

Membership and Interest Groups Matters

A Policy Paper for Honiton u3a

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SCOPE AND PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide a management framework within which the various interest groups within Honiton U3A can operate. The policies will provide support and guidance for:
 - The Groups Coordinator
 - The Leaders of the various interest groups.
2. The scope of this document is necessarily limited to essential detail, and does not seek to repeat supporting details from information provided, for example, by the U3A Trust. A reference or a link out will point the reader to places where additional and useful information is held.

MEMBERSHIP

3. The membership year runs from 1 April to 31 March the following year. The annual membership fee becomes due on 1 April and members who are renewing should complete the renewal process by 30 April. If by the end of May, and after a reminder, any member has not paid an annual fee, the Membership Secretary will revise the membership database and remove that member's details. The following types of membership are offered:
 - Full Membership.
 - Associate membership.
4. Non-members may be included as 'temporary members' for the period of two visits to a main meeting and additionally, one taster visit only to an interest group .

Main Meetings – visits by non members

5. A Visitor who is not a member of Honiton u3a may attend two of the main monthly meetings without taking up full member. A donation of £2.00 may be invited to cover hire costs and insurance. For the period of the meeting only, the visitor is considered to be a temporary member for the purposes of insurance.
6. A record of the visit will be made in the Visitors Book. If, after attending a Main Meeting, a Visitor decides to enrol and become a full member, the visitor donation may be subtracted from the annual fee. A visitor who has attended a main meeting, may also visit an interest group for one taster session (see next section regarding any payment).
7. Non-members/Visitors may not attend or vote at an Annual General Meeting, Extraordinary or Special General Meetings.

Interest Groups – taster visits by non-members

8. A Visitor who is not a member of Honiton u3a may, with the approval of the Group Leader and Groups Coordinator, attend one 'taster session' of one selected group. If the group operates at a hired/rented venue, the visitor may be invited to make a donation of £2.00 to cover hiring/rental expenses and insurance. Throughout the duration of the taster session only, the Visitor is considered to be a temporary member for the purposes of insurance.

9. A Visitor who has previously joined a group in a taster session and who for that period became temporary member, may not attend or vote at an Annual, Extraordinary or Special General Meetings unless that Visitor subsequently joined as a full member.

INSURANCE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Honiton u3a Groups Coordinator

10. The Groups Coordinator will be the member responsible for facilitating the initiation of new interest groups and supporting existing interest groups and their convenors. The Groups Coordinator will normally be a Trustee and committee member. The Groups Coordinator will:
- Facilitate the setting up of new interest groups including the recruitment of new Group Convenors/Leaders (an individual u3a member or group of members who run a group).
 - Support existing groups.
 - Support and advise the Group Convenors/Leaders.
 - Ensure good communication between the Group Convenors/Leaders, the group members, the Committee and the u3a as a whole.
11. For further details, visit the *Groups Coordinator role description* on the u3a website.
12. At Honiton u3a, the Groups Coordinator should:
- Maintain a list of Group Leaders and their contact details.
 - Maintain a list of Members attending Interest Groups.
 - Ensure that Group Leaders have completed a Risk Assessment for their various group activities.

Interest Group Leaders

13. The Interest Group Leader will be the member responsible for facilitating the organisation and management of an interest group. The Group Leader may be a Trustee and committee member although this is not a requirement. The Group Leader will:
- Maintain a list of the group members
 - Complete a Risk Assessment covering the activity and venue. (Where the venue of an 'outdoor' meeting varies, it may be necessary to complete a Risk Assessment for different venues)
 - One copy of the assessment should be retained by the Group Leader, and a further copy should be passed to the Groups Coordinator for retention.
14. A risk assessment checklist must be carried out for all group activities and a number of different risk assessment templates are available on the u3a website.
<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice>
15. Of the several Risk Assessment guidance templates, the few most commonly needed will be:
- Home based risk assessment checklist
 - Venue based risk assessment checklist
 - Walk leader risk assessment checklist
16. Risk Assessment forms can be downloaded from the U3A Trust website, or obtained from the Groups' Coordinator. Once completed, the form should be sent to the Groups' Coordinator for safekeeping.

Access requirements and special needs

17. Where a member attends an interest group, but requires the support of a Carer, the Carer does not necessarily need to be a paid-up member of Honiton U3A. However, the nominated Carer should complete a membership application form so that contact details are recorded and available. If in the view of the Group Leader an individual member requires the support of a Carer, the Leader may decide to exclude that member if the nominated Carer is not present or available.
18. Group Leaders will liaise with the Groups Coordinator where there are concerns about the ability of an individual to participate. If the activity is an 'outdoors' activity such as walking, strolling or an external visit, the Leader of the activity should not be required to take on the role of a Carer for that event or activity.

Insurance and Risk Assessment

19. The Third Age Trust provides indemnity insurance for group activities, and although personal accident insurance cover is not provided by the Third Age Trust, the indemnity insurance does cover all u3a members with respect to third party claims. Further details can be found on the u3a website.
20. The validity of the U3A Trust Insurance may be rendered invalid if certain conditions have not been fulfilled. The validity of insurance relies on
 - The activity being properly documented with respect to a Risk Assessment having been completed for the activity.
 - All individuals involved in the activity being fully paid-up members, or associate members of Honiton u3a, or temporary members making use of a 'taster' session.
21. Honiton u3a will always encourage and may require members to bring a Carer with them to u3a activities as needed, and with no additional cost for the Carer. The Carer will fall under the u3a Trust liability insurance unless the Carer is a professional Carer, in which case the individual will be covered by the employer's insurance arrangements.

Health and Safety

22. All accidents and incidents must be reported to the Groups Coordinator and the Committee as soon as possible and it is important to have an accurate record in case of any future problems. To help record and report any accidents or incidents, please use the Incident Report form template. The Group Leader will normally be responsible for initiating the Incident Report form which can be downloaded from the U3A Trust website at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice>

23. All members (especially solo members, and those attending a session without a partner) should be encouraged to carry some form of emergency contact details including information concerning any medication being taken. This applies equally to venue-based activities as well as outdoor activities. A useful vehicle for such information is the ICE facility (In Case of Emergency) on a mobile phone

24. Leaders of outdoor activities should carry or have access to mobile phone facilities. Problems may arise if the walk/activity moves away from mobile phone coverage. This eventuality should be addressed in the Risk Assessment for the event.

Safety and emergency equipment

25. With some activities provided as part of an interest group, it may be necessary for the Leader (and possibly group members) to carry some useful items to support the session. In walking groups, for example, such items may include map/compass/first aid kit. The requirement for any items identified under this heading will have first been identified in the associated Risk Assessment for the activity. Funding for the purchase of any of these items must come from within group or personal resources.