

# Winchester u3a

## Guidelines for Group Leaders

**Interest groups** are a crucial part of any local u3a and we want to continue to have a wide range of successful groups with vacancies for new members.

This is only achieved through the hard work and efforts of our group leaders. We have prepared these guidelines to help group leaders setting up new groups and running established ones.

### **Starting a new group**

You will need to decide:

- The purpose of the group, together with the subject matter/activities and at what level. This may be discussed with members of your group.
- When, how often, where, and how you are going to meet.
- The maximum number you can accommodate.
- What help is available to you – locally, regionally, nationally.
- At the first meeting, encourage participation by all. Have a list of points to be discussed and agreed.
- Some financial help is available when setting up a group.

The Groups Secretary is happy to help and advise.

### **Role of the group leader**

- Ensure that on the list of special interest groups on the Winchester u3a website your details are shown correctly as the contact/group leader and check regularly for the accuracy of the information about the group. Please advise the Groups Secretary of any changes.
- Organise the group and develop a programme in consultation with the members of the group in line with the u3a ethos.
- Liaise with the Groups Secretary.
- Be willing to attend group leaders meetings to discuss issues and share expertise/ideas.
- Be willing to attend meetings for new members and welcome any new members to Winchester u3a.
- Inform the Groups Secretary of any changes to the group, such as meeting times, name and contact details of group leader and number of vacancies.
- Send financial information about the group to the Treasurer as and when requested.
- Once a year supply the Treasurer with a list of the members of your group.
- Inform the Membership Secretary if any people in your group move away or die.

### **Running your group**

- Keep a list of names of members of your group and their contact details [telephone and email] and, if thought useful, keep a register of attendance.
- Keep a note of anyone interested in joining but to whom you cannot offer a place.
- Provide the Groups Secretary with a short paragraph about the objectives of the group, dates and times of meetings for inclusion on the website and update this when necessary.
- Keep a note of what happens at each meeting – and you, or members of your group, provide short articles on your activities for the Newsletter.
- If appropriate, keep a note of your expenses [photocopying, hire of rooms/ DVDs etc] and ask your group members to share these. You should not be out of pocket!

- Make sure new members are welcomed to the group. Check that they are members of the Winchester u3a. If not, they may attend one taster meeting and if they wish to continue, they should contact the u3a Membership Secretary. Unlike some local groups, we do not have reciprocal membership with other u3a groups, so they do need to join the Winchester group.
- The safety and welfare of our members is important. When organising activities, considering such things as mobility and make sure the members are briefed so they can decide whether they are able to safely take part. Risk assessments are not required for most of our activities, unless we identify a particular hazard that needs attention. When we use outside venues, we need to make sure members are aware of the venue's facilities and such issues as fire procedures. Also, when arranging visits, we need to check with our hosts on special safety requirements – for instance footwear – and issues related to mobility etc. Sample checklists are available on our website.

### **Insurance**

- In your group activities, members are covered by Public & Products Liability Insurance. This covers Winchester u3a members for loss and accidental injury to a person or accidental loss or damage to property not belonging to them, as long as it arises from or in connection with a u3a activity.
- Should you experience such a situation, contact the Secretary in the first instance for advice and information.

### **Use of paid outside speakers and tutors**

- One off payments to speakers or reimbursement of legitimate expenses are fine.
- If you are planning to use a freelance tutor to lead the class on a regular basis, you are advised to check that s/he is registered with HM Revenue and Customs as a self-employed person and has a current public liability policy of at least £2m.

### **Financial matters**

- As a charity, we are required to follow sound financial practice. If in doubt, consult the Winchester u3a Treasurer!