

Accessibility policy

Statement

Stansted Mountfitchet U3A is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of each U3A draw upon their knowledge, skills, and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning). Stansted Mountfitchet U3A is committed to ensuring that the U3A is as inclusive and accessible as possible for those in their third age who meet the criteria for membership. This policy document should be read alongside Stansted Mountfitchet's U3A's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.

Aims of the Policy

This policy has been drawn up to ensure that Stansted Mountfitchet U3A takes steps to review accessibility needs for individual members and makes reasonable adjustments, where possible, to accommodate the needs of members with disabilities and/or health related needs. The policy considers the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and the need for Stansted Mountfitchet U3A to avoid discriminating directly or indirectly against members with disabilities and/or health-related needs. The policy will act as a reference point for Committee Members, Group Leaders, and individual members in terms of the steps Stansted Mountfitchet U3A will take. The policy will also identify the parameters of the adjustments that can be made. Stansted Mountfitchet U3A is a membership charity and not a service provider, therefore whilst reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals can participate and attend, there will be certain needs that the U3A will not be able to accommodate due to the level of care that an individual may need.

Practical Approaches to Increasing Access

In ensuring equality of access Stansted Mountfitchet U3A will take the following steps:

- General meetings will, as far as possible, be held at a well-lit, fully wheelchair accessible venue, with wheelchair accessible toilet and with a sound system in use.
- At the monthly members meetings, the front row of seats will be reserved for members who have impaired hearing or vision.
- Group Leaders running groups that require a certain level of fitness and/or mobility will be happy to advise members in advance so that members can decide as to whether the group is suitable for them.
- Stansted Mountfitchet U3A will try to ensure that there are a range of groups available that will provide access to members so that members do not feel excluded from too many interest/activity groups.
- Stansted Mountfitchet U3A will maintain a database of public venues and the facilities offered by each venue. However, some groups take place in members' homes and therefore adaptations for accessibility are not possible.
- Stansted Mountfitchet U3A has a duty of care to all members, and this may mean that difficult decisions must be taken in assessing an individual's ability to participate either in the

U3A as a whole or within individual activities. These decisions will always be taken through discussion with the individual member and his or her carer, to ensure that a fair and considered decision is taken. This may include developing a risk assessment with the individual regarding their ability to participate.

Stansted Mountfitchet U3A will seek additional advice and support from U3APlus, The Regional Trustee, National Office, the national website, and external specialist organizations as required.

This policy was adopted on: 14th December 2022

Policy Review date: December 2024