

# Selby & District u3a Group Leaders Handbook

(Revised May 2021)

Version 3

## 1. Introduction.

Interest groups are the lifeblood of the u3a organisation. This document outlines some of the considerations related to establishing and running groups and is based on common practice and common sense. The title Group Leader is used here, though some might prefer facilitator, organiser or manager.

## 2. Main Role

All u3a groups are charities and as such, are bound by the rules of the Charity Commission. All officers in a charity (Including Group Leaders) are obliged to carry out certain functions in a prescribed way.

- a) To run the group in line with local and national u3a policies and objectives.
- b) It is recommended that group members share responsibilities for running the group.
- c) Identify a deputy and delegate wherever you can to spread the work load.
- d) Appoint a Group Treasurer if any money is involved in running the group.
- e) Maintain a record of group members, their valid membership and contact details.
- f) Decide with group members the frequency of meetings, then ideally select a specific day, time and location suitable to members.

At all times the Groups Coordinator or Committee Members are able to assist you.

## 3. Operating an Interest Group

Each group will develop its own structure within the u3a ethos of shared and self-help, learning in a co-operative and mutually supportive organisation. This results in an increase in knowledge, a supportive and friendly atmosphere which enables everyone to participate.

## 4. The Group Leader's Role

Ideally no one person should have to carry the load of running an interest group. Interest groups benefit from regular planning meetings to help maintain a lively and dynamic interest group. It is important to encourage participation as some members will be less active than others, but their opinions matter!

You should consider whether there are any risks which may occur as a result of the group's activities. If so, talk to the Groups Coordinator or a committee member. Organise an initial meeting, invite people to attend and identify what you want to achieve.

## 5) Log Book.

It is always useful to keep records of activities. This can include a statement of the groups aims. Details of members including their emergency contacts. A register of members details.

Local information.

**It is particularly important in this covid era (and beyond) that you keep a log of attendees at your group meetings.**

A record of any incidents and/or accidents occurring during group meetings should be kept.

Incident report templates are available on the Documents section of our website. Our Membership Secretary holds the Accident Book where such incidents should be recorded.

## 6) Problem Solving

Issues can occur between members. Don't leave a problem too long before trying to resolve it. These can be very minor and resolved quickly, they may be more complex. If the latter, these should be out in the open and if appropriate, an independent person may need to be involved. Call on the Groups Coordinator or any committee member for advice.

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This is deliberately a condensed version of this guide. Should you require further details of any aspect of Group organisation, there are a large selection of documents available within Selby & District u3a, or on line. Any Committee member would make these available to you at any time.