3A if they wish.

### **Group Enrolment Day**

We usually have our Enrolment Day at the end of August, but 2020 and 2021 have been challenging years and it had to be cancelled.

- This is an opportunity for Guildford U3A members, and prospective new members, to talk to group leaders that they might not otherwise meet, and to find out about groups that they might like to join.
- Since 2019 this is not an opportunity to renew subscriptions – existing members must do it online or by post. Only new members can join on the day.
- All groups should be represented at Enrolment Day, where group leaders can sign up new members where they have spaces.
- It is acceptable for group leaders to ask existing members if they wish to continue, at the last meeting for the academic year.
- Applications to join should be accepted on a first come, first served basis, but many groups have a core of members who remain year after year – but they should all re-apply each year.
- In the absence of a Group Enrolment Day, all members should contact the Group Leader, of any group they want to join, either by email or phone.

After Enrolment Day you might well find that you have a waiting list. If anyone who has signed up has still not come to a meeting after three months, then you can offer their place to someone on the list. If it is only a matter of one or two people, please try to fit them in. We find that it is rare to have a 100% attendance, as members have appointments and commitments to grandchildren, as well as occasional health issues. However, be aware if your venue has a limit on numbers allowed in a room.

If a member stops coming to meetings then it is helpful to find out why. It may be a case of ill-health or, if a lift could be provided, a solution offered. If you hear that a group member has died, please notify Sue Watson, Membership Secretary, so that she can amend her records.

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

All group leaders should have contact details for their group members, usually including name, telephone number and email address. There is no need to have home addresses on your records, although postcodes could be included in order to help identifying where car sharing could be offered. It is useful to have an alternative telephone number to call, should a relative or friend need to be contacted in an emergency. Members are asked to provide this on their renewal form.

New regulations were introduced in 2018 that affect U3As. Have a look at the Privacy Policy on the website. If you keep details of your group members on your computer then you should:

- Have a password on the computer;
- Keep the data as encrypted spreadsheets or Word documents;
- Think about what happens to the computer or its software if it needs to be fixed by a professional repair service, which may need to be told the PC password. We should not trust them with members' details;

(If your platform does not support encrypted spreadsheets or Word documents, keep data in password protected 7-Zip archive (<https://sourceforge.net/projects/sevenzip/>) or on a memory stick with a password protected partition –various freeware apps are available.)

Paper records should be kept in a locked container and shredded when discarded.

Most of our members do use computers and therefore group leaders will usually communicate with their members by email. In order to comply with the GDPR rules you should always send emails as BCC (blind copies) to members. This should ensure that the members are not inadvertently given each others' email addresses. In order to do this, send the email to yourself, and BCC all the group members. If you have members who do not use computers then you will have to contact them by phone or post.

We also ask you to sign a GU3A Data Protection Declaration. This should be completed and sent to The Secretary GU3A ([secretary@guildfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@guildfordu3a.org.uk)) or by post to the address in the prospectus and on the website. Or it can be placed in a dedicated box at Group Enrolment Day. If there is more than one group leader handling information for a group, then both should sign a copy of the declaration.

## **Beacon**

Guildford U3A uses a management database, Beacon, which stores information about all members, and the groups to which they belong, for legitimate GU3A interests. We encourage our group leaders to access their group members' details on the database in order to produce group registers, check membership and send emails to members. This will mean that group leaders do not need to keep members' details on their own computers and thereby avoid problems with data protection. Training and help in using Beacon can be provided. If you use Beacon to create your group register then you do not need to send a list of names and membership numbers to the Membership Secretary at the start of the academic year.

- If you can, log into Beacon, look at your group's membership list, and update it. (Instructions are available on request)
- If you don't have, or don't know that you have, a Beacon user account then email Justin Jackson [beaconadministrator@guildfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:beaconadministrator@guildfordu3a.org.uk) and your (possibly brand-new) login name will be emailed to you followed by a text message with the password.
- If you do not have a computer or tablet and an internet connection, appoint a deputy to do this for you.



- If you are unable to do either of these, contact your Group Co-ordinator to maintain your list (probably by delegation)

### **Setting up a new group**

U3A is a co-operative and mutually supportive organisation, not a service provider, and most groups will not be taught courses, though there are some. New group leaders should consider the following:

- What would we like to do?
- How can we achieve this?
- What study/learning methods can we use?
- Where and how often shall we meet?

There is a wealth of information about a wide range of subjects available to us.

- We can use books, DVDs, online material, online courses, and PowerPoint presentations.
- A group might invite in occasional external speakers or demonstrators to give talks.
- There might be trips out to places of interest (talk to your Group Co-ordinator if there are likely to be costs, such as a coach).
- Use the national subject advisors, where they are available.

There is a useful document called More Time to Learn, which can be downloaded from the national U3A website (<https://u3asites.org.uk/files/1/london-region/docs/moretimetolearn.pdf>). This has many helpful hints and tips for group leaders. Groups should be friendly and people-centred. Members should be involved as much as possible and their enjoyment of the activity is of prime importance, or they may leave the group. Arrange seating as informally as is practicable and allow opportunities for members to get to know each other.

Inevitably most group members will look to the group leader to be the decision making focus for the group. However, we encourage groups to participate, wherever possible, in research, presenting or running the group. Groups are encouraged to have a deputy group leader – someone who can step into the breach if the group leader is not available, for example while on holiday or in the case of ill-health. If possible this should be formalised, but often it is a more informal arrangement. These deputies may also be interested in running groups in due course, once they have had some experience of what is entailed. There are various training events, either nationally or locally, which can provide new or prospective group leaders with the knowledge and skills required to run a group. If a group leader does not have a computer then it is possible to appoint a deputy from within the group who can send emails and update the Beacon database.

Some groups have a small committee to spread the load of running a group, and this usually works well.

The group or session leader should keep control of the meeting, in respect of both timing and content. Timing is especially important if members are contributing prepared talks. If time runs out then some members could feel disappointed that they have not been able to give their contribution, despite a possible feeling of relief. It is also important that the session finishes on

time, including putting away chairs/tables, as there may be another group coming into the venue straight afterwards.

If you wish to hold remote/virtual meetings at any time, particularly useful during the summer months when we do not use venues, then there are various methods available. During the Coronavirus Pandemic many of our groups have used Zoom with great success. There is a Guide to Zoom under Downloads on the GU3A website, but training is available if needed – contact the Director of Studies for more information and/or to set up a trial run.

## Problems

- The GU3A website (<https://u3asites.org.uk/guildford>) has our current policies on Data Protection, Privacy, Safeguarding, etc, as well as an Accident Form (under downloads). For further information, please contact the GU3A Secretary at [secretary@guildfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@guildfordu3a.org.uk).
- There is more advice on the national website (<https://www.u3a.org.uk>) regarding risk assessments and templates.
- If there is an accident, which results in injury or damage to property, then you should notify your Group Co-ordinator, who will notify the Committee, and an Accident Form (see above) should be completed.
- If emergency first aid is required then there may be a group member who can help. You can download a free first aid app from the Red Cross. Personal accident insurance cover is **not** provided by U3A.
- If damage is caused to property by a member of the group then take full details, as in future it may be the subject of an insurance claim. Please report this to your Group Co-ordinator, who will report to the Committee. Remember that most car parks say that parking is at the owner's risk.
- If you have a difficult member, whose behaviour is regularly disturbing other members of the group, then ask your Group Co-ordinator for help. It may be that the same problem has occurred elsewhere before and advice is available.

## Communications

- Contact details for all Group Leaders, Group Co-ordinators and Committee members are in the prospectus, but this is password protected for anyone wanting to download the document from the website, so that our phone numbers are not in the public domain. Anyone can email a Group Leader from the website by going to Groups, clicking on the required group, then clicking on the blue link saying Email\*\*\* (group code). Contacting Group Co-ordinators by email is done by clicking on Programme Planning Committee on the Welcome Page, then clicking on the title under Email.
- We have a generic telephone number for GU3A for forwarding messages, which is 01483 323631.
- Email contact details for some members of the Committee are on the Contact page of the website.
- Group Leaders can edit information on their group's page on the website; contact the Webmaster for instructions on how to do this.
- There is a Guildford U3A newsletter (three issues per annum), which can be accessed via

the website, emailed or members can opt to have a paper copy sent to them. However, all members should bear in mind the cost of postage. Please submit items about your group or activities for the newsletter as this is a good way to inform members of what is going on in Guildford U3A. During the Coronavirus lockdowns there have been a series of more frequent, interim newsletters in order to keep members up-to-date with current U3A news.

- Through the Guildford U3A website there is a system of Alerts. These can be used to let members know about something new, to remind them about a forthcoming event, or to spread the word that a change to the programme is being made (such as cancelling a meeting due to group leader absence). Contact your Group Co-ordinator if you think that an Alert would be appropriate and he/she will contact the Webmaster.
- The GU3A website has all the prospectus information for every group. If you wish to add something, such as a programme for the year, then contact the Webmaster for instructions.
- There is an annual Group Leaders' meeting, usually held in January, where group leaders, Group Co-ordinators and members of the Committee come together. This is a good opportunity to learn new information, share experiences, as well as to chat to other people who carry out a similar role to you.
- Guildford U3A also has both Twitter and LinkedIn accounts, and both a Facebook Group and Facebook Page. These can be used to publicise what we're doing.
- The U3A movement is apolitical and does not endorse any other charitable organisations. Please do not include anything in your communications with other members, which might be construed as advocating any political or charitable body.

### **Accessibility and Inclusion**

We all understand that in getting older there can be a wide range of health issues that get in the way of enjoying life. U3A aims to help its members to get the best out of their groups, by being aware of fellow members' problems and endeavouring to organise meetings appropriately. The three main problem areas are hearing, vision and mobility, but there is also the problem of dementia. Group leaders should encourage members to let them know what gets in the way of full participation in a meeting. In the prospectus and on the website there is a list of venues with basic information about hearing loop systems, disabled toilets, etc.

There are different types of hearing problems.

- It might be that a little thing like sitting at the front that resolves a difficulty.
- If a member wears a hearing aid, then does the venue have a hearing loop?
- Do you know how to get it switched on? However, only a few of our venues have a loop system.
- The speaker needs to use a microphone and there can be problems with that if he or she isn't used to using one.
- Some halls have microphones and speakers, which could help those members without hearing aids.
- All speakers using a projector and screen, whether group leaders, group members or external visitors, should remember the basic rules of presentation:
  - Speak up, speak clearly, speak slowly

- Don't cover your mouth (with hands, or notes)
- Face your audience – voices get lost when the speaker faces away from the listener
- Don't turn to look at the screen (a quick glance is okay, then turn back to speak to your audience)
- Use the laptop to show you what's appearing on the screen
- Repeat questions so that everyone hears them.

There are different types of visual problems.

These could include blindness, low vision, colour blindness and dyslexia.

Can you provide handouts in a larger font size?

Can another member read handouts to a blind member?

If using PowerPoint for talks then be aware that coloured backgrounds and fonts can make or break a good presentation. Some colours are very difficult to read.

Use pictures where possible.

Mobility can become a problem as we get older.

- Backs, hips or knees hurt, or surgery results in reduced mobility for a while.
- Sitting still for a long time, on hall chairs, is not comfortable or good for the joints.
- Can you build in a “stand up and stretch” moment every 20 to 30 minutes?
- Many of us take the ability to drive for granted and then, when an accident or ill-health happens, we are lost if unable to drive.
- As group leaders we should be aware if our members are unable to get around, and it may be possible to organise lifts from other members.
- That's where it's useful to know post codes for members.
- If you have a member in a wheelchair then is access appropriate for them to join your meetings?

### **New Members' Co-ordinator**

Before the pandemic struck in March 2020, the Executive Committee of Guildford U3A had become aware that although we were attracting new members, many of them were not renewing their membership after the first year. The decision was taken to appoint a New Members' Co-ordinator to help new members settle in and find their way around Guildford U3A, and get involved in groups and activities. Lye-Whatt Chua has taken on this role and he may contact Group Leaders on behalf of some less confident new members, and we hope that you will assist him in what he is doing.

### **Other Information**

All members, but especially group leaders, should be aware of the U3A Terms and Conditions. These can be found on the GU3A website, on the Welcome page. All GU3A members agree to abide by our terms & conditions and policies when they join or renew their subscriptions. On the Downloads page you will find our policies, GU3A Constitution, the prospectus, and other useful information, including recent newsletters.

Group leaders should be aware of the rule that no payments should be made to U3A members for services rendered to any U3A. Thus, if you organise for a U3A member to give a talk to your

group, there should not be a speaker fee paid.

If you contact your group members using a computer and want to send out documents in Word or Excel, then please remember that not everybody has Microsoft software on their devices (computer, laptop, tablet, Smartphone). You can overcome this by saving a document as a PDF file and then sending that instead, which means that anyone can open and read it. If you, or your members, don't want the expense of putting Microsoft software on your computer then there are some free products around that are compatible. Our GU3A laptops all have Libre Office installed, which is free and can read Microsoft documents.

I hope that these notes have been useful to you. I am sure that your groups will thrive and that members will enjoy their experiences with U3A. Thank you again for volunteering to be a group leader in Guildford U3A.

Best wishes

Moira MacQuaide  
Director of Studies, Email: [moira.macquaide@gmail.com](mailto:moira.macquaide@gmail.com)

## Annex – Coronavirus Pandemic Information

The years 2020/21 have brought much change to our lives as we have coped with the restrictions brought on by the Coronavirus Pandemic. Advice and guidance on what to do has come from the Government and from the Third Age Trust, but has changed frequently over time. We have also had advice from our venues on their requirements for ensuring that they have Covid-19 Secure Premises. Many of our groups have met remotely, using Zoom or another video or tele-conferencing app. There is a section on the TAT website specifically giving advice for running U3As during the Covid-19 pandemic and it is worthwhile checking there (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/running-your-u3a-during-covid-19>). Below is an extract from an email sent to all Group Leaders at the end of July 2021:

We are looking forward to the new academic year 2021/22. The prospectus has been published, with lists of dates for meetings, along with their venues, and the website updated. However, there are still questions in many minds about how to move forward, the rules that we face, and the challenges that might arise. We need to be sure to comply with Government guidelines, U3A National Office guidance as they hold our insurances, and whatever our venues are saying. At present the Government is saying that there are no hard and fast rules about meetings, but everyone should take responsibility for their own, and others', safety, so wearing masks and social distancing is a good idea. It is worthwhile keeping an eye on the Third Age Trust website for more information as it appears. I have asked all our venues to provide us with information about their Covid-Secure status and what they will provide, as well as what they will be requiring of their users. As soon as I have all the responses, I will circulate a summary to you.

Whatever your plans, I am sure that you will be consulting your group members to see what they are happy to do. You may want to make some changes to the way that you run your meetings, such as:

- Everyone bringing their own refreshments rather than using a venue's kitchen, at least for the first few meetings.
- Some venues will be providing hand sanitiser but you may want to provide some or ask your members to bring their own.
- Ventilation is important, so windows and doors should be opened where possible, but as we get into the winter months that might not be acceptable, especially for those members who feel the cold.
- Seating could be a bit further apart than normal.
- Face masks could be required, but these can be a problem for members with hearing difficulties and for language groups.
- Some groups might feel happier continuing with Zoom for the time being and we are having all our Monthly Meetings on Zoom for the coming year.
- It might be possible to hold Hybrid meetings, allowing for some members to meet face-to-face, while others join the meeting via Zoom. This is something that we are currently working on, so if you think that it might work for you then please ask for help in setting it up. It may be that there is a member in your group who could help with this.

In accordance with the aim of taking responsibility for your own, and others', safety, all Group Leaders are asked to complete a Risk Assessment before re-starting their meetings, which can be found on the National Office website. You should also ask your members to consider their own situations, using the Personal Members' Checklist, also on the National Office website (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/running-your-u3a-during-covid-19>).

In August 2021 the Guildford U3A Executive Committee decided that all members must take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. An alert was sent out saying: "If you wish to go to a face-to-face meeting or a trip it is your responsibility to have had either two vaccinations or a current negative test certificate (less than 48 hours old). Please do not come to a meeting or trip if you do not have either of these."

