



# Accessibility Policy



## Statement

Newhaven and Peacehaven u3a is a learning cooperative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of this u3a draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning). Newhaven and Peacehaven u3a is committed to ensuring that this u3a is as inclusive and accessible as possible for all members. This policy document should be read alongside Newhaven and Peacehaven u3a's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

## Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure that Newhaven and Peacehaven u3a reviews accessibility needs for individual members and where possible makes reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of members with disabilities and /or health related needs. The policy takes into account the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and the need for Newhaven and Peacehaven u3a to avoid discriminating directly or indirectly against members with disabilities and/or health related needs. The policy will be a reference point for Committee members, Group Leaders and Individual members in relation to this u3a's commitment to Access and Inclusion. Newhaven and Peacehaven is a membership charity and not a service provider therefore, whilst reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals can participate and can attend with carers to support their needs, there will be certain needs that this u3a may not be able to accommodate due to the level of care an individual may need.

## Practical Approaches to Increasing Access

In ensuring equality of access Newhaven and Peacehaven u3a will take the following steps

- A small sub committee will be maintained, membership made up of volunteers
- The sub committee will have its own terms of reference and will report activities to the u3a committee
- The sub committee will have responsibility for liaising with the group coordinators who in turn will meet annually with the group leaders to ensure that group leaders are aware of u3a's expectations and to provide support when adjustments and/or difficult decisions need to be made.
- The subcommittee will support the membership secretary in communicating with new and existing members who indicate that they have a disability or health related issue that may need additional support and/or adjustment and discuss with them what needs they have and how these could be met

Monthly meetings will, as far as possible, be held in a well lit, fully wheelchair accessible venue, with a wheelchair accessible toilet, a hearing loop system and a sound system.

- A register of members willing to provide transport to meetings will be held by the u3a chairperson
- A register of members who will maintain telephone contact with those members without access to the internet, will be held by the u3a chairperson
- Members with a sight impairment can be matched with a u3a member who can help with descriptions of visual presentations.
- Access to meetings will be reviewed by the u3a committee on an ongoing basis with a view to considering any adjustments that may need to be made.
- Group leaders will liaise with the group coordinators and provide information about accessibility to their group, to be made available to members. Group coordinators will also keep a data base of venues and access to groups.
- Group leaders will liaise with the group coordinators about an individual's ability to participate.
- Newhaven and Peacehaven u3a has a duty of care to all members and this may mean that difficult decisions have to be taken in assessing an individual's ability to participate either in the u3a as a whole or within individual activities. These decisions will always be taken through discussion with the individual member and his or her carer in order to ensure that a fair and considered decision is taken. This may include developing a risk assessment regarding their ability to participate.
- Group Leaders considering the exclusion of someone from their group should seek advice and support from the Group Coordinators or the u3a committee.
- Newhaven and Peacehaven u3a will seek additional advice and support from u3a plus, the Regional Trustee, National Office, the national web site and external specialist organisations as required.

**This policy was adopted on 12.07.2023. Policy review date November 2024**