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## Coronavirus Advice Sheet 2

The Third Age Trust has put together this Question and Answer list – collating all its current advice on coronavirus which has been sent out to U3As.

Please continue to look out for mailings as the situation changes.

### 1. What is current advice regarding Coronavirus?

The Third Age Trust continues to follow the government and NHS advice on coronavirus and will keep you updated with regular mailings when the advice changes.

The current advice is to stop non-essential contact with others and adopt social distancing. Those in 'at-risk' groups are to be shielded from social contact for 12 weeks. People who should take particular care to minimise social contact are, among others, people over the age of 70.

We can all reduce the impact and spread of misinformation by relying on information from trusted sources such as [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
[www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot) [www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net)  
<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19> [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

To find out more go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19ukgovernment-response>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) advice is to use NHS 111 England NHS 24 in Scotland NHS Direct Wales including online advice where possible

Use pharmacies and GPs responsibly, and go to the hospital only when you really need to.

This is further explained on the NHS website: [When to go to A&E and Choose Well Wales](#)

## 2 How to avoid catching or spreading germs?

Do:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

Don't:

- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.

## 3. What should I do if a member of my U3A is diagnosed with Coronavirus?

If a U3A finds that a member or members have contacted coronavirus, please follow the government advice on isolation.

The current government advice is that the member and all people living with the member should self isolate for 14 days.

Please let the Trust know immediately if your U3A has been affected by Coronavirus [please do not identify the person or persons in question] – This is so that the Trust can formulate an overall picture of the UK-wide situation and offer appropriate advice and support. We would ask U3A committees and members to keep fellow members up to date with advice about coronavirus

## 4. What should I do about cancelling meetings and larger scale events?

Many U3As have asked us whether to postpone their monthly meetings and Interest Groups. Our advice is to follow the government guidance which is asking the population now to avoid all unnecessary contact. The Trust has also

taken the step of postponing its large events and meetings. If possible, please put a notification on your website giving details of your period of closure and how members can continue to contact the U3A. If possible, please include a general contact email for U3A members during the period of closure or partial closure.

## 5. What should my U3A do about its AGM?

This advice is relevant for all U3As that have a model 2012 constitution, 2018 constitution or 2019 constitution. If you do not have a model constitution please phone the Trust advice team for further assistance.

Holding the AGM 1. The U3A should still plan and call an AGM (the model constitution provides that an AGM must be held every year).

2. U3As can send out the paperwork for AGMs as normal. In the AGM notice to all members, the opportunity for members to submit questions or comments in advance of the meeting if they are unable to attend as normal could be offered.

3. It is likely that many U3As may have to delay their AGMs. If a U3A needs to postpone their AGM under the model constitution no more than 15 months may elapse between successive AGMs. So, for example, if a U3A held an AGM on 1 March 2019, in principle they would have until 1 June 2020 to hold their next AGM. This might give them time to reschedule an AGM for a time when, hopefully, the coronavirus issue is less critical. If the coronavirus situation has not abated by the end of the 15 month time limit, we would not expect the Charity Commission to seek any enforcement action against the charity on the basis of a technical breach which is a consequence of serious health concerns and adherence to government guidance.

4. If an AGM is called but there is no quorum (e.g. because members are selfisolating) then the meeting will have to be adjourned. The constitution does not specifically require the adjourned meeting be held within the 15 month time limit set out above so an adjourned meeting could be held after the 15 month time limit has expired. The quorum at a re-convened meeting is the members present at that re-convened meeting (i.e. the normal quorum requirements fall away where there has been an adjournment). So, where an AGM has been adjourned, it is possible that the members of the executive committee could constitute a quorum for the purposes of the reconvened general meeting.

**NOTE: A U3A cannot call an initial AGM when the quorum was only the committee, this could only occur at a reconvened AGM following an inquorate initial AGM**

## 6. What should a U3A do about meeting Filing Deadlines for the Charity Commission?

There is no technical requirement in the constitution to seek members' approval of the U3A accounts and annual update. If the accounts and annual update cannot be presented to the members at a meeting because that meeting has been cancelled or postponed, the trustees can sign them off and submit them to the Charity Commission – this would be preferable to missing the relevant deadlines. The finalised accounts could then be circulated to members by email or post, or simply presented at the next AGM.

## 7. What is the best way to manage remittances to Trust when access to post may be limited?

The Third Age Trust would be grateful if U3As could pay amounts falling due directly into our bank accounts instead of paying by cheque. The relevant details are:

For payments of:

- Annual Membership Subscriptions

**Barclays Bank, The Third Age Trust, Account number 80892092, sort code 2021-78**

For payments of:

- Contributions to Third Age Matters magazine distribution costs
- Beacon licence Fees to be paid

**Barclays Bank, Third Age Trust Trading Ltd, Account number 03515370, sort code 20-21-80**

## 8. What can my U3A do to keep members involved in interest groups and activities remotely?

It is so important that all our members stay connected and continue to connect to the micro U3A Communities that they are part of – not least through their

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interest groups. There have been some great suggestions about how we can all stay connected with each other. U3As have come up with lots of ideas and we'll be posting these on the website as we go along.

[https://www.u3a.org.uk/component/content/article/197-covid-](https://www.u3a.org.uk/component/content/article/197-covid-19/556keeping-in-touch?Itemid=490)

[19/556keeping-in-touch?Itemid=490](https://www.u3a.org.uk/component/content/article/197-covid-19/556keeping-in-touch?Itemid=490) Let us know about what personal action you are taking at [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk) Sign up to the newsletter where we will be posting more of these ideas and which we will use to get in touch with you if needed. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>