

# BRANCH

<http://u3asites.org.uk/eastbourne-central>

## ***GROUP LEADERS' HANDBOOK***

**March 2024**

### **Introduction:**

Thank you for being a group leader. You play a key role in our u3a in providing a wide range of study groups and activities. These groups are where our members can meet and learn new skills in a friendly and welcoming environment, fulfilling the motto of u3a “learn, laugh, live.”

The advice contained in this booklet has been put together to remind you of some of the obligations that are demanded of all of us in running group activities and to protect you in the event of a complaint being raised. You will find important information on the following issues – monies collected, making access to groups for members as easy, safe, and fair as possible and data protection.

The committee will invite all GLs to an annual event to recognise their contribution and give them an opportunity to discuss any common issues.

If you have any questions or need any help, then please contact any member of the committee, or email the Group Leader Coordinator (GLC), Kath Boak, the contact point for Group Leaders [eastbournecentralgls@btinternet.com](mailto:eastbournecentralgls@btinternet.com)

*Kevin Davis*

Chairman

## **Membership and safety of groups**

Group leaders play a key role in attracting people to join our u3a and in making them feel welcome.

### **Aims:**

- To ensure group leaders and anyone attending their group is covered by the Third Age Trust public liability insurance policy in case of an accident or accidental damage leading to a claim whether in a member's home or a public venue.
- To create safe, welcoming environments.
- To enable members of Eastbourne u3a access to a wide range of groups.

### **Policy:**

- Group leaders should check annually that everyone in their group is a member of Eastbourne Central U3A by asking to see their membership card for the current year or contacting the Membership Secretary.
- Provided there are spaces available members of another U3A branch may join a group for a taster session. If they then decide to join the group, they will be expected to become an associate member of Eastbourne Central. This policy has been adopted by the other local U3As.
- Non-members may also attend a taster session, and will be covered by the Third Age Trust insurance policy. But they must then become members to join the group. Details of the policy can be found at [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)
- Group leaders are expected to fill in a risk assessment so that hazards can be avoided, and the terms of public liability insurance met. The u3a website has a short, useful guidance document and 2-page risk assessment forms for home-based or venue-based groups. These ask you to consider things like trip hazards, seating space, registers, cables, exits, and smoke alarms. If circumstances stay the same, each year the existing form can be signed and dated. It must be kept in a safe place for 3 years as it would be required as the basis of any claim that may be made.
- Group Leaders will be asked annually for the overall capacity of their group and the number of existing members. If a group then becomes full during the year, or places become available in a group which was previously full, the GL should tell the GLC.
- If possible, it is advisable that a Deputy Group Leader be appointed. Depending on the size and nature of your group, that person could have specific responsibilities such as collecting the contributions, or welcoming new members. The Deputy should also have access to your group members' details, in case of you not being able to attend.
- If you appoint a Deputy, please pass their details to the Group Leader Coordinator.

## **Group finances**

- Groups should be self-financing, e.g. hall hire and equipment. u3a branch funds cannot be used to subsidise individual groups.
- However, a grant of up to £100 may be used as necessary to set up a new group.
- Also, the Committee may consider the purchase of costly equipment from u3a branch funds. This would not be owned by one particular group, and must be available to other groups.
- Groups' funds should not normally be allowed to build up, and no more than £200 should be retained by the group leader as cash in hand. This limit can be maintained by paying invoices regularly and reducing amounts collected to attend groups. Groups cannot hold individual bank accounts.
- Cash in hand kept by group leaders should be stored in a container, clearly marked as "funds belonging to Eastbourne u3a Central Branch".
- There is no need to keep a record of contributions to hosts for use of their homes or for refreshments.
- To maintain transparency and trust for all concerned, group leaders of groups that meet outside homes, should keep a record of income and expenditure, the balance to be agreed and signed off by a second group member after every session.
- Signing of contracts, e.g. use of outside venues, is the responsibility of the Committee.
- Payment for social group outings should be paid for directly by each member to the relevant supplier. No member should benefit from any discount, e.g. a free place offered by the company.
- A group leader may choose to engage a tutor but if that tutor requires payment, s/he must not be a member of any u3a and must be self-employed. Contact the Chair (email: [ebu3a@btinternet.com](mailto:ebu3a@btinternet.com) ) for further guidance.
- Associate membership fee is the year's full subscription less the fee to the Third Age Trust (TAT).

## **Data Protection**

To comply with data protection regulations study group leaders should:-

Ensure that all email addresses of members of their group are inserted in the BCC (blind carbon copy) box when sending out messages to the whole group. This ensures that individual addresses are hidden from other members of the group.

If a member of the u3a requests the contact details of another member this should be done by asking the other member if they object to their contact details being given to that member. If they do, then their details must not be given out. Information about a member cannot be shared with others without permission.

A copy of the full data protection policy is available through the links page on our website <http://u3asites.org.uk/eastbourne-central>

## **Copyright**

**'Fair Dealing'** The UK government website explains that works can be used for private study and research, without breaching copyright. This will allow most u3a groups to share copyrighted materials within a private group setting to review and discuss the work for learning purposes. The artist/author/owner of the work should be fully credited; the works should not be shared more widely.

For further details please go to our website to view the full document via the links page.