

STARTING AN INTEREST GROUP and being a **GROUP FACILITATOR**

Key is to **ORGANISE** the group and be a **CONTACT** between the Group and the **Groups' Coordinator**

'TEAMWORK'

Firstly, ensure all members of your group are **signed up members of MIU3A**, their membership number should be on the register. A **non -member** will nullify your Groups' **insurance** cover.

- 1) All members should give you their contact details, check attendance at meetings and let the Groups' Coordinator have a copy of this list and update any changes.
- 2) Please advise the Groups' Coordinator if a member should become very ill or pass away, this is to **avoid** possible **insensitive** contact. It is important to keep a check on attendance, if a member is absent three times in succession without advising you, please check that all is well, if so, the member should be advised that their place will be offered to the next member on the waiting list (inevitably there will one)
- 3) Try to find the reason why a member stops coming to meetings; does something need to change within the Group?
- 4) Enlist a member to be a **deputy** to shadow you so that the Group can continue whilst you are on holiday, give them the register as a starter to being involved.
- 5) Communication amongst Group members should not reveal members' contact details without their consent - a signature on the register is usually the easiest way (when emailing use **Bcc** or **'blind copy'** option)
- 6) Describe fully on the website (via the website manager or Groups' Coordinator) the requirement for membership and for adequate participation of the Groups' activities. Check the website that the details of the Group you are facilitating are correct – i.e. venue, date and time and advise the Website Manager accordingly of any amendment required.
- 7) When the Group becomes full, do **not turn** away a member without explaining that their name will be placed on a reserve list and when sufficient numbers allow, another, parallel Group can be started. You **must advise** the Groups' Coordinator of the situation in order that an additional Group can be formed.
- 8) In the event of an incident/accident seek professional medical help if the situation warrants it, there are **no formal requirements for First Aid or First Aiders in a Group**
- 9) **If an incident/accident occurs**, fill in and send to the MIU3A secretary an accident form obtained from the Secretary or Interest Groups' Co-ordinator.
- 10) Whenever the Group is using a commercial venue, such as a hall for example, ensure that the **venues' POSTCODE** is to hand for use in informing **rescue/emergency services**.
- 11) If you are leading a walking group, make sure you have the walk leaders' check list

- 12) **Encourage** all members to participate, you are not a paid tutor, every member should contribute to the running of the Group for the benefit of the whole.
- 13) **REFRESHMENTS** to avoid any possible embarrassment, place a dish on a table and suggest say 35p per visit for tea/coffee and biscuits. Give this to the person nearest the door and ask them to pass it round - Job done.
- 14) **Ask** for a volunteer within the group to be a 'buddy' for anyone without the benefit of email. Also, it's a good idea to start a 'telephone tree' - ask for a volunteer to organise this. It's not one persons' responsibility and this should be emphasised.
- 15) **MIU3A** have their own dedicated printer and requests for printing of flyers and notes should be requested via the membership secretary.
- 16) **Advise** Group members of any potential difficulty regarding access to the venue, for example; **parking restrictions or several steps** into the building.

SELF FINANCING GROUPS

Never open a bank account

Never put members' money into your personal account

When handing over money, always obtain a receipt and wherever possible, avoid cash

The **TREASURER must** be consulted whenever a pre- booking is required to be paid for e.g. theatre visit, coach trip or should you wish to hire a hall for your activities, and these will be **paid direct, using an official MIU3A cheque**. Consult your Groups' Coordinator and/or the treasurer for help and advice on the correct procedure.

INSURANCE

The Third Age Trust organises public and products liability, money and all risks insurance on behalf of all U3As. The money and all risks cover are only for U3A money and property.

Members are **not** covered under the U3A insurance cover for personal accident and injury or for the loss or damage to their own property.