

Ferndown & District U3A



Registered Charity no. 1073206

Ferndown and District U3A endorses the National U3A Vision and Mission statement.



Vision and Mission Statement

OUR VISION

is to make Lifelong Learning, through the experience of U3A, a reality for all third agers.

OUR MISSION

declares our purpose as an organisation and serves as the standard against which we weigh our actions and decisions. It is to:

- Facilitate the growth of the movement.
- Provide support for management and learning in U3As.
- Raise the profile of the U3A movement.
- Promote the benefits of learning in later life through self help learning.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE U3A MOVEMENT

The U3A Movement is non-religious and non-political and has three main principles:

The Third Age Principle

- a) Membership of a U3A is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full time employment has ceased.
- b) Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a U3A.
- c) Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a U3A can do so.

The Self-help Learning Principle

- a) Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; by the members, for the members.
- b) No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.
- c) There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all U3A members.

The Mutual Aid Principle

- a) Each U3A is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the U3A Movement.
- b) No payments are made to members for services rendered to any U3A.
- c) Each U3A is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.
- d) Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the U3A movement.

January 2014

Volunteer Policy

1. Statement of Values

Ferndown U3A is an autonomous, self-help organisation run by the voluntary efforts of its members. When becoming a member of Ferndown U3A, individuals agree to abide by the aims and guiding principles of the U3A movement, often referred to as the 'ethos' of the U3A. The objective of this policy is to make members aware of this.

Each U3A is a learning co-operative of people who are no longer in full-time employment. The main aim of a U3A is to encourage and enable its members to help each other to learn by the sharing of knowledge, skills and experience. The guiding principle for a U3A is that it should offer learning activities which reflect the members' wishes and which aim to satisfy the widest possible range of interests. U3As arrange and support their own programmes as appropriate to these chosen learning activities.

The funding of a U3A is mainly through the subscriptions of its members. Members themselves then undertake, without payment, the many and varied tasks necessary to run their U3A. Ferndown U3A encourages all its members to embrace this U3A 'ethos' of self-help, by offering to share their own knowledge, skills and experience with the rest of the membership. This can be done in many ways: by sharing your knowledge of a particular subject as a Group Leader; by sharing an experience as a speaker at a monthly meeting; by offering to help members of the committee, when they ask for volunteers for specific tasks, for example preparing the hall before and after meetings or helping to make and serve refreshments.

2. The Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers

All volunteers are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of gender, race, colour, disability, religion, age or sexual orientation.

It is the responsibility of volunteers:

- To treat everyone associated with the organisation with courtesy and respect;
- To be reliable, particularly with agreed arrangements;
- To co-operate with other volunteers.
- To ask for support when and where it is needed;
- To carry out agreed roles and tasks;
- To respect the confidentiality of members, visitors and the organisation;
- To be reliable and communicate the agreed level of commitment;
- To notify the appropriate person if you are unavailable or unable to fulfil your volunteer duty.

3. Recruitment of Volunteers

Membership of Ferndown U3A is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full time employment has ceased.

Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a U3A can do so.

4. Insurance

All members are covered by the Public Liability Insurance of the Third Age Trust, but members are responsible for their own personal safety. This can be particularly important for outdoor activities

such as walking groups. Details of the cover offered is available on the National U3A website or can be requested from the committee.

5. Expenses

No payments are made to members for services rendered to any U3A.

Ferndown U3A believes that volunteers should be able to claim back reasonable, agreed expenses they incur in the administration of the organisation. All expenses to be claimed need to be approved in advance, and require original receipts.

6. Problem solving

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage.

7. Confidentiality

Members' details are held on a computer data base in accordance with the requirements of current data protection legislation. This information is retained within the Committee of Ferndown U3A and under no circumstances will it be passed to third parties.

Investment Policy

1. Introduction

Ferndown and District U3A is an autonomous, self-help organisation run by the voluntary efforts of its members. All U3As are members of the Third Age Trust (a Registered Charity) which is their national support and advisory body. Ferndown and District U3A is funded in the main by the subscriptions of its members. Funding from outside sources may be sought on occasions and is accepted only if there are no conditions attached which might conflict with the Trust's aims and guiding principles.

The Charity has an annual income of £25,000, most of which is expected to be spent during the year it is collected.

2. Investment Objectives

The Charity seeks to produce the best financial return within an acceptable level of risk. Our policy is broadly to maintain the value of these reserves and to use the income from them to advance our charitable purposes.

3. Risk

The Charity's assets will be held in cash or near cash investments denominated in sterling. Cash deposits should be in an interest bearing account. The trustees will regularly review accounts to ensure they are getting competitive rates. Rather than constantly seeking the highest rate, trustees have agreed to deposit cash in an institution that has consistently good interest rates.

Cash will only be deposited with reputable institutions, such as those authorised by the FSA in the UK. The trustees will ensure that the invested money and institutions are protected.

4. Management, Reporting and Monitoring

The Charity will manage its own cash deposits and has nominated a list of authorised signatories, two of which are required to sign instructions to the deposit taking institution. The opening or

closing of bank accounts should be authorised by the whole trustee body. All trustees share responsibility for ensuring that proper and appropriate steps are taken to protect the investment before arranging for deposit of the charity's money.

The Treasurer will monitor the cash position and prospective cash flow schedule and report this to the Board of Trustees at each meeting.

5. Approval and Review

This Investment Policy Statement will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure continuing appropriateness.

Conflict of Interest Policy

A trustee has a legal duty to act in the charity's best interests when making decisions as a trustee. If there's a decision to be made where a trustee has a personal or other interest, this is a conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest are common in charities but action needs to be taken to prevent them from interfering with the ability to make a decision only in the best interests of the charity.

Legal requirement: you must declare a conflict of interest immediately you are aware of any possibility that your personal or wider interests could influence your decision-making.

All members of Ferndown and District U3A will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the charity on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the charity's decision-making process, to enable our stakeholders to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of our members.

A standard agenda item will be added at the beginning of each meeting to allow any actual or potential conflicts of interest to be declared.

In the course of meetings or activities, committee members will disclose any interests in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict between the charity's best interests and the committee members best interests or a conflict between the best interests of two organisations that the committee members is involved with.

Any such disclosure and the subsequent actions taken will be noted in the minutes explaining

- what sort of conflict of interest it was
- which trustee or trustees were affected
- if any conflicts of interest were declared in advance
- an outline of the discussion
- if anyone withdrew from the discussion
- how the trustees made the decision in the charity's best interests

This policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and members should respect its spirit as well as its wording.

Vulnerable Beneficiaries Policy

The trustees of Ferndown U3A recognise that they have a duty of care to their charity that will include taking the necessary steps to safeguard and take responsibility for vulnerable adults.

The trustees have assessed the risks that arise from the charity's activities and operations and believe that their activities do not involve 'vulnerable'.

The trustees undertake on-going monitoring to ensure that this remains the case.

The trustees have a complaints policy that defines how to respond to allegations of abuse and how to take steps to ensure they and the people working in the charity know how to deal with incidents of abuse if they arise.

Risk Management Policy

The Charity Commission recommends that Charity trustees should regularly review and assess the risks faced by their charity in all areas of its work and plan for the management of those risks (Charities and risk management (CC26)).

Risk Management is a process that demonstrates that the Charity is acting appropriately in order to avoid excessive risk, and that the Charity's response to risk – whether by insurance, active control measures or avoidance of risk – is proportionate and effective.

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for overseeing Risk Management within the Charity and is ultimately accountable for it.

Any risks or opportunities arising will be identified, analysed and reported at an appropriate level.

A risk register covering key strategic risks will be maintained and updated annually and more frequently where risks are known to be volatile.

The charity will regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of its risk management framework and update it as considered appropriate.

Risk Management Statement

Charities that are required by law to have their accounts audited must make a risk management statement in their trustees' annual report (Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008). This does not apply to Ferndown & District U3A. However, trustees of smaller charities with gross income below the statutory audit threshold (who should still be concerned about the risks their charity faces) are encouraged to make a risk management statement as a matter of good practice.

The U3A Trust Risk Management Statement is:

The Trust has reviewed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed and an updated risk assessment register has been drawn up. Where appropriate, systems and procedures have been put in place both to mitigate any risks identified and to minimise the potential impact on the Charity should any of them materialise.

Step 1: Risk Identification	Step 2: Risk Assessment		Step 3: Risk Management	
List of Possible Risks	Risk H/M/L	Impact H/M/L	What are we already doing about it? (mitigating factors)	What more can we do about it?
Insufficient funds for group Courses and accommodation	L	H	Contingency funds maintained Monitoring of budgets and plans	New initiatives to be approved by Committee
Loss of key volunteers - experience or skills lost	M	H	Document systems, passwords, plans and projects. Ensure no area is covered by only one person.	Succession planning
Health and Safety	L	H	Properly documented policies and procedures. Making members constantly aware of danger and risk and reporting any problems.	Risk assessment will be conducted on all new activities and projects to ensure they are in line with the charity's objectives and mission. The u3a Trust Risk Assessment Forms will be used where appropriate.
Procedural and systems documentation- actions taken without proper authority	L	H	Properly documented policies and procedures	Ensure all procedures regularly reviewed
Loss of accommodation	H	H	Spreading the venue usage around Ferndown	Keep informed of local reports on accommodation

Date to be reviewed	
Person/Group responsible for review	

VENUE RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

U3A Name:					
Location:					
Date:					
U3A Interest Group					
Description of Activity:					
HAZARD		Yes	No	N/A	COMMENTS
1	Is the access suitable for the group attending the activity?				
2	Is wheelchair access adequate?				
3	Is the area free from obstructions & trip hazards?				
4	Is adequate means of escape in an emergency provided?				
5	Are there appropriate direction signs to aid escape?				
6	Is there a Fire Alarm?				
7	Is there Emergency Lighting?				
8	Is there designated assembly point? Where is it?				
9	Is there an emergency procedure for the building? Do you have a copy?				
10	Is seating always laid out?				
	Is it a U3A responsibility to before and after the activity to lay out seating				
11	Is food being provided / prepared?				
	Is the kitchen adequate and hygienic?				
	Are food safe cleaning materials available?				
	Visual safety check on Kettles etc				
12	Are the Toilets facilities adequate & accessible?				
13	Is equipment being brought to the venue?				
	Has it been safety checked?				
14	Is there a First Aid box or is the U3A to provide				
15	Other (define)				
16	Other (define)				
Additional information:					

Signature

Position

Date

Complaints Policy

Ferndown and District U3A is committed to providing the best possible service for its members and values feedback regarding its offerings, whether positive or negative.

Compliments – All compliments will be acknowledged, and will be passed to members involved.

Complaints - The complaints procedure is intended to provide a fair structure for making and dealing with complaints.

Ferndown and District U3A believe:

- People making complaints have the right to be treated equally and not suffer discrimination.
- People making a complaint are entitled to seek external assistance to advocate on their behalf.
- Complaints are to be treated with an open mind and will be investigated without prejudice.
- Complaints are to be treated seriously and dealt with in good time.
- People making complaints have the right to confidentiality. If requested, names will not be disclosed in investigating complaints. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated.
- Abusive and offensive comments are not defined as complaints and will not be accepted as complaints.

In the first instance

1. The complainant should speak to the person causing the distress to see if the matter can be resolved informally. If this fails or the person feels unable to take this action, then
2. Raise the matter with the group leader who may deal informally with the matter
3. Refer the matter to the Group Co-ordinator to resolve the matter

If the complainant feels that the matter has not been dealt with satisfactorily then the concerns they have may be raised with the Committee of the Ferndown and District U3A. The complaint must be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Committee on the Form attached to this policy. A sub-committee will be appointed to consider the complaint. If your complaint is regarding the Chairman, this may be dealt with by the Vice Chair.

The written submission should provide information about the nature of the complaint, and also the positive outcome you would wish to be achieved by bringing the complaint. This does not create an obligation on Ferndown and District U3A to resolve the outcome in this way.

The Member has the right to attend a meeting to qualify the complaint and if unhappy with the initial decision, may appeal to the Chairman for a hearing by the full Committee whose decision shall be final.

Leaders have the right to ask any Member to leave their Group if they are deemed to have behaved in a disruptive or disrespectful manner.

The Committee also has the power to exclude a member from a Group or terminate Membership where any Member has acted in a way which is prejudicial to the U3A, or brings it into disrepute.

Ferndown and District U3A

Member Name.....

Date.....

Brief Details of Complaint