

Halesworth and District u3a Email Policy and guidelines for forwarding messages and emails to master membership list

Halesworth u3a now primarily uses email to keep members informed.

- The main vehicle for communication is now our newsletter, which is circulated by email at intervals throughout the year.
- The newsletter and other emails along with the u3a website provide a fast, effective and cost-effective way of keeping most of our members informed.
- We are aware that not all members use email regularly and we will continue to keep them informed through posters, local publicity, and printed copies of our newsletter.
- We would also encourage those not on email to try to link with a fellow member who is perhaps a near neighbour, friend, or fellow interest group member and to act as an 'email box' for them and to print or pass on relevant information, as appropriate.

Halesworth u3a keeps only one master copy of the u3a current email list, and this is held by the Membership Secretary who uses it to send out 'to all members' emails.

- Due in part to our success in informing members by email we are increasingly requested to publicise non u3a events for other local organisations.
- We try to keep our 'to all members' emails to a minimum and to channel most information through the newsletter. We aim to send out no more than 2 or 3 emails in addition to the newsletter in any month.
- This means that some requests for passing on information will need to wait to be added to the next newsletter or u3a business email.
- Wherever possible interest groups should use their own contact lists to inform their members about items of specific interest, rather than requesting use of the 'to all members' email list.

Following discussion locally and having sought guidance from the Third Age Trust, we will be guided by the following principles:

- The core principle of the u3a movement is that it is a non-political and non-religious organisation. (This is spelt out on our website under "vision and mission "of the u3a.)
- In addition as a charity a u3a can only undertake activities that are of an educational nature as this is an essential part of the constitution that all u3as have to follow.

- A u3a should not therefore put out any information of a political or religious nature as this is not what its charitable objectives allow and is contrary to the principles of the u3a movement.
- It happens quite often that an individual u3a member wants to encourage other members to get involved in lobbying for some local issue. The answer has to be not within the u3a, however worthy the cause.

Within this framework:

- We are of course happy to forward on, many items of non u3a local information, for example:
 - Local educational events, courses, and talks, e.g. Science Café meetings, Museum Talks, and events at the Cut, where we believe they may be of interest to many U3A members.
 - Events (art exhibitions, concerts, etc) put on primarily by U3A interest groups.
 - Public meetings about local pressing issues, but excluding 'lobbying' and matters of a religious or political nature.
- We regret we are not always able to publicise events just because they are local - either because of frequency or because we consider them not to be of interest to enough members.
- We will not circulate, or include in our newsletter, fundraising appeals from any organisation, local or not. However, we may occasionally signpost a local organisation's fundraising event or information, if we believe it is of particular interest to many of our members,

This policy should be viewed as work in progress and will be reviewed in the light of experience. Should you wish to suggest how the guidance included here can be improved, please contact the Halesworth U3A chairperson through the contacts page on the website -- just go to halesworthu3a.org.uk

Halesworth & District u3a Committee March 2021