

Wolverhampton



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

How Your U3A Works

This booklet outlines the current roles and responsibilities of committee members and others who contribute to the running of Wolverhampton U3A. Its purpose is two-fold:

- a) To increase members' awareness of the wide range of tasks that have to be carried out for our branch of the U3A to operate efficiently and successfully.
- b) To encourage members to feel that they could actively contribute to the running of the U3A by becoming a group co-ordinator or a committee member, and perhaps later taking on one of the roles described in the following pages.

New committee members are necessary for the health of the organisation. If you are interested in joining the committee or attending one of its meetings as an observer, do have a word with any existing committee member. You will be welcomed!

Being a **Committee Member (Trustee)** involves:

1. Attending about six meetings of the committee a year.
2. Contributing at those meetings to discussions and decision-making.
3. When ready, taking on one of the roles described below or other responsibility.
4. Participating in the annual meetings with group coordinators.
5. Assisting with other tasks as and when required.

The role of **Chair** involves:

1. Chairing public meetings of Wolverhampton U3A.
2. Drawing up the agendas for, and chairing, committee meetings of the U3A.
3. Representing Wolverhampton U3A in public forums.
4. Encouraging its representation on area and national bodies.
5. Responsibility (currently) at the monthly meetings for the notice board and tea rota.

The role of **Treasurer** involves:

1. Managing moneys coming in (eg subscriptions, monthly meeting collections, trip payments) and banking these.
2. Managing payments (eg to speakers).
3. Keeping a record of accounts (ledger or spreadsheet) and a receipt book.
4. Liaising with other officers as necessary (especially membership secretary).
5. Reporting regularly to committee.
6. Paying the annual capitation and direct mailing subscription to Third Age Trust.
7. Arranging an annual audit of accounts.

The role of **Secretary** involves:

1. Sharing communications from the Third Age Trust with the committee and, when appropriate, with members.
2. Taking minutes of committee meetings and the AGM, and distributing draft of these to the committee.
3. Liaising with the Chair and other committee members to draw up the agenda for committee meetings.
4. Reminding committee members of forthcoming meetings and sending them any necessary documents.
5. Completing and submitting the Annual return to the Third Age Trust.
6. Organising (or delegating) the ordering of U3A diaries.

The role of **Initial Contact** involves:

1. Being the initial contact for people enquiring about membership.
2. Giving them information about
 - a. the U3A in general and Wolverhampton U3A in particular
 - b. how to join
3. Sending out up-to-date information sheets and membership forms.
4. Passing on details of the enquirer to the **Meeter and Greeter**.
5. Arranging to meet the new member at their first meeting.

The role of **Membership Secretary** involves:

1. Receiving and recording subscriptions for new and existing members and forwarding these to the Treasurer.
2. Sending out membership cards.
3. Maintaining the membership database and the direct mailing list.
4. Co-ordinating the printing and distribution of membership renewal forms and other papers that need to be sent out before the AGM.
5. Providing details of renewals/non-renewals and membership numbers to the committee and (when appropriate) group co-ordinators.
6. Attending the monthly meetings (or delegating this if necessary) to help collect payments and check on new members.
7. Being the **Initial Contact** for enquiries (see above) if he/she is not available.

The role of the **Speakers' Secretary** involves:

1. Maintaining a database of potential speakers.
2. Contacting, negotiating with and provisionally booking nine monthly speakers for the following year (October – August).
3. Taking the proposed programme to committee for approval.
4. Confirming the booking details with speakers.
5. Supplying a copy of the programme for printing on membership cards.
6. Supplying a copy (with agreed fees) to the treasurer.
7. Contacting each speaker near to booked date to confirm details and check what equipment is required.
8. Meeting and greeting speaker on date of talk.
9. Sending thanks to speaker

The aim of the **Meeter and Greeter** is to make the process of joining the U3A “user-friendly” and welcoming by

1. Contacting new and prospective members to see what their interests are and remind them of the next general meeting.
2. Meeting new and prospective members at general meetings and introducing them, if possible, to the co-ordinators of groups they might be interested in.
3. Contacting them at a later date to see if they are happy with the U3A.
4. Visiting interest groups to make discussions with members more meaningful.

The role of the **IT Co-ordinator** currently involves:

1. Managing the Wolverhampton U3A website:
 - a. Making changes and additions as requested by the committee;
 - b. Keeping the News section up-to-date;
 - c. Maintaining the Groups list and their information pages in conjunction with coordinators.
2. Keeping an up-to-date mailing list of members and sending out communications as requested by the committee.
3. Managing the U3A printer: purchasing consumables, carrying out printing and collecting payments.

The role of the **Groups' Co-ordinator** involves:

1. Being familiar with U3A guidance for the operation of interest groups, and offering advice and guidance to group co-ordinators when asked.
2. Assisting in the start-up of new groups, eg with publicity, guidance to the co-ordinator, setting up the first meeting.
3. Ensuring that group co-ordinators are aware of their responsibilities with regard to membership of the U3A.
4. Encouraging co-ordinators to keep their groups' pages on the website accurate and up-to date.
5. Informing group co-ordinators as and when necessary
 - a) of any relevant decisions of the Committee and
 - b) of information given out at monthly meetings so that they can inform group members who were not present.
6. Liaising with Groups Coordinators of other U3As if requested.
7. Arranging an annual "thank you" and "sharing good practice" get-together for the group co-ordinators.

The role of **Publicity Officer** is to raise awareness and encourage membership of Wolverhampton U3A by:

1. Distributing annually to local libraries posters of up-to-date details of the U3A.
2. From time to time arranging advertisements in local magazines.
3. Ensuring that the U3A entry in the LEA database is up-to-date and accurate.
4. Writing and revising when necessary the introductory documents sent to new and potential members.
5. Seeking ways to widen the membership of Wolverhampton U3A.

Producing the **Newsletter** (currently three times a year) involves:

1. Contacting group co-ordinators – especially those whose groups have not featured recently in the newsletter – to ask for contributions, including photos where possible/relevant.
2. Liaising with the committee over any notices or reports that need to be included.
3. Sourcing features such as a cover picture, poem, cartoon etc.
4. Formatting the contents into four A4 pages and converting to PDF.
5. Sending the finished newsletter to the IT Co-ordinator to e-mail to members.
6. Copying the newsletter onto a disk and taking to a printer for a limited number of paper copies.

Being a **Group Co-ordinator** involves:

1. Arranging the group's programme and notifying members of the dates and locations of meetings.
2. Ensuring that the group's page on the Wolverhampton U3A website is up-to-date.
3. Maintaining an up-to-date list of members, keeping a record of attendance and checking membership of the U3A.
4. Keeping a record of topics.
5. Encouraging members to contribute to the group via discussion and presentations.
6. Welcoming new members.
7. Attending one of the annual meetings of group co-ordinators.