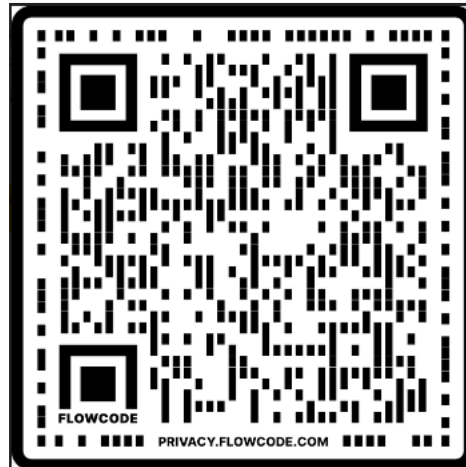




WELCOME GROUP LEADER HANDBOOK



Mansfield u3a QR Code

The Third Age Trust
Registered Charity No. 1164177

"We don't stop playing because we grow old. We grow old because we stop playing."

George Bernard Shaw

Welcome!

Thank you for volunteering to lead a group. As a Group Leader you have such an important role in our u3a. Every month dozens of our members attend the wide range of groups that you volunteer to run. We have 31 active groups, although that number looks as though it will increase very soon – probably by the time you read this. The groups are the lynchpin of our u3a, so without you the wheels really wouldn't turn. The reason that many of our members choose to join us is because of what is on offer in the groups – that is where they really get to know new people and friendships develop.



I hope you find the information that follows useful and that it will help you to run your group sessions smoothly. Much of it will probably be used occasionally; some of it we hope you will never need, but it's always useful to have such information to hand if ever we do. Please remember that there is always support available so if you do have any questions, just ask. Your first point of contact is Stella Hall, the Groups Convenor, but you can also contact any Committee member.

A massive thank you for all you are doing. Enjoy your role as Group Leader and know that you are one of those key people keeping our u3a in full swing!

Elaine Huckerby
Chair



- **Stella Hall – Group Convenor**
E-mail: groupconvenor.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com

I would like to start by saying thank you for all your time, enthusiasm and effort you have put into running your groups and to ensure you that this booklet is not trying to reinvent the wheel it is there as a guide only.

My role is to be the first person you should consult if you have any questions about group matters and be there to help new groups to get started.

I will be arranging Group Leaders meeting twice a year and hope to see you all there so that we can pass on ideas and learn from one another

In turn I ask that you keep me informed of any changes made in the running of the group for example changes of venue or meeting dates.

It is particularly important to let me know if you want to step down as leader or if the group is being wound up.

Running your Group

There is no blueprint for how you run your group - you may run it however you and the members like, but you may find the following advice helpful.

- You don't have to do everything yourself. Group members can take on roles and it is useful to have back-up in case you are ever away.
- Engage the group members as much as possible in the activity. Most people like to take an active rather than a passive part in what is going on.
- Most groups meet once a month. If the meeting is late in the month, for example, then those groups will usually skip the December meeting and take time off during the summer. Some hold Christmas events at a restaurant.
- Please check membership cards at the first session of the year (probably September or October). Ensure that all members of your group are members or Associate Members of Mansfield u3A or a local u3a in the North Notts Neighbourhood Group. This is an insurance requirement. All u3as are independent and members of one u3a are not automatically allowed to become involved in the Interest Groups of another u3a.
- Don't feel that you must be a Group Leader forever. If you enjoy it so much that you want to go on indefinitely then that's fine, but, running a group for, say, three years is a great contribution.
- Please publicise your group.
 - You can send reports of recent group activities to the Newsletter Editor e-mail: newsletter.editoru3a@gmail.com
 - You can also post on our Facebook page,
 - Set up a table at the Members' meetings so that potential new members can talk with you about the group.
 - I also encourage you to address the meeting for a few minutes to keep your activity high profile. Just let the Chair know before the meeting starts that you would like to say something.
- This publicity will hopefully encourage new Group Leaders to come forward too. We need to keep the wheels rolling!

Register of attendees

Please keep a register of attendees to your group every time you meet. If a member leaves a meeting a record or note should be made to account for those still present in the event of evacuation.



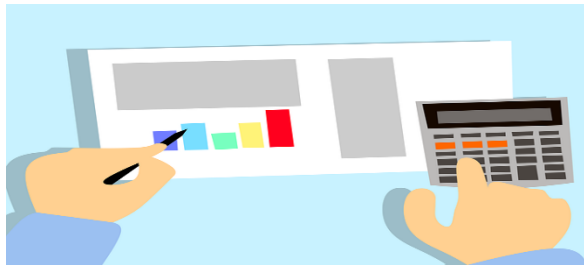
Group finances and accounts

All groups have to be self-financing. Costs can vary widely between groups, but the group leader should not end up out of pocket.

It is reasonable to expect that groups will incur expenses to cover room hire, materials, refreshments etc. A Group Leader may not hold any cash collected to pay for these expenses but must hand it to the Groups Treasurer. Mansfield u3a must account for all monies held at the end of each financial year and you will be asked for an account of what you hold (not what you have spent).

If you provide refreshments for your group, keep a record of your expenses (coffee, tea, biscuits etc.), ideally with receipts so that you can claim these back from the Group Treasurer. It is important to be transparent with all monies in the event of the u3a being challenged about the way money is spent.

Mansfield u3a is able to offer a start-up grant of £50 to those groups who may need it for buying materials to get their groups started please contact the Group Convenor if you think this is something you may need



Handling and Collecting Money



Sheila Pegg is the Groups Treasurer.

- All monies collected at your meetings should be paid to Sheila as soon as possible after collection. This might be at next monthly Members' meeting or sooner if possible. Some Group Leaders drop it at Sheila's home - if you choose to do that please let her know. Sheila will collect monies from you if this is more convenient.
- Along with the monies, please record the group name and the amount being handed in and the breakdown of cash and cheques (if appropriate). There is a printable form on the Mansfield u3a website should you prefer to use this, but it can be recorded in whatever way is convenient to you.
- Monies must always come to the Group Treasurer to pay into our u3a bank account. You should not use your personal bank account as this is against Charity Commission rules.
- We have a debit card that can be used by the Group Leader if needed. Please see Sheila if you need it.
- If members pay by cheque, the cheque must be cleared by the bank before a cheque can be issued to cover an event e.g., group entry fees or coach hire. Please make sure you allow time for this to happen when passing members' cheques on to Sheila.
- We are not allowed to issue blank cheques.
- Full details can be found on our u3a website in the Finance Policy.

Equipment: General

We own a useful selection of equipment, any of which can be borrowed by leaders to help them with their group activities. A full list of the equipment and the current custodians is given in the Assets Register which can be provided by the Treasurer treasurer.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com the business secretary businesssecretary.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com or your Group Convenor Stella groupconvenor.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com

Any equipment bought by a group out of group funds must be included in the asset register. Members should be made aware that using their own equipment, such as a laptop, a digital projector, or a camera, at u3a Group Meetings is at their own risk. u3a insurance will not cover it against accidental damage, so it is advisable for these members to check that their Household Insurance policy covers this risk.

Copying Documents

You may sometimes want to copy or scan copyrighted printed material for use in your group activities. The Third Age Trust, the u3a Headquarters organisation, pays the Copyright Licensing Agency for a “blanket” copyright licence which allows all u3as to do a reasonable amount of such copying/scanning whilst remaining within the law. There are a few exceptions and full details of the CLA licence can be obtained from the Business Secretary if in doubt.

Car Parking at Mansfield Town Football Ground

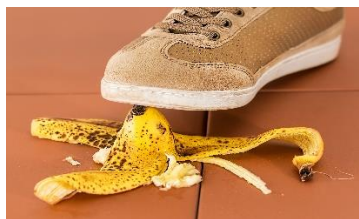
If you wish group members to park at the football ground when you have organised a coach for a trip away, you MUST inform the Business Secretary of the desired date, the times between which the cars will be parked there and the approximate number of cars.

You will be issued with car parking slips for group members to put on the dashboard. It would be sensible to park close together.

Accidents and Incidents

If anyone in your group is involved in an accident or suffers an injury whilst attending a u3a activity, they must complete an accident report form, which you supply. This form must be completed and handed to the Business Secretary at the earliest opportunity. [Incident Report Form](#)

We are not required to hold First Aid Certificates or carry first aid kits but, if necessary, call the relevant Emergency Services.



Insurance

Whilst attending a u3a activity every member of every u3a in the country is covered by an insurance policy taken out by The Third Age Trust. The insurance is what is known as Public and Products Liability Insurance. It insures a u3a member against compensation claims arising from injury or damage to property suffered by a third party, or claims arising from the failure of a product, for which failure a u3a member is held to be legally liable.

If you have specific concerns or want to know more, please contact either the Groups Convenor or the Business Secretary.

Health and Safety

A leader or deputy has to be aware of the Health and Safety (H&S) procedures if the activity is held in a venue other than your home. In practice this means being aware of the location of the fire exits and First Aid box at the start of the meeting.

Know the postcode of the venue in case you need to ring the emergency services. For the same reason, the leaders of the Walking and visits groups should be able to provide clear directions as to where they are.

For insurance purposes, a Risk Assessment Checklist should be completed for every group. Our insurance is invalid without one. There are some templates available on the national u3a website, which should cover most group activities. We will provide copies of these for completion at the Groups Leaders meetings. If you are comfortable completing one for your group activity, please go ahead. If you would like some help, please contact the Group Co-ordinator initially. There are several people who can support you.

Any groups that use electrical equipment involving cables being laid across floors should be aware of the potential tripping hazards. These should be mitigated by using mats to cover the cables or they should be taped to the floor, wherever possible.

Portable electrical equipment should only be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for its intended purpose and in the environment for which it was designed and constructed. A visual inspection should be carried out on all electrical equipment and associated leads before each use. The electrical equipment supplied must have been P.A.T. (Portable Appliance Test) tested.

If coach transport is used, please ensure members wear seat belts as this is a legal requirement and our insurance could be invalidated if seat belts

RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS

Why do we need to complete a risk assessment?

Risk assessments are part of the Health and Safety at Work Act. Although this does not apply to u3a members because they are not at work, the insurance company expect u3as to take reasonable precautions through risk assessment checklists, and they use these as a basis for any claims. If a member were injured, our insurers would ask for the completed risk assessment to prove how the risk was identified. All groups need to complete risk assessments. A checklist is sufficient for most activities; the more hazardous the activity, the more detailed the checklist should be.

A risk assessment checklist should be completed at the start of any activity where there have been changes. If you do not change the activity (for example, change of venue, different equipment), there is no need to update the checklist. They should be reviewed annually in September regardless of changes.

Templates are available on our u3a website for:

Home-based activities [Home Based Risk Assessment](#)

Venue-based activities [Venue Based Risk Assessment](#)

Online-based activities [Online Based Risk Assessment](#)

Day trips [Day Trip Risk Assessment](#)

Holiday travel (more than 24 hours and/or includes an overnight stay) [Holiday Travel Risk Assessment](#)

Outdoor Sporting activities [Outdoor Sport Risk Assessment](#)

Walks [Walks Risk Assessment](#)

Personal member (if adjustments are to be made to accommodate individual needs) [Personal Member Risk assessment](#)

Meetings for Group Leaders

There are two meetings a year which a group leader is either expected to attend or to provide a representative to attend in their place. These meetings are held in spring and autumn and will be advertised in advance.



Information from the Third Age Trust (TAT)

Our parent organisation is a great source of all kinds of information and material which you may find useful in your group activities. The u3a national website contains useful general information under the Advice heading on Finance and Insurance and Safety.

In addition, under the Resources heading, there is Subject Advice, DVDs and access to the educational magazine Sources Online which contains articles of interest to group leaders.

You can join the website as this gives you access to all the information you need.

Nottinghamshire Network of u3as

There are currently 33 u3as in the Network. Peer Support Groups (PSGs) exist for some committee roles. They were originally set up at the request of u3a members to provide help, support, and knowledge to new and longstanding committee members. All meetings are held by Zoom.

If you are interested in joining the Peer Support Group, contact:

Groups Co-ordinators' PSG - Administered by [Kathryn Tuddenham](#): wbu3agroups1@gmail.com

North Nottingham Neighbourhood Group (NNNG)

The NNNG consists of nine u3as all within a short distance of Mansfield. This group has shared events, and we are part of the reciprocal agreement which means our members can partake of any of their groups without having to be a member of their u3a as long as there is room in that group. Your Group can also welcome members from the other u3as but always check that they are a member of a u3a first. This can be a good source for new group members.

[NNNG Reciprocal Statement](#)

General Information

Designated Officers

- Accessibility Officer – Stella Hall
- Almoner/Welfare Officer – Jean Hatton
- Data Protection Officer – Gill Mallinder
- Safeguarding Officer – Irena Dubowski

Facebook

- This is a private groups page, which can only be accessed by Mansfield & District u3a members.
- If you wish to join then please contact Jean Hatton (Membership Secretary – membership.u3amansfield@gmail.com)

Members Meeting

- We meet on the third Tuesday of each month (apart from August and December) at the One Call Stadium, Quarry Lane, Mansfield, Notts. NG 18 5DA. (The Stags Football Ground).
- There is free parking and a lift if required as the meeting room is on the first floor and the Greeters will meet you there.

Newsletter

- A monthly Newsletter is produced by Yvonne and Mick Kennison, Newsletter Editors, for the beginning of each month. These are circulated by email and a small number are printed and available at the monthly meeting for those who do not have email addresses. If you have anything you wish to contribute then please email them on Newsletter (newsletter.editoru3a@gmail.com)

Website

- This is run by Bob Longden and Mike Allen.
- To access the Website, then please use the QR code on the front of this Newsletter

Member Code of Conduct

- Members are expected to know, follow and promote the principles of the u3a Movement at every opportunity.
- Members must always act in the best interests of Mansfield u3a and the u3a Movement, strive to uphold its reputation and never do anything which could bring their own, another u3a or the u3a movement into disrepute or expose it to undue risk.
- Members are expected to use Mansfield u3a's resources responsibly and only to further its stated charitable objects/purposes.
- Members are expected to reflect the current organisational policy of Mansfield u3a, regardless of whether it conflicts with their personal views.
- Members are expected to abide by Mansfield u3a's procedures and practices.
- Members are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect at all times.

The Committee which was elected in September 2023



Left to right: John Lawes, Carole Harrison, Hilary Miller and Susan Ford (Committee Members). Elaine Huckerby (Chair). Gill Mallinder (Treasurer). Kathryn Henshaw, (Business Secretary). Sheila Pegg (Groups Treasurer). Stella Hall (Groups Co-ordinator). Jean Hatton (Membership Secretary). Philp Tucker (Speaker Finder). And Irena Dubowski (Vice Chair) ← who was not at this photo call.

Policies

Like any organisation, our u3a must comply with the law. Here is a summary of our main policies that particularly relate to your role as a Group Leader. The full versions, when you feel up to digesting them, are on the Mansfield and District u3a website. [Mansfield u3a policies on the website](#)

Please make sure you are familiar with these main points and refer to them when there is a need.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

The Equality Act states that we cannot treat someone unfairly because of:

- Ethnic origin, nationality, or race
- Age
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Gender Reassignment
- Political belief
- Pregnancy (I know this one if unlikely!)

This means that we must make “reasonable adjustments” to meet members’ particular needs. We must make adjustments and take practical steps to include those with needs in our activities, including the group activities you organise as a Group Leader.

For groups, this might include:

- The time and location of meetings
- Facilities for wheelchairs users and those with mobility issues
- Provision for the hard of hearing or visually impaired
- Communication with those without email or internet access

The Accessibility Officer will be happy to discuss any necessary adjustments with you. You can read more about accessibility in the next section.

If you witness discrimination, please discuss it initially with either the Accessibility Officer or one of the Committee.

Accessibility Policy

We must, where possible, make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of members with disabilities or health-related needs. As a u3a, we ask members when they renew their membership, or join as new members, to inform us of any needs they wish to bring to our attention.

The Accessibility Officer will liaise with Group Leaders to check that groups are accessible and discuss possible adjustments. For example, a change of venue might be needed to accommodate wheelchair use. If you become aware of the need for adjustments, please contact the Accessibility Officer.

If you are running a group that requires a certain level of fitness and/or mobility, please provide this information in advance so that members can decide for themselves whether the activity is suitable for them.

We have a database of venues outlining the facilities offered by each venue.

Safeguarding Policy

The term “safeguarding” refers to measures in place to protect the health, wellbeing and human rights of vulnerable individuals. All Mansfield u3a members have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns to the Committee. As a Group Leader, you may become aware of a safeguarding concern or have a concern reported to you by a member of your group. Please do not try to deal with this yourself - you must pass the concern on to one of the Committee.

We have a Safeguarding Officer who is trained in the steps to take.

- Safeguarding procedures might be needed where there is:
- An unkempt appearance
- Significant weight loss or gain
- A change in behaviour
- Threats of physical harm or bullying
- Fear of a group or an individual within a group
- Physical injury
- A disclosure – the member reports abuse.

If a member tells you of a safeguarding concern:

- Stay calm and try not to show shock or pass judgement
- Listen carefully and give them time
- Don't stop them talking – they may have other things to tell you
- Be sympathetic but don't make promises you can't keep
- Be aware that medical evidence might be needed
- Tell the person they were right to tell you, that it is not their fault, that you are going to inform the Safeguarding Officer and you will take steps to protect them.
- Write down what has been said, using the member's own words, and contact the Safeguarding Officer or one of the Committee immediately. Once you have passed this on, you do not need to do anything else.

Data Protection Policy

Data Protection is about how we store and process members' information, and how we protect the rights of our members. As Group Leaders, you have access to certain information (data), such as names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses.

- Ask only for data that you actually need e.g., if you don't intend to use email then don't ask for addresses
- You must ask for consent if you want to use data in a new way e.g., setting up a What's App group using phone numbers you have already been given
- Do not use the data for any other purpose other than u3a activities
- Do not share data with anyone else without the member's consent
- Keep the data safe, whether it is in electronic or paper form - use strong passwords for electronically stored data.

Photographs are personal data. When you take group or individual photographs you should ask members to move out of shot if they do not wish their photograph to be taken. You should tell members where the photos will be displayed (usually this will be in the Newsletter). There is a statement to this effect in the newsletter, so all members are aware.

If you organise a trip or activity that requires next of kin information, you should inform the member why this is required and how it will be used.

If you require health-related information, this will be with the member's consent, and you should inform them why it is needed and how it will be used.

You can find more explanation about the rationale and practicalities behind the retention and sharing of members' data in the Privacy Policy on the Mansfield and District u3a website.

