

Group Organiser's Guidance

Thank you for being a Group Organiser

Our Groups are the core of what makes Tiptree u3a so successful, and it only happens because of volunteers like yourself. We appreciate your commitment and hope this guidance assists you in your role.

As always, the Group Coordinator, as well as the rest of the Committee, is available for support if needed.

Records

When any new member joins your Group, check their membership card to ensure they are a member of Tiptree u3a.

Have a group attendance register, update this at each Group Meeting, including meetings in member's homes.

Each January, check members have renewed their membership (have a current membership card) or check on Beacon; and advise the Group Coordinator when done. If you are not able to do this then let the Group Coordinator have a list of your group members please.

If a non-Tiptree u3a person has asked if they could come to your group to see if they want to join, let the Group Coordinator know.

If, unfortunately, a member of your group dies please let the Membership Secretary know asap so the records are updated to prevent any further communication being sent.

Finance

Many Groups have no equipment or costs relating to the Group (e.g. those meeting in member's home). A small payment can be made to the host to cover refreshments and a record is not needed for this.

Payments received to cover the hire of rooms etc. need to be recorded and then paid to the Tiptree u3a Treasurer, who will settle invoices received.

The Treasurer is only able to make payments if there are sufficient funds held in your Group's account. Any money received then becomes the property of Tiptree u3a.

If you are not sure about a financial matter please contact our Treasurer to discuss it.

Venues

Groups can meet in various places e.g. member's homes, a hired venue, outside at an agreed location. Please ensure that your meetings are as inclusive as practical, also refer to the u3a Policy for more information (a copy is available on the website <https://u3asites.org.uk/tiptree/page/100013>).

If you need to hire a venue, the best way to cover costs is probably to ask for an upfront payment from members to cover an 8-12 week period. This ensures the hire costs are covered no matter how many members turn up each time.

There are a number of venues locally so if you ever want to discuss some options speak to the Group Coordinator.

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Website

The website is where many people look for information about our u3a and its many interest groups. It is really important that we make sure the information is correct, welcoming and interesting.

Group Organisers are sent a log-in and password for their Group page, which can then be edited. They can do this themselves; a group member can take on this task or the information can be sent to the IT & Publicity Manager for updating.

The First page will have the where, when, who, what, how etc. about the group. Where required there is the option of a second page for the Group's News and Programme.

Group at Full Occupancy

Groups may be unable to take new members for several reasons, often due to limitation of space.

If options have been considered and your Group cannot take new members at this time, please let the Group Coordinator know.

The webpage can be updated and the Group Coordinator can then keep a list of any members who might be interested if a new group could start.

It is also important that members, especially if new, are not disappointed by hoping to join a group and then finding out it is not an option.

Tasks

Getting members involved in running the Group helps to share the work, and could foster a new Group Organiser for the future.

Communication with the rest of Tiptree u3a

Tiptree u3a members are interested in what is going on in the many Groups, so please keep your webpage updated. The Newsletter has a regular feature of Tell Us More, at some time your Group will be approached asking for some details of what you do. Although you may not think it is interesting others might and it could encourage new groups. Likewise, if your Group is looking for more members the Newsletter is a useful tool.

GDPR

Any device (e.g. computer, tablet) that holds personal information (including telephone numbers and email addresses) of group members should be password protected.

Personal information should not be shared with other group members without explicit permission from that member.

Emails should only be sent using BCC (only see their own email address). If for some reason your group wishes to do this differently, please discuss with the Group Coordinator in the first instance.

Please do not disclose any personal contact details on the Website.

Please make sure you have agreement from each member of the group if they are in any photo taken after explaining where/how it will be used.

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Insurance

The Third Age Trust has arranged for insurance cover for Public Liability and Product Liability, it does not include Personal Accident.

NB Under 18s are not permitted at any u3a activity.

The Principles of the u3a Movement

The u3a movement is non-religious and non-political and has three main principles:

The Third Age Principle

Membership of a u3a is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full time employment has ceased.

Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a u3a.

Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a u3a can do so.

The Self-help Learning Principle

Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; by the members, for the members.

No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.

There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all u3a members.

The Mutual Aid Principle

Each u3a is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the u3a movement.

No payments are made to members for services rendered to any u3a.

Each u3a is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.

Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the u3a movement.

This guidance is intended to be a brief introduction, and will not include everything you might want to know. Further information can be found in the Tiptree u3a Constitution and Policies, on the Third Age Trust Website (www.u3a.org.uk) or by contacting the Tiptree u3a Committee.

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