

Roles and Responsibilities of Northumbria Region u3a (NRu3a) Committee Members

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Note: Unlike individual u3as, NRu3a is defined by the Third Age Trust (TAT) as a Network and therefore can be found on the national website under u3a Networks (and not in the list/map of u3as). NRu3a has a constitution and other documents relating to how it operates.

Chair

Role summary

- To provide inclusive and democratic leadership of the board of Trustees (the committee).
- To ensure the committee fulfils its responsibilities for the overall governance, strategic direction, financial stability, administration and sustainability of NRu3a.
- To ensure NRu3a applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects/purposes, abides by its governing document (the constitution) and complies with charity law and other relevant legislation.
- To ensure the NRu3a upholds the guiding principles.
- To oversee adherence to the terms and conditions of affiliation to the Third Age Trust.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of NRu3a.
- To safeguard the good name and values of NRu3a organisation.

Main responsibilities

Please note

- The specific tasks listed below are in addition to the statutory requirements and responsibilities of Trustees of charitable organisations in the UK as laid down by the relevant regulatory bodies.

Committee Meetings

- To plan the meeting agenda in advance with the Business Secretary and agree on any papers to be circulated with it.
- To chair committee meetings ensuring that:
 - the meeting starts and ends on time.
 - all necessary business is covered.
 - discussions involve everybody and are not dominated by a few people.
 - discussions remain focussed on the stated agenda items.
 - clear decisions are reached following a unanimous or majority vote of the committee.
 - a timetable for implementation of actions/decisions is agreed.
- To be impartial and encourage objectivity in decision-making.
- To encourage all members to put forward new ideas and initiatives for discussion.
- To provide a casting vote in the event of an equal split.
- To agree the annual cycle of dates for committee meetings.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- To write a Chair's report for the Annual Report and Accounts and ensure the final draft of the Annual Report is presented to the committee for approval in good time prior to the AGM.
- To chair the AGM ensuring that the business of the meeting is conducted according to laid down procedures and any existing standing orders.

- To arrange an induction for newly elected Trustees so they start with a sound knowledge base.
- To ensure the bank signature mandate is updated as required.

Quarterly Meetings

- To organise and chair the Quarterly meeting.

Governance

- To ensure the committee complies with its constitution and remains focussed on NRu3a's stated charitable objects/purposes and its aims.
- To facilitate the committee to determine the strategic direction and short and long term aims of NRu3a, set its policies, define its goals, set targets and evaluate performance.
- To ensure NRu3a applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects/purposes.
- To ensure that NRu3a abides by the guiding principles and ethos of NRu3a movement.
- To protect and manage any property and assets belonging to NRu3a.
- To ensure that all Trustees clearly understand their duties and responsibilities and can make best use of their particular skills so they can become fully engaged and involved.
- To ensure all board decisions are implemented in a timely manner.
- To ensure that the committee reviews activities once they have taken place, to highlight what if anything can be learned and improved.
- To develop a strong team ethos within the board and maintain positive working relationships dealing with any conflicts which arise quickly and constructively.
- To encourage the committee to review its own effectiveness and consider whether individual roles can be better organised and/or distributed.
- To ensure the committee reviews risks on a regular basis and puts measures in place to mitigate any which are identified.
- To discuss succession planning and ways of encouraging members to volunteer for the committee.

Finance

- To ensure the committee agrees and regularly reviews an appropriate level of reserves and where funds should be placed.
- To ensure financial transparency through detailed disclosure of financial information to the committee.
- To be constantly aware of the financial position of NRu3a through regular communication with the Treasurer.

Member u3as

- To ensure new member u3as are welcomed and supported and that they understand the ethos and self-help nature of the organisation.
- To ensure that all possible methods are used to achieve the best level of communication possible between the committee and the member u3as
- To establish a procedure for member u3as to provide feedback, raise issues and suggest new initiatives to be brought before the committee for discussion.
- To ensure all volunteers feel valued and supported.
- To ensure that the committee regularly reviews its structure, ways of working and relationship with the member u3as
- To attend NRu3a functions and host monthly meetings as required.

External contacts

- To liaise with local organisations and to be the first point of contact.
- To attend network, regional and national meetings as appropriate.
- To be a spokesperson and an ambassador for NRu3a ensuring that the local community is aware of what NRu3a is and does.
- To represent NRu3a at external functions, meetings and events.

Other

- To provide a Chair's letter for the regional magazine "The Messenger" and the NRu3a website
- To sign the minutes of Committee and General Meetings as a correct record on behalf of those approving the minutes
- To forward any correspondence received to the rest of the Committee

On completion

- To carry out a comprehensive handover to the new Chair.

Vice Chair

- It is usual for a Vice Chair to hold another Committee position although constitutionally this cannot be an Officer role. It is generally accepted that simply being available to deputise for the Chair does not constitute a viable committee role.
- To deputise for the Chair at main meetings or committee meetings whenever the Chair cannot be present
- To assist the Chair by being available for contact on NRu3a matters by external agencies and individuals
- To be available for contact by members as an alternative to the Chair in his/her absence or simply in support of the Chair
- To work alongside the Chair to ensure continuity in the event of any unavailability on the part of the Chair
- To assist the Committee in a wide range of 'without portfolio' matters.
- To arrange venues for Committee and quarterly meetings in conjunction with Chair.

Treasurer

Bank Account

- To be responsible for receiving and banking monies generated by the general activities of NRu3a and for paying legitimate expenses
- To keep clear and accurate records.
- To keep a register of NRu3a member treasurers up to date and accurate
- To remind all members when subs are due if remaining in Network
- To bank monies for subscriptions so that transactions can be easily identified on the bank statements.
- To record numbers attending quarterly meetings and keep a running account.
- To maintain a register of signatories for the above Bank Account
- To make sure that any monies paid out are authorised by 2 signatories.

Reporting

- To provide a report of income and expenditure at the Committee Meetings.
- To draw up and present to the Committee Annual Accounts at the end of each financial year
- To present the Annual accounts to the Examiner agreed at the Annual General Meeting

Budget

- To present a draft budget for the following year to the Committee at each January's Committee Meeting.
- Following discussion, to finalise the budget and to present it for acceptance at the following Committee Meeting

Other

- To keep the Asset Register up to date.

Business Secretary

- To keep the Chair well informed as correspondence is often addressed to the Secretary.
- To construct the AGM agenda with the Chair.
- To send AGM agenda with relevant documentation in good time as per constitution.
- To produce Business report for committee and quarterly meetings if necessary.
- To check venues & Caterers for Quarterly meetings.
- To provide whoever is on reception with list of u3as attending Quarterly meetings.
- To convey decisions taken, to the people who may be required to take action.
- To take action as required following the meeting.
- To deal with correspondence following discussion with the Chair.
- To maintain full and accurate files including minutes.
- To be the point of contact and reference between meetings.
- To be the link with the National Office.
- To promote the u3a ethos.
- To keep the PAT register up to date.
- To keep the Policy and Procedures file up to date.
- To keep Licences & Insurance documents up to date (if applicable)
- To keep Charity Commission documents up to date.
 - Send completed 'Fit for Purpose' and Charity Commission Eligibility forms to the Charity Commission for each new NR committee member as soon as possible after they are appointed.
- To keep the Website Manager updated. This will include but is not confined to providing:
 - Updated versions of the policies, procedures and other NRu3a documents that are posted on the website
 - Copies of quarterly meeting minutes and AGMs
 - Notices of meetings and preparation documents for the same
 - Names and roles of members of the committee

Website Manager

Role summary

- To maintain the website for NRu3a using the Sitebuilder system or whatever system the Committee agrees to.

Main Responsibilities

- Add new material to the website on a timely basis. In addition to plain text this will involve links to files and photos and links to other websites
- Delete out-of-date or irrelevant material
- Create new pages, sub-pages and links as necessary in order to ensure that the website is easy to navigate and read
- Oversee matters of web policy:
 - Agree and review, annually with the committee, matters of web policy.
 - Check that material submitted for uploading does not breach policy requirements

Other

- Encourage timely updates for the website from all regular contributors
- Encourage occasional contributors to submit information relevant to the region for adding to the website:
- Provide log-in access to other individuals to enable them to update relevant pages and sub-pages
- Ensure web security:
 - Replace NR members' email addresses with named links
 - Include any personal information on the website only with the specific permission of the individual
 - Provide robust passwords for access to the site for all editors
 - Take any other necessary steps to ensure the website remains secure, following advice from Sitebuilder administration or administrators of the system being used.

Distribution Administrator

- Distribute all material in consultation with committee using distribution lists
- Review the nature of and entries in the distribution lists with the Chair and the committee, as required
- Ensure all distribution lists are kept up to date with information received by the committee.
- Twice a year request updates from each member u3a about their Chair, Business Secretary, and Regional Representative

Minutes Secretary

- To take Committee and Annual General meeting minutes and send to the Chair and Business Secretary to send out before the next meeting.
- Take printed minutes to next meeting for signing, after agreement by Committee and then give to the Business Secretary for archiving.

Magazine Editor (Northumbria Messenger)

Primary responsibilities

- Edit an electronic version of the magazine for sending to the website and for electronic distribution, four times a year to coincide with the quarterly meeting
- Enlist the help of a proof reader
- Arrange for the printing of the hard copies if agreed by the committee.

Secondary Responsibilities

- Keep lines of communication open to contributors to enable them to send in reports etc
- Acknowledge receipt of reports
- Chase up contributions
- Edit contributions where necessary
- Actively encourage the membership to contribute items of interest
- Be open to feedback and new ideas
- Supplement, where appropriate, items in the Messenger with the Editor's own contributions.

Committee Member

On taking up the role

- Agree to abide by 'The Trustees Code of Conduct'
- Read and understand The Essential Trustee CC3 (Charity Committee Document)
- Complete both a 'Fit for Purpose' and a Charity Commission Eligibility form and give to the Business Secretary

Main Responsibilities

- Attend committee meetings and join sub-committees and working groups as appropriate
- Help with running the NRU3a and participate in events.
- At quarterly meetings:
 - Liaise with the Registration Team in order to welcome new members
 - Engage with members of u3as to elicit information and opinions, in order to feed this back to the committee.