

ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

1 Aims of the Guidelines

Given the widespread concern amongst u3a members and wider society about climate change, Roding Valley u3a has adopted the Third Age Trust guidelines relating to the environment. These guidelines aim to encourage the Committee, groups and members to reflect on the way their activities may impact on the climate change, biodiversity loss and the environment.

The guidelines have been designed to:

- address the concerns of members and wider society with regard to environmental issues
- encourage communication and dialogue on environmental issues within Roding Valley u3a
- encourage a culture of awareness and a sense of responsibility within the membership with respect to sustainability and environmental issues
- provide information to members on how they might reduce their adverse impact on the environment
- minimise the environmental impact of organised u3a activities

2 Practical Measures

The following are practical measures to raise awareness and to minimise environmental impact. Please note that committee members and groups convenors have an important part to play in supporting these measures during the activities of the u3a.

The Committee will:

- Ask a member to become the Environmental Officer, who will monitor environmental issues arising within the u3a.
- Consider arranging speakers on environmental topics for some monthly meetings.
- Wherever possible, incorporate environmental concerns into planning and decision making.
- Consider the impact of activities which take place outside, in natural ecosystems e.g. walking and nature groups and how trips and holidays could be made more sustainable.
- Encourage the formation of climate and environmental groups within the u3a.
- Check whether venues operate environmentally responsible policies such as using local suppliers, and encourage them to do so.
- Ensure as far as possible that refreshments are served in an environmentally friendly manner e.g. using crockery rather than disposable cups and plates.
- Minimise waste and encourage reuse and recycling.
- Encourage travel to meetings and events by walking, car sharing and public transport where available.

- Consider conducting a survey of members to seek their views on climate and the environment and suggestions for measures which might be taken by the u3a.
- Make these guidelines available on the Roding valley website and draw members attention to it.
- Encourage dialogue on climate change issues with the wider population including e.g. younger people.

3 Definitions

Environmental issues: These are the often negative effects of human activity on the natural world, including climate change, pollution, drought and biodiversity loss. Environmental protection is the practice of working to slow, halt or reverse this.

Climate Change: The UN defines climate change as referring to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These shifts may be natural, but since the 1800s, this is primarily due humans burning fossil fuels.

4 Further reading

The Climate Coalition is a UK's largest group of people dedicated to action against climate change: www.theclimatecoalition.org .

The Climate Change and Environment Subject Adviser and can be reached at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects/climate-change> . You can find out about the u3a Climate Change Network, led by Frances, here: <https://www.u3asites.org.uk/climate-change/welcome> .

Climate Change Committee is an independent organisation, established as part of the 2008 Climate Change Act, it reports regularly to the UK parliament, and the devolved governments on progress in tackling climate change. It is also acts as an independent advisor on the impact of climate change on all aspects of living in the UK: <https://www.theccc.org.uk> .

The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. It prepares comprehensive reports on climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for reducing the rate at which climate change is taking place: <https://www.ipcc.ch/> .

The Wildlife Trusts are a grassroots movement where members and volunteers work together with local Wildlife Trust to make their local area wilder and make nature part of life <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/> .

Version	Description of changes	Date
0.1	Draft prepared by Laura Blake	20 05 2023