**u3a FERNDOWN**

**GROUP LEADER INFORMATION**

**Group Leader Information and Support**

Thank you for agreeing to organise an interest group. We are sure you will find it extremely rewarding. However, it might seem a bit daunting initially. This document is intended to provide advice and support.

Interest groups are the life blood of Fu3a, and each group will develop its own structure. However, it is important that your group follows our 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.

### Our Aims and Principles

* Membership of Fu3a is open to all who are no longer in full time employment.
* Learning is by the members, for the members.
* No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.
* There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers. They are all u3a members.
* No payments are made to members for services to Fu3a.
* However, if you require equipment please refer to the Committee.

***If you are starting a new group, these are the recommended steps to undertake:***

* Agree the development of your group with the Group Coordinator/ Committee.
* Consider what the aims of the group are – what are you hoping to learn/achieve/share by offering the group?
* Is there an existing [Subject Adviser](https://www.u3a.org.uk/resources/subjects) who can support with ideas for the development of the group? Identify what you want to achieve from your first meeting.

### The first group meeting

Recommended steps to take at the first meeting:

* Introduce yourself and the purpose of the group as you see it.
* Ask about the skills and experience within the group. If you can pass this information to the Committee –for future groups.
* Agree to keep the register which is sent out before the start of each term.
* Familiarise yourself with fire exits and point these out to members.
* Familiarise yourself with where First Aid kit is held.
* Agree, if relevant, the level that the group will be aimed at – beginners, improvers, advanced.
* If possible, agree a deputy – illness happens.
* Familiarise yourself with caretaker at the venue – details on Beacon.
* Agree dates, times etc – sometimes these change.
* Identify any accessibility needs that group members may have.
* Agree how contact will be made. e.g. Beacon database
* Agree some ground rules.

# Copyright

A CLA (Copyright licensing Agency) licence allows some materials within limits for educational use within groups. Ferndown u3a purchases a licence from the Trust each year. The Trust also provides a PPL (Phonographic Performance) and a PRS (Performing Rights Society) licence to cover the playing of music and a MPLC (Motion Picture Licensing Company) licence to cover the showing of films. These are included in the fee that u3as pay to the Trust. There are limitations to each of these licences and if you are going to be using copyright material in any form, for example, printed, audio or pictures, please check the Copyright Policy on the website.

# Insurance

All members of Ferndown u3a are covered by the u3a Insurance policy in Venues, home groups and trips.

# Equipment

We have equipment such as projectors and screen if required. Most venues also have equipment you can use. Please advise the Group Coordinator of requirements.

# Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

Ferndown u3a Equipment is PAT tested and certification issued by a qualified Electrician. If you use personal equipment at a venue the u3a will arrange for it to be PAT tested.

# Venues

* Please encourage members to leave venues as you find them.
* If required to stack chairs please, not in front of radiators.
* If you need chairs and tables set out in a specific way please consult with the caretaker at the venue. A plan often helps.
* Some venues require a key code. You will be advised if this is the case and the code given.
* The Studio at Ferndown Village Hall does have a chair lift for those with accessibility issues. However, it is unsuitable for wheelchair users and hence it is only really of use to people arriving on foot but who have difficulty with the steps.

# Care Homes

Some of our venues are in care homes. A few clients residing in the home may wish to attend your group. Please make them welcome as this is their home.

# Accidents and incidents

If an emergency incident happens during a group session you should call the emergency services as soon as possible.

Report all accidents and incidents to your Committee as soon as possible and complete an accident form. An ***Accident Report Form*** is available on the Fu3a website. It is important to have an accurate record in case of future problems relating to the incident. For example, if damage is caused to property by a member of the group, take full details, as it may be the subject of an insurance claim. All Venues have Accident Books.

# Emergency Contact Details

These are included in the members’ details on Beacon. Additionally, along with your Group Register you receive a Group Members’ list which includes emergency contact numbers.

# Registers

Registers are sent out at the beginning of term. These also double up as fire register. Please keep for one year.

# Absence

If a member is absent for 3 or more weeks and has not informed you of holidays or illness, please establish if they no longer wish to be part of the group. If that is the case, please inform the Membership Secretary to allow any members on the waiting list to take up the place.

**Illness**

If a member is seriously ill / in hospital please let the Group Coordinator know so we can send a card.

# Refreshments

You are not required to provide refreshments. If you do please make a small charge to cover cost as you should not be out of pocket.

# Out of Pocket Expenses

No group leader is expected to fund a group. Some group require specific equipment e.g. Art / Craft. Please share the cost with members.

# Policies, Procedures & Risk Assessments

All documents can be accessed on the website [www.ferndownu3a.co.uk/policies/](http://www.ferndownu3a.co.uk/policies/) Each venue also has its own Risk Assessment.

# Website / Beacon Database

Leaders can contact their members through the Beacon system. All Group Leaders have a separate login to enable access to group members’ details and allow you to contact them. Training is given. You can access this through the members’ portal Group Leader section.

It is advisable to use the Beacon to email group members. If using a personal email, please blind copy (BCC) members.

## Sharing Information

It can be good to share information about your group and this can be done in several ways:

* Send to the Website Coordinator to upload on group information page.
* Send to the Social Media / Facebook Coordinator
* Send for inclusion in the Fu3a newsletter.
* Photographs: if you do not wish to be included in photographs it is your responsibility to exclude yourself by notifying the Website Administrator.

**Committee Contact**

To contact a specific Committee member please refer to the Governance page on the website or send to [ferndownu3a@gmail.com](mailto:ferndownu3a@gmail.com) where it will be forwarded to the appropriate person.

**Problem Solving**

Talk to your Group Coordinator or Committee if you are unsure how to resolve a problem or just want someone to explore options with.

# Open Day

We host an “Open Morning” on the last Friday before the Whitsun Holiday. This is an opportunity for you to advertise your group and answer members’ questions. The Events Coordinator will contact you prior to the day to discuss your requirements.