

Information, Advice & Guidance for Group Administrators

This handbook provides the information and guidelines a Group Administrator needs to set up and run a group activity. The Groups Coordinator will provide Group Administrators with updates to this document as necessary.

Contents

Section	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Participative Learning	2
3. Bookham u3a Website	2
4. Reference Documents	3
5. Data Protection	3
6. Role of a Group Administrator	4
7. Risk Assessments	5
8. Health & Safety	6
9. Starting a New Group	7
10. Group Finances	8
11. Insurance provided by the Third Age Trust	9
12. Copyright	10
13. Group Members from other u3a's	10
14. Problem Solving	11
15. ICE Data	11
16. Injury and/or Damage	11
Group Administrator Set-Up Expense Claim Form	12
Incident Report Form	13

1. Introduction

Group Administrators are the life blood of our u3a, without you we wouldn't exist.

Thank you for agreeing to organise/look after one of our u3a interest groups. We are sure you will find it very rewarding experience; however, it might seem a bit daunting initially. This handbook is intended to provide you with advice and support. It is important that your group follows the u3a ethos of shared, participative and self-help learning. The result will not only be an increase in knowledge, but a supportive and friendly atmosphere which enables everyone to participate.

We hope the advice given in this document give you everything you need to know about setting up and running your group – but please never feel alone in doing this – if you need any additional help or guidance please speak with the Groups Coordinator, who will be happy to support you.

We want you to know that we very much appreciate the time and energy you give to your groups and thank you for your contributions.

2. Participative Learning

The value of the u3a style of learning is that everyone can contribute and by doing so will all gain a feeling of self-worth and integration. As we all learn in different ways, the variation in content, method and style can make the learning experience more vibrant and appealing. Many of us will have particular skills, but most of us will use a combination of the following:

- Visual: using pictures, diagrams, images and spatial understanding
- Verbal: using words – both spoken and written
- Auditory: using sounds, rhythm, music, spoken presentations
- Physical/kinaesthetic: using hands, body, senses and acting things out
- Logical/Mathematical: using logic, systems, sequences, data, statistics
- Social: learning as part of a group, sharing experiences and explaining your understanding to others
- Solitary: studying on your own

3. Bookham u3a Website

It is recommended that you visit the Bookham u3a website, <https://bookham.u3asite.uk/> where various important u3a documents and information can be found to help you and our members. You also could benefit from visiting the Third Age Trust website <https://www.u3a.org.uk/> where you can find group subject support.

4. Reference Documents

Bookham u3a policy and other documents are available on its website; these include:

- a. Data Protection
- b. Privacy
- c. Accessibility - Guidelines for dealing with group members with disabilities (physical or mental) and/or living in sheltered care homes etc.
- d. Health and Safety
- e. Safeguarding
- f. Risk Management Guidance and Risk Assessments
- g. Insurance
- h. Finance
- i. Our Constitution
- j. Committee roles
- k. How to be a good group member
- l. Instructions on the use of Beacon

Other information that will be useful has been incorporated into this document for ease of reference.

5. Data Protection

Bookham u3a, its members and any associate members, and by association also its Group Administrators are required to comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

You do not need to give you written permission to hold data, as this has been covered by u3a membership and renewal forms, where u3a members have signed to say they accept u3a data policies.

Following good practice ensures that the rights of members are protected and that the risk of a data breach is minimised.

Group Administrators have a lawful basis for obtaining and having access to personal information (data) about people in their group, including addresses and contact and ICE details. Group Administrators should:

- a. Keep all group member personal data always secure
- b. Adopt strong passwords and never share them with anyone else
- c. Not to put personal contact data about themselves and or their group members on your group information pages (on Beacon) showing the activities you undertake as these can be view not only by all our u3a members but also anyone else who accesses to what is in effect a public website.

- d. Not send data outside the u3a without prior member consent and/or for specific agreed reasons
- e. If a member leaves your group, or there has been no activity from a member for a maximum of 12 months you must remove their names and their personal information from your group listing unless a longer period has been agreed (such as recovery time that may be needed following major illness, surgery etc). Likewise, persons must be removed if they are no longer paid-up members or associate members of our u3a

More detailed guidance can be found in our Data Protection Policy which is accessible on our website. In addition, national guidance is also available through the Third Age Trust website at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/members-area/support/advice-and-guidance#dataprotection>.

6. Role of a Group Administrator

As a Group Administrator you are responsible for the running of your group and for resolving any difficulties that may arise. However, the Group Co-ordinator is there to provide advice and support if you need to talk anything through.

It's quite often useful to have a deputy if possible; somebody to look after the group should you be away or unwell. Note: You don't have to do everything yourself, share tasks around with others in your group.

The following will be helpful to you:

- a. Keep an up-to-date list of members and contact details (including 'in case of emergency' ICE contact) and ensuring that group members are members of Bookham u3a or another u3a group – the name of which should be recorded.
- b. At least annually ensure those that attend are still u3a members and that their membership has not lapsed.
- c. Remind group members of next meeting – time, place and title of meeting.
- d. Keep master list of the groups future programme and encourage all members of your group to contribute to the groups programme. This may require them to arrange, present or organise individual meetings in turn (sometimes working with others in the group as this encourages active participation, particularly when the group is newly formed)
- e. The frequency of meetings is up to you; for example, weekly, twice a month, or monthly all work well.
- f. Complete a risk assessment to cover the risk environment in which the group operates, share same with group members, ensure it is kept up to date and that is used by whoever leads each group meeting.

- g. In the very rare event of an accident ensure that an Incident Report Form is completed and that it is past to the Secretary of Bookham u3a.
- h. Once a group is full the Group Administrator should inform the Groups Coordinator and, together, they should consider the possibility of establishing another group. In that regards you should keep a waiting list of interested persons not just to fill your own gaps but to help facilitate the formation of a new group.
- i. Advise the Groups Coordinator of membership changes to your group and if the day/time of the meeting is changed.
- j. Inform the Groups Coordinator if an advert or monthly meeting signup sheet is required to attract additional members.
- k. If available, attend the annual Group Administrator meeting.
- l. Working with the Groups Coordinator maintain the information held on the Bookham u3a website in respect of your group and do check that the description of your group on the website is correct.
- m. Raise the profile of the group by arranging for an article to be published internally or arranging for photos of the group and or their activity to be forwarded to the Publicity Officer and the Groups Administrator for display and or publication as appropriate.
- n. Possible additional duties:
 - i. In some cases, the Group Administrator will have special skills or knowledge of a subject that allows them to lead the group and set, with the input of the group, the programme as well as pass on their skills
 - ii. Some groups hold a small amount of petty cash for consumables for the group e.g. materials, tea and coffee, paint etc.
 - iii. Arrange or have arranged facilities such as rooms for meetings and collect or have collected monies to cover these expenses

7. Risk Assessments

- a. The u3a insurance company expects u3as to take reasonable precautions through risk assessment checklists. If a member were injured, the insurance company would ask for the completed risk assessment to demonstrate how the risk was identified.
- b. Bookham u3a strongly advises all groups to complete risk assessments to protect group members. For most activities, a checklist is sufficient. The more hazardous the activity, the more comprehensive the risk assessment checklist should be. The Third Age Trust has prepared model risk assessment checklists for different kinds of u3a activities which have been complemented by Bookham u3a with possible mitigations for specific risks.
- c. The following checklists are available to download from the Bookham u3a website either under the Groups or Downloads tab:

- Part / Day Trips
 - Home Based
 - Online Based
 - Outdoor Sport
 - Venue Based
 - Walks
- d. Matching a checklist to a particular group is not rigid, so that you should adopt the one containing the most appropriate risk descriptions and amend as you see fit. You may also decide to extend the model checklist(s) by adding further risks peculiar to your group's circumstances.
- e. The desired frequency for completing such checklists is described in the Risk Assessment FAQs found with the risk assessment checklists.

8. Health and Safety for Groups

- a. Health and safety is everybody's responsibility. It is incumbent on all to act and behave in a way that is safe to themselves and others and to report anything that might be hazardous so that it can be put right. To this effect group organisers should
- i. Keep an accurate and up to date register for each activity
 - ii. At the first session, or when new members join, check emergency contact numbers and details of any relevant medical issues or disabilities
 - iii. Be aware of the guidelines issued in writing or verbally by venues and the Group Administrator/ Committee in the event of a fire or an accident
 - iv. Check the activity venue to identify potential hazards which should be removed or brought to the attention of participants.
 - v. Before the first meeting a risk assessment should be completed by the Group Administrator.
 - vi. Check electrical equipment before use and report any concerns to the Group Administrator. It is your responsibility as lead to ensure the environment is safe and that equipment is used in a responsible manner.
 - vii. Follow up all incidents where health and safety has been compromised by contacting the u3a Health & Safety lead and completing and submitting an incident report so preventative action for the future can be undertaken and lessons can be learned. This should be done even if nobody is hurt.
- b. If in any doubt, please err on the side of caution. It is better for people to be disappointed than hurt. You can always discuss anything relating to health and safety with any member of the committee who will be only too happy to help.

- c. Whilst there is no legal requirement for a first aider to be present at any u3a group meetings it's always worth knowing if any of your group members are qualified first aiders or retired health care professionals.
- d. All Group Administrators should familiarise themselves with the venues they use and ensure that their members know of any evacuation procedures related to the venue.

9. Starting a New Group

Some groups can continue for many years, others have a limited life span and naturally will come to an end.

- a. New groups are formed when:
 - i. Members request a new group. Anyone can start up a new group if a few members have shown an interest in a particular subject
 - ii. When groups have a waiting list that cannot be accommodated in a reasonable timescale
- b. The Groups Coordinator will advertise new interest groups at the monthly meeting in the Old Barn Hall, and the details will also be circulated in the Chairman's Monthly Notices and by other communication means.
- c. When sufficient members have expressed an interest in forming a group the Groups Coordinator will call a meeting to discuss:
 - i. Who will be responsible for organising and administering the group – the person we call the Group Administrator?
 - ii. When the group will meet; day/time/duration
 - iii. Where the group will meet
 - iv. How many members; minimum/maximum, plus identify any relevant skills members may have
 - v. Expectations of the group (its aims) plus what are the members hoping to learn/achieve/share.
 - vi. Agree the tasks that need doing to run the group and who is willing to support these
 - vii. Possibly programme for the next few months
- d. If a similar group exists, it may be possible for another Group Administrator to act as mentor or assist with the setting up and ideas about a programme.
- e. There may be an existing national subject adviser who can support with ideas for the development of the group – check on the national website: www.u3a.org.uk – or contact neighbouring U3As to see if they have a similar subject group and then talk to the group leader to get some first-hand knowledge/advice.

There is a one off 'Start Up' Fund available for new groups of £50 and a Claim Form is included at the end of this document. The fund is intended for the purchase of initial materials etc. and not for any ongoing expenses such as hall hire.

10. Group Finances

- a. Most groups do not hold any group funds; however, all groups fall into one of the categories below:
 - i. Meeting in member's homes where petty cash is held towards consumables expenses and / or contributions made towards refreshments
 - ii. Out and about groups where a contribution is made to driver's expenses
 - iii. Groups where individuals pay their own expenses on the day
 - iv. Groups members paying for meeting in hired facilities or requiring a subscription
 - v. Groups that pay expenses to a non-u3a person to assist with the group
 - vi. Formal outings where transport is hired and/or tickets booked in advance
- b. The Third Age Trust (TAT) has stipulated that where contractual arrangements are made this must be done via the Trustees namely the Committee members – this applies to iv, v, vi above. Details of the requirements are set out below:
 - i. Some groups meet within group member's homes and need to ensure that they hold sufficient funds for the consumables their group uses. This, for ease we will refer to as petty cash. Petty cash should be limited to a reasonable amount or the activities being undertaken (normally between £50 to £75) but if any group considers that it requires a larger amount, please seek advice from the Committees Treasurer.
 - ii. Many groups enjoy going out and, on the day, the individual member pays their own expenses e.g. London Walks. The u3a has no interest in personal finances. Similarly for wine and other groups where the expenses are met by the group members on the day, the u3a has no interest. Out and about groups where a non-binding contribution is made to the driver's expenses is again for individuals and our u3a has no overriding interest.
 - iii. The TAT has stipulated that only Trustees namely the Committee members can enter into contracts for the hire of facilities and subscriptions and that all transactions must go through the u3a accounts. If a Group Administrator, for ease pays an invoice, other than for facility hire and receives a receipt then they should inform the Treasurer so any reimburse can be considered.
 - iv. The TAT also state that every member of the group pays equally for contractual commitments. In essence this means that if a group has 20 members and the facility costs £40 per meeting, everyone should be charged £2 for every meeting whether they attend or not. Some groups may mistakenly only charge those attending a particular meeting although most charge a fee at the beginning of a period to cover contractual arrangements, usually on a three-monthly basis. It is acceptable to make a flat fee charge to all members for the contractual obligation and expenses.

1. Group Administrators who collect payments from the group members, for contractual obligations must ensure those funds remain available to them and the Treasurer to pay invoices.
2. Group Administrators who receive invoices (preferably on a quarterly basis), must check them before they are paid by them or the Treasurer. A receipt for the payment must always be obtained. It is imperative for auditing purposes that all invoices and receipts are forwarded to the Treasurer. Note: Hall hire fees should normally be paid out of the u3a's bank account unless express permission has been granted by the Treasurer.
- v. All groups are operated on a non-profit basis, and Group Administrators should never be 'out of pocket'. If there are financial difficulties, then please discuss with the Treasurer in the first instance.
- vi. For the very few groups where they require external expertise to function then any expenses to cover such help should normally be paid through the Treasurer.
- vii. Outings finance - anyone arranging an outing where transport and/or tickets are purchased in advance should speak with the treasurer at the planning stage.
- viii. Any Group Administrator wishing to discuss any aspect of managing their group's finances, that is not covered above, should consult the Bookham u3a Treasurer.

11. Insurance provided by the Third Age Trust

Bookham u3a is covered by a range of policies, the most relevant of which for Groups and their members are:

- a. Public and Products Liability – this policy indemnifies against sums that a member could become legally liable to pay because of:
 - i. Accidental injury to or death of any person
 - ii. Accidental loss or damage to material property not belonging to the member and which arises or is caused in connection with u3a business
- b. All Risks Home Contents Cover – this policy covers damage to the property of a u3a member whilst their home is being used to host a u3a event

Please seek advice if you are organising a group trip that involves staying away for one or more nights as additional insurance issues may arise.

Be aware that policy interpretation can be complex and relies on the principle of legal liability against which any claim is assessed. If a member believes they have experienced an insurable event, then they should provide a full report to Secretary of Bookham u3a for consideration by the Committee for onward transmission to the Third Age Trust. An Incident Report Form is presented at the end of this document.

Note: Only registered u3a members are covered by insurance.

Full FAQ related to all aspects of insurance can be found at www.u3a.org.uk/advice

12. Copyright and other Licencing

- a. A Copyright Licencing Agency licence – this allows some materials within limits for educational use within groups. Bookham u3a purchases such a licence each year from the Third Age Trust to cover any group copying. There are limitations to the licence scope and if you are going to be using copyright material in any form, for example, printed, audio or pictures, please check the support for u3as section of the Third Age Trust website for further details.
- b. Phonographic Performance Licence (PPL): this allows us to use sound recordings within our organisation and is covered by a licence obtained held by The Third Age Trust (national).
- c. Film Licence: This has been obtained nationally by The Third Age Trust and covers most producers and films.
- d. DVD/Blu-ray and Downloads Licence: The Third Age Trust has an umbrella licence covering the use of all pre-recorded media in homes and other places where u3a activities take place.

If you unsure about using the above and whether you will be suitable covered do seek advice from the Group Coordinator and one of our committee members.

13. Group Members from other u3as

- a. Members of other u3as can join our groups. Details of members from other u3as should be passed to the Membership Secretary to be added to the membership list, after which the member should be added to the relevant group list by the Group Administrator. Always ensure a person who claims to be from another u3a is in fact a u3a member.
- b. Whether or not there should be a general charge for members of other u3as is a matter for the Bookham u3a Committee (if a charge is brought in Group Administrators will be informed), however this does not include an incidental charges made to all attendees of a group (as an example, paying for a meeting room, tea and coffee at meetings, costs towards a speaker etc).
- c. If the group has a waiting list, then Bookham u3a members have priority.

- d. Once in a group a member of another u3a cannot be displaced if a Bookham u3a member subsequently joins the waiting list.
- e. Information required for non-Bookham u3a members who belong to another u3a. The following should be sought by the Group Administrator and forwarded to membership@bookhamu3a.org.uk so that they can add to the database and assign a membership number:
 - i. Name
 - ii. Address
 - iii. Telephone number: Landline/Mobile or both
 - iv. Emergency Contact
 - v. Email Address
 - vi. Name of u3a they belong to
 - vii. Acceptance that the above details can be kept on the Bookham U3A website

14. Problem Solving

Sometimes issues can arise within a group that disrupt the smooth running and can spoil the enjoyment for everyone. Don't leave a problem too long before trying to resolve it. Talk to the Groups Coordinator or another Committee member if you are unsure how to resolve the problem or just want someone to help explore options.

If your numbers fall in your group and you are concerned about its viability, speak to the Groups Coordinator. Publicity can be given through newsletter and website, or your group may be able to collaborate with another local u3a in order to remain viable.

15. ICE Data (member emergency contacts)

Contact data 'In Case of Emergency' is an essential requirement in the event of an accident or sudden illness. This applies particularly to groups with an active agenda involving exercise and / or sport, or to outings including walks in London. The Group Administrator should ensure that if he/she is not present during a group activity, that the member in charge has a full attendee list that includes names and telephone numbers of member emergency contacts. This information can be downloaded from the particular groups own section of Beacon after logging in.

16. Injury and/or Damage

However caused, and no matter how small, an Incident Report Form must be completed and sent to the Secretary of Bookham u3a. A form is presented at the end of this document. Do also inform the Group Coordinator and in serious cases copy in the Chair of our u3a.

Bookham u3a

Advice for Group Administrators



Bookham and District U3A

Group Administrator Set-Up Expense Claim

Date: _____ Group Name: _____ Claimant: _____

- a. I claim £____/____ in expenses incurred solely on behalf of my duties as a u3a Group Administrator as set out below:

Signed _____ Date _____

- b. Authorised by _____ Date _____
(Secretary or Treasurer)

- c. I acknowledge receipt of £_____ Signed _____ Date _____

Agreed allowances (receipts/evidence) must be supplied. It is usual for the allowance to be paid for equipment; however, it may cover telephone calls, mileage, photocopying, stamps etc. when incurred in setting up the group.

A maximum of £50.00 may be claimed for set up expenses of a new group. Note that any purchased items remain the property of Bookham & District U3A

For office use a) Cheque number and date: or b) Petty cash and date:

INCIDENT REPORT FORM – Bookham & District U3A

Please note that this form is to be completed by a member of the Committee, a Group Administrator, or the property owner and should be retained on file by the u3a Committee in case of a claim and for a period of three years even if a claim appears unlikely.

1. Your details

U3A	
Name	
Position	
Email	
Telephone	
Address	
Postcode	

2. Incident details

Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Where did the incident occur?	
Please state the reason for the injured person or damaged property being there	
Please describe the circumstances of the incident	
<i>Attach a sketch or photograph(s) if possible</i>	

3. Particulars of person(s) involved in the incident (continue on a blank page if necessary)

Name	Email
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Was he/she a member of your u3a on the date of the incident?	
Name	Email
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Was he/she a member of your U3A on the date of the incident?	

Sections 4 and 5 are to be completed for any incident involving injury.

4. Particulars of the injured person(s)(continue on a blank page if necessary)

Name	Email
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Was he/she a member of your u3a on the date of the incident?	
Name	Email
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Was he/she a member of your u3a on the date of the incident?	

5. Details of injury

Describe the injury/injuries
Immediate action taken
Treatment at the scene
Admission to hospital
Ongoing medical treatment

Section 6 is to be completed for any incident involving damage to property

6. Details of damaged property

Describe damage caused	
Estimated cost of repair or replacement	
Name of owner of damaged property	
Email	Telephone
Address	
Postcode	

The remaining sections are to be completed for all incidents

7. Name and contact details of any witnesses to the incident

8. Declaration

I/We declare that to the best of my/our knowledge and belief all the foregoing particulars are true and correct in all respects.

Signed

Dated

Send this completed form to the Secretary of Bookham u3a