

8 Sharing Groups with Another u3a

8.1 Introduction

A Shared Group is one where a member of another u3a can become a member of that Group without joining the host u3a.

If the topic of the Group is not commonly offered or if the Group needs more members, and RVu3a members have not responded to advertisements in the newsletter or other publicity, it may be appropriate to make it a 'Shared Group' with one or more other U3As.

8.2 Approval

All Shared Groups must be agreed by the Committees of ALL the u3as concerned.

If a Convenor wishes their Group to be shared, they must initially agree this with the existing members of the Group, then contact the Groups Coordinator who will take the proposal to the RV u3a Committee for approval. If approval is given, the Groups Coordinator will then contact the Groups Coordinators of one or more local u3as, it's been agreed to share with, to ask if the other u3a is willing to advertise the Group.

The Committees of the other u3as will need to approve the request. Sometimes this isn't given, usually because the u3a has a similar Group of their own which they want to safeguard.

8.3 Priority For Roding Valley U3a Members²

At the outset when the Group is recruiting new members, RVu3a members will have priority over members from other u3as.

Once the Group is established, the Convenor must ensure that a member of an outside u3a who has joined their Group won't be asked to leave if a member of RV u3a wants to join but there is no space. This means, when the Group is full, and other u3a members have been enrolled onto the Group's membership, they will not be expected to stand aside to make room for any later applications from RVu3a members.

For members on a waiting list, when a vacancy occurs, RVu3a members will have priority.

8.4 Joint u3a Groups

Occasionally a Shared Group will be shared because the Convenor belongs to two u3as and the new Group is advertised in both at the same time. If a venue is involved it's important to agree with the Committees of both u3as which u3a will be the host. The host u3a is then responsible for booking the venue, the finances of the Group and general over-sight.

8.5 Ceasing To Share a Group

At some point, a Shared Group may find that it has sufficient members from RV u3a wanting to join so that it no longer needs members from other u3as. This should be reported to the Committee via the Groups Coordinator who should then ensure that other u3as are informed. Existing members from other u3as will continue to be allowed to attend the group.

² This is in line with an agreement made between RV u3a and Epping Forest u3a in Autumn 2022.

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8.6 Confirming Membership On Non-RV U3a Members

At least annually Convenors will be asked to provide the Groups Coordinator with a list of their members (unless they are already maintaining their membership on Beacon.)

Convenors must provide the following details for non-RV members:

- Name
- Address
- Contact details (including emergency contact details if given)
- Name of u3a to which they belong and membership number

The Groups Coordinator will then record the non-RV u3a member in the Beacon Membership System as an associate AND confirm with the other u3a Groups Coordinator that they are still a current member. If they are not a current member, they must either join the appropriate u3a or they will be asked to leave the Group.