



Guidance for Stoke-on-Trent South U3A Committee Members

1. OBJECTS OF STOKE-ON-TRENT SOUTH U3A

These are as follows:

“The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development”.

This paragraph is incorporated into our constitution and reflects the revised object clause as stated in the Articles of Association of the Third Age Trust. The wording has been agreed with the Charity Commission and introduced following our AGM in May 2018.

2. POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE

These are listed in the Constitution, and include fundraising, buying, selling or leasing property, co-operating with voluntary and statutory bodies, appointing advisory committees, running events, publishing materials, and participating in area and regional U3A groupings.

The membership of the Committee is also defined in the Constitution, a copy of which is available on our website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/stoke>

There is detailed advice on the functions, membership and running of a Committee in the ‘Committees and Procedures’ document available on the members’ section of the Third Age Trust website at www.u3a.org.uk

3. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee normally holds one ordinary meeting per month and additional special meetings can be called as necessary. There is also the Annual General Meeting, open to all members.

Details of the structure and running of meetings are in the Constitution. The ‘Committees and Procedures’ document from the Third Age Trust also gives a wealth of detail on committee operation, including the ‘Golden Rules for an effective committee meeting’, which are:

- > prepare beforehand
- > be involved
- > explore the issues
- > take responsibility
- > make decisions
- > follow them up.

4. WHY DOES BEING A COMMITTEE MEMBER MAKE ME A TRUSTEE?

Stoke-on-Trent South U3A is a Registered Charity (No. 1148741). Under

Charity Commission rules, charity trustees are the people who serve on the governing body of a charity. They may be known as trustees, directors, board members, governors or committee members. It is also the requirement of our parent body, the Third Age Trust and of their contracted insurance companies, that all U3A committee members are trustees. It is a legal requirement that all charity trustees' names and addresses are supplied to the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission's website can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

5. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF TRUSTEES

Trustees are expected to act in the interests of the U3A, ensuring that it operates in a manner consistent with its objects and purposes. He/she should act with care and diligence and in accordance with any legal requirements.

New trustees should read and sign the Trustee Code of Conduct for Stoke-on-Trent South U3A (copy available on our website <https://u3asites.org.uk/stoke>), alongside the Charity Commission's document 'The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do'. Expectations of Stoke-on-Trent South U3A Committee members as trustees are, in brief, the following:

- a) Comply with Charity law and the requirements of the Charity Commission. Each new trustee will be required to sign a declaration of eligibility (copy on Stoke-on-Trent South U3A website).
- b) Promote the principles of the U3A movement.
- c) Always act in the best interests of Stoke-on-Trent South U3A, uphold its reputation and not bring it into disrepute.
- d) Reflect the current Stoke-on-Trent South U3A policy, regardless of personal views.
- e) Abide by Stoke-on-Trent South U3A's procedures and practices.
- f) Never derive financial benefit from being a trustee.
- g) Use U3A resources responsibly.
- h) Inform the Chair before agreeing to speak on behalf of the U3A.
- i) Respect the authority of the Chair in meetings, and accept majority committee votes as final.
- j) Treat fellow committee members with courtesy and respect.
- k) Respect organisational, committee and individual confidentiality.

6. **INSURANCE COVER**

The Third Age Trust provides insurance policies for all U3As, which includes Public and Products liability, Money Cover, All Risks Equipment insurance, Home Contents Cover and Charity Indemnity insurance. The latter provides specific indemnity for the legal liability of trustees. Details can be seen on the 'Overview of the Insurance Policies provided by the Third Age Trust' document on the national U3A website.

7. **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

a) The Stoke-on-Trent South U3A Constitution

b) Trustee Code of Conduct for Stoke-on-Trent South U3A

c) The Essential Trustee: what you need to know – Charity Commission's CC3 leaflet which was published in 2012 and last updated in 2018:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

d) Third Age Trust material – all in www.u3a.org.uk at Home/Member's Area/Advice for advice and procedures on a range of subjects including financial matters, document retention, data protection, complaints procedures, etc. You will need to register on the site to access guidance and procedural documents. It is recommended that committee members refer to this site occasionally for up to date information.