



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Horsley U3A

www.horsleyu3a.org

Group Activities Guidance



March 2017

Next formal review date: March 2018

Group Activities Guidance

The following information is a brief summary of the information that is available to leaders in the current Horsley U3A Group Activities Handbook. Copies of the Handbook can be downloaded from the Horsley U3A website.

1. Getting Started

Thank you for agreeing to be a Group Contact, Convenor, or Leader. Although these notes have been compiled to give some overall guidance, you are encouraged to read the extra detail that is available in the Horsley U3A Group Activities Handbook.

New group leaders (whether of new or established groups) may like to start by:

- Finding out or clarifying what members expect of their group
- Discovering or checking the expertise in the group
- Reviewing the local and national support that is available to the group

It is then useful to consider sharing some of the organisational duties such as collecting subs, booking rooms, helping to organise a programme, ensuring that the group's web page is kept up to date and maybe writing an occasional article for the Newsletter.

2. Annual Reception

Each year we hold a Reception for all Group Leaders to which you will be cordially invited. The event is usually held in January and is primarily intended to thank Group Leaders for their work during the year and to share their experiences with each other.

3. Organising your group's activities

It is up to each group to decide how their group will be run. Sharing tasks rather than taking them all on yourself is advised but is not mandatory.

Keeping a record of participants and managing any finances involved is strongly recommended. If you have to, or wish to, limit the number of members joining your group please let our Group's Support team know. **Waiting lists are not encouraged.** There may be enough interest to set up another Group. The Group Support team will help you with this process.

There is no limit to the size of a group. There may be as few as 5 or as many as 50 members enjoying a common activity. However when numbers exceed 50, consideration should be given to forming a second group. All group members should be encouraged to participate and contribute to the group's activities.

When organising an outing for group members, comprehensive advice is given in the

4. Accommodation

Many groups meet in the houses of their members, sometimes in rotation. For larger group meetings there are plenty of public meeting rooms in the area. These can be hired at very reasonable rates. For details see Appendix C of the Handbook

5. Equipment

Horsley U3A has its own laptop, projector, screens and display boards that can be used in any of the rooms of East Horsley Village Hall (or elsewhere by agreement). Full details of the arrangements for using this equipment are given in the Handbook.

6. Finance

Groups must aim to be self-financing. You might need to cover the cost of hiring a room or other running costs by charging members a small fee for each meeting. For regular meetings you might levy a charge to cover the costs of a season or the entire year. **A petty cash tin works best for most groups as it's easily passed on to the next leader or a stand-in when necessary and is perfectly adequate for small sums (up to £100 total).** You may wish to keep some or all of the cash you have collected in your personal bank account for safety; if so, please inform the group members beforehand where their money is being held. Do not use your personal bank account to hold more than £200 of U3A group money; make use of the U3A Social Account instead. **For more details about finance see the Horsley U3A Group Leaders Handbook.**

7. Insurance

The Third Age Trust provides insurance for many aspects of our U3A group activities. The policy is set up to protect all U3A members, and includes 'member to member' cover so if somebody is injured undertaking a U3A activity and legal liability could be proven, the insurers would deal with any claim. Further advice regarding insurance is given in the Handbook

8. Letting the wider membership know about group activities

A brief description of your group activities and contact details appears in our **Directory**. In addition you are encouraged to contribute to our **Newsletter** which is issued twice a year. A membership wide e-mail can be sent to all members if you are keen to attract members to a particular meeting (contact the **Membership Secretary**). Alternatively, notices can be posted and literature displayed on the monthly meeting noticeboards and, if needed, announcements made at the monthly meetings. Notices for the public noticeboards need to be prepared in a particular way before being displayed. Contact Kelvin Hayes for more information.

A particularly powerful way of informing others of your group's activities is to use the **Horsley U3A Website**, see: www.horsleyu3a.org.uk. Each group is allocated at least one webpage if not more. **Group Leaders are encouraged to keep their web pages interesting and up to date.**

9. Privacy

To encourage members to enquire about group activities, the telephone numbers of the Group Leaders are listed and displayed on local public notice-boards. To help communication within your group, you will probably share your e-mail address with your group members. We also encourage you to allow your e-mail address to be used on our website and in particular your group's web page. However, this can be avoided if you are concerned about privacy.

10. Learning

Learning is at the core of all U3A activities. There is undoubtedly a wealth experience among group members and many will be keen to continue learning. There is also plenty of advice and experience available to help you incorporate learning into your group activities. In 2014 U3A National Office published a handbook entitled 'More Time to Learn'. Copies can be obtained from central office or from our Group Support team. <http://www.u3a.org.uk/members-area/onlineshop/handbooks/more-time-to-learn-detail.html> Leaders are also encouraged to read appendix B of the Handbook.

11. Subject Support

All groups tend to thrive on variety and new ideas. Your group members are an important source of ideas and these can be supported using national and local U3A resources. These include:

- i) Group contacts/leaders in other U3As.
- ii) U3A subject co-ordinators and networks.
- iii) Online courses.
- iv) Podcasts and downloadable videos.
- v) Central U3A Resource Centre.

More details are included in the Group Activities Handbook but If none of these meet your needs please contact the members of our Horsley U3A Groups Support Team.

Logging into the National U3A website it is very easy. Go to:

<http://www.u3a.org.uk/home.html> All you will need decide is a name and a password.