

## GROUP LEADER'S INFORMATION PACK

This pack should give you all the information needed to set up and run your group. Thank you for taking on this important role, it is much appreciated and will help form the backbone of our u3a.

Please remember the groups co-ordinator and any committee members are always there to help.

There are some documents you will find useful:

- Risk Assessment forms for venues.
- Insurance Document.
- Accident Form
- EDI information and Safeguarding.
- Attendance Register
- Making u3a Carrick dementia friendly

These can all be found on the u3a Carrick website: [u3acarrick.org.uk](http://u3acarrick.org.uk)

Emergency Contact List:

This is confidential between you and the member but it need not be a formal next of kin, just someone who may be available, perhaps to run your member home or give some help if they are experiencing difficulty.

Venue List currently used:

This may help you find a suitable venue. The treasurer will be able to help.

[treasurer@u3acarrick.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@u3acarrick.org.uk)

Start with a chat with the Groups coordinator [groupscoordinator@u3acarrick.org.uk](mailto:groupscoordinator@u3acarrick.org.uk)

They will be able to give you lots of advice and encouragement.

The University of the Third Age is an organisation specifically for those no longer in full time employment who would like to make friends and join activities, be they academic or more leisure activities. The ethos of the u3a is to have fun, learn new skills and make new friends. As an aspiring Group leader you have shown an interest in sharing your knowledge or skill with other members, at the same time enjoying sharing the activity with others.

- As a preliminary you should discuss your idea with the Groups Coordinator who is your initial point of contact for anything relating to your group.
- You will be advised to advertise your idea via the monthly newsletter to assess what support your group might enjoy. Contact the newsletter editor: [editor@u3acarrick.org.uk](mailto:editor@u3acarrick.org.uk) with a short description and asking for members to contact you if they are interested. The u3a Carrick Facebook page is also a good way to advertise your idea, contact the [vicechair@u3acarrick.org.uk](mailto:vicechair@u3acarrick.org.uk).
- The next step is to gain committee approval for your idea. The committee will wish to know how often you would like to meet and if you have established a date and venue so that costs can be considered. If you will require equipment the committee will need to give their agreement for its purchase. The Groups Co-ordinator will be able to advise you. Contact details are on the website and newsletter.
- Once established your group will have an initial 3 month trial period to assess how it is going or if you need assistance.

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### **Group Leader's Role**

- The role of a group leader is to make all the necessary arrangements for group meetings. It will be your responsibility to book venues and to cancel them if you are unable to meet on occasion.
- Please bear in mind that some venues require at least a month's notice for a regular booking to be cancelled. You should be aware of public holiday dates when it may be inadvisable to schedule a meeting and to inform the newsletter editor of your dates so that potential members and current members may know when you are meeting. Please also contact the treasurer if you need to cancel a meeting.
- Once the committee have given approval to your plan you can go ahead and make bookings.

### **Venues**

- A list of venues currently in use can be provided. These will usually be deemed cost effective. The venue may require sight of the u3a insurance document and may also require a signature from a committee member that invoices may be submitted to the Treasurer.
- If you plan to hold meetings in your own home then you will not need funding but you should still liaise with the committee as they will be there to support you. Contact is the Treasurer at: [treasurer@u3acarrick.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@u3acarrick.org.uk)
- It is important to be mindful that some venues have limitations on numbers attending because of room size or fire regulations, this may have an impact on group numbers.

### **Beacon**

- Carrick u3a uses the Beacon administration system and as a group leader you will be required to use it. Contact the committee for a short training session. Beacon will allow you to check that your attendees are paid up members and to contact them when necessary. You will be able to set schedules and print registers as well.
- Non members thinking of joining are allowed to join 2 meetings before they sign up for membership.

### **Finding members**

Your first members will be those who have shown an interest in your initial submission to the newsletter but once you have set dates and a venue it is worth announcing this again in the newsletter and on the Facebook page.

Also maybe request the group leader for the monthly meeting to make an announcement on your behalf, or produce a sign up sheet so that you may contact potential members.

No groups should be closed to members though through your risk assessment members should be able to undertake any activity you lead. There may also be limitations on venue capacity. If this is the case consult the group's co-ordinator or maybe encourage one of your members to start another group. If you feel you are unable to carry out some of the tasks required, such as the Beacon requirements, there may be a member of your group who is willing to help out.

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You are not expected to:

- Arrange transport for group members
- Provide personal services for infirm members
- Arrange for provision of refreshments, although many do.

### Initial meeting

At your first meeting members may find the following topics useful:

- What you envisage the meetings will cover
- How you are able to access resources, the committee may be able to help
- What is the best method of communication, Books, Powerpoint etc.
- Demonstrations or speakers.

Hopefully your group members will be able to assist or know of a volunteer speaker. If a paid speaker is occasionally required committee agreement will be needed prior to any booking.

**You should not ask your members to contribute financially.**

Any monies raised during meetings remain the property of u3a Carrick. A tea fund may be held from contributions made by members but should not be allowed to become excessive.

As a charity, u3a Carrick is not permitted to make donations to other charities. If a speaker from another charity comes to one of your meetings it is possible to accept voluntary donations from those attending by means of a 'bucket' at the end of the meeting.

If your group will be more active, other considerations may apply, for instance, safe footwear, terrain or trip hazards. This should be discussed as part of your risk assessment.

Once you are up and running please send a short piece for inclusion on the u3a Carrick website, ideally with some photos [webmaster@u3acarrick.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@u3acarrick.org.uk)

The committee will facilitate a group leader's meeting from time to time to advise on updates and help with any problems.

### Registers

- A register of those attending each meeting must be kept and should be submitted to the Committee at least twice yearly. This will help u3a Carrick to budget each year and will meet with insurance requirements.
- You should keep an emergency contact register for your group. This is confidential and only for use when a member requires assistance. It does not necessarily have to be a family member, just someone who is able to assist in the event of a problem.
- In the event of an incident an accident form, if necessary, should be completed and forwarded to the Groups Co-ordinator.

### Problems

Very occasionally there may be problems within the group, if these difficulties cannot be resolved by discussion with the member concerned then your first point of contact should be with the Groups Co-ordinator, who will be able to advise you.

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### **Insurance**

U3a Carrick is insured through its affiliation to the Third Age Trust and is covered for its legal liabilities towards members and accidental loss or damage to property and for the legal liabilities of trustees. If a group uses a member's home for its meetings, it is covered subject to the normal test of legal liability but injury or damage caused by a defect in the property is not covered.

Any group meeting should be enjoyable, both for members and you as Group Leader. If you feel daunted by any of the requirements please seek help from the groups coordinator or any committee member.