

Doc: Yate & Sodbury U3A Accessibility Policy	Date: 7 September 2022
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Change Record

Issue	Date	Section(s) Affected	Description of Change/Change Request Reference/Remarks
Draft 1	28/4/2020	New	Based on sample from U3A Central Ref: U3A-KMS-POL-007
Draft 2	30/4/2020	Document control sheet	Typos in document control sheet
Draft 3	6/5/2020	P3/S1.3	Reference for list of venues and risk assessment form plus typo
01	11/5/2020	Document reviewed	Update document control header
01	11/5/2020	All	Published
01	11/5/2021	All	Review, no changes, all same just review date changed from 11May21 to 11May22
02	7/9/22	All	Binny is the policy owner, changed document prepared by Patrick to Binny, no content changes, format updates.

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Yate and Sodbury U3A Accessibility Policy

1 Policy

1.1 Statement

Yate and Sodbury 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 to provide peer to peer learning. Yate and Sodbury U3A is committed 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 the Yate and Sodbury U3A Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

1.2 Aims of the Policy

This policy has been drawn up to ensure that Yate and Sodbury U3A takes steps to review accessibility needs for individual members and makes reasonable adjustments, where possible, to accommodate the needs of members with disabilities or health-related needs. The policy takes into account the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and the need for Yate and Sodbury U3A to avoid discriminating directly or indirectly against members with disabilities 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 to be taken by Yate and Sodbury U3A. The policy will also identify the parameters of the adjustments that can be made.

Yate and Sodbury U3A is a membership charity and not a service provider, therefore whilst reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals can participate and can attend with carers to support their needs, there will be certain needs that the U3A will not be able to accommodate due to the level of care required by the individual.

1.3 Practical Approaches to Increasing Access

In ensuring equality of access Yate and Sodbury U3A will take the following steps:

- An Accessibility Officer will be identified from amongst the membership. This will be a volunteer role.
- The Accessibility Officer will have responsibility for liaising with Group Leaders on an ongoing basis to ensure that groups are accessible and that group leaders are aware, via this policy document on the U3A website, of what the expectations are and what adjustments may need to be made such as relocating a group held within someone's home to a wheelchair accessible venue.

The Accessibility Officer will contact new members who indicate that they have a disability or health-related issue that may need additional support, which may include:

- *Discussion of needs:* Discussion with them what needs they have and how these could be met as appropriate.
- *General meetings:* These will, as far as possible, be held at a well-lit, fully wheelchair-accessible venue, spacious enough to cope with wheelchairs and mobility scooters, with wheelchair-accessible toilet and hearing aid loop system, and if possible a sound system in use.

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- *Meeting presentation:* Speakers giving visual presentations will be asked to give a good description of the presentation if there is a possibility that people with visual impairment are present.
- *Meeting venues:* At the monthly members meetings, the front row of seats will, if required, be reserved for members who have impaired hearing or vision.
- *Committee review:* Accessibility will be reviewed regularly by the committee with a view to considering any additional adjustments that may be needed, for example the availability of a hearing loop or access to training.
- *Training material:* Committee members and group leaders will be made aware of training material on the Groups [web-page](#) designed to support them in having an awareness of and facilitating access.
- *Fitness criteria:* Group Leaders running groups that require a certain level of fitness or mobility will be asked to provide guidance to potential new members in advance so that members can decide as to whether the group is suitable for them.
- *Liaising with Accessibility Officer:* Group Leaders will liaise with the Accessibility Officer where there are concerns about an individual's ability to participate.
- *Activities available:* Yate and Sodbury 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 or activity groups.
- *Carers:* Yate and Sodbury U3A will encourage and may require members to bring carers with them to U3A activities, as needed, with no additional cost for the carer. The carer will fall under U3A liability insurance unless they are a professional carer, in which case the individual must be covered by their employer's insurance cover.
- *Venues available:* Yate and Sodbury U3A will maintain a database of venues, with brief descriptions of facilities offered to accommodate different needs. [See list of venues at: https://u3asites.org.uk/yate-sodbury/groups](https://u3asites.org.uk/yate-sodbury/groups)
- *Duty of care:* Yate and Sodbury U3A has a duty of care to all members and this may mean that difficult decisions have to 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 their carer in order 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. [See example risk assessment form in Guidelines for Group Leaders Appendix 4 at: https://u3asites.org.uk/yate-sodbury/groups](https://u3asites.org.uk/yate-sodbury/groups)
- *External U3A support:* If appropriate, Yate and Sodbury U3A will seek additional advice and support from U3APlus, the Regional Trustee, National Office, the national website and external specialist organisations as required.

This policy was adopted on:

Policy review date: