

# **CONVENORS' HANDBOOK**

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for deciding to organise an interest/study group for Wendover u3a. We are sure that you will find it very rewarding, however at first it may all seem a bit daunting so the purpose of the information in the Handbook is to provide advice and support for the role. Each group develops its own structure but it is important that the group follows the u3a ethos of shared, participative and self-help learning.

## GETTING STARTED

### 1) Group leadership and management

Groups are led by a group Convenor or increasingly by Joint Convenors who share the responsibilities and main tasks. Often other members of the group also undertake agreed responsibilities e.g. organising the refreshments, maintaining the group register, planning and delivering an event or group activity because there is no reason why one or two people should need to do all the work for the group.

### 2) Purpose and objectives

At an initial meeting of the group it would be useful to discuss and agree amongst the group members what they are hoping to get from the group and how they would like to achieve their objectives through mechanisms like - discussions, skills training, shared presentations, practical sessions, visits etc. The focus of the subject matter of each group will lead to the different approaches and methods which will clearly then relate to the interests and existing skills within the group. The agreed overall purpose and objectives of the group should then be shared within that group's section on the website see Group responsibilities and tasks .

### 3) Venue

After the initial meeting it will be necessary to decide where will be the best place for the group to meet. This could be in a house or houses of members on a rota or in a hired hall or other local facilities e.g. rooms in local coffee bars or pubs. The size of the group and parking facilities and access for individual members e.g. any disability requirement will clearly influence the decision made. See Local Venues for details and information about facilities used by our u3a groups.

### 4) Additional expertise and information

#### 4.1. Resources and advisors.

There are u3a national and regional resources and specialist advisors who can assist and support with specific subject areas see [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk).

#### 4.2 Speakers.

Groups may want to consider using specialist speakers perhaps on a periodic basis within their group programme. These talks can then lead on to form a useful

foundation for discussions and further inputs from group members at group meetings throughout the year. If you hire a speaker for a group meeting the cost must be met by the group. No fees should be made to a speaker who is a u3a member.

### 4.3 Tutors

Some groups have tutors who are members with expertise in the subject matter of the particular group e.g. knowledge of the language or technical subject being studied by the group. Regular paid tutors are contrary to the principles of the Third Age Trust.

For further information on payments made by groups see Money Matters.

To obtain further information and advice on anything in the Handbook or indeed any particular queries you may have please contact us .

Joint Groups Co-ordinators.

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