



Registered Charity number: 1080095

Guidelines for Group Leaders

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GUIDELINES FOR GROUP LEADERS

1. Introduction

Group Leaders are important. A U3A is mainly a collection of interest groups and without Group Leaders it couldn't really exist. Being a leader always involves a certain, usually modest, amount of organisational and administrative work, but it also gives a lot of satisfaction and enjoyment. These guidelines are intended to help you either take over the leadership of an existing group or start a new one (see Appendix I). If you find they are not sufficient for your needs then please don't hesitate to ask a member of the committee – everyone is very willing to help! Their details are on the Welcome page of Thornbury u3a web site.

2. The Group Coordinator

The Group Coordinator is the first person a Group Leader should consult if he or she has any questions about group matters and is, in particular, the person who helps new groups to get started. (See list of committee members on the web site) The Coordinator will help you complete a Group Details Form (Appendix II) and provide ongoing advice and help on group matters or will refer you to someone who can. In turn, the leader must keep the Coordinator informed of any changes made in the running of the group – changes of venue or meeting dates, for example. It is particularly important to let the Coordinator know if the leader plans to step down or if the group is being wound up.

3. Recruiting Members

Members can be recruited for your group by advertising in our Newsletter and on our Website. Please note that if a would-be member needs to be accompanied by a companion or carer in order to fully participate in the group's activities, this is allowed provided the U3A Committee is notified beforehand. The Committee will then give guidance to the Group Leader to make things as easy and safe as possible. The companion/carer need not be a U3A member but, if acting in an unpaid capacity, will still be covered by the Public and Products Liability Insurance taken out for all of the country's U3As by The Third Age Trust (see Section 14). If the companion/carer is acting in a paid capacity, he/she will not be covered by our insurance and it will be necessary for the Group Leader to see evidence that the carer/companion has suitable Public and Products Liability insurance in place.

4. Finding somewhere to hold your Meetings

Small groups often hold their meetings in a member's home. If this is not convenient, or the group is too large, rooms or halls can be hired quite cheaply in and around Thornbury and the neighbouring villages. The Group Coordinator can provide advice on choosing a venue. Any agreement entered into for hire of premises should be cancellable upon giving of reasonable notice (generally one month or less) and should not be a long term commitment. Whoever signs the rental agreement should do so 'on behalf of Thornbury U3A' in order not to become personally liable.

5. Running your Group: Practical Advice

You may run your group however you and the group members please, but you may find the following advice useful.

- ◆ Don't feel you have to do everything yourself: the group members should be willing to pitch in and take some of the tasks off your hands – such as collecting fees, buying the tea and biscuits, arranging the chairs, running an individual meeting.
- ◆ Appoint and share knowledge with a deputy leader so that meetings can carry on when you cannot attend. This ensures you don't have to cancel a meeting at short notice. You can also allow the deputy leader to run a meeting occasionally under your guidance, thus training a possible successor.
- ◆ Engage the group members as much as possible in whatever activity is being practised. Most people like to take an active rather than a passive part in what is going on. This can be as simple as allowing them to conduct a "question and answer" session at the end of a talk.
- ◆ Take a break or two during the year, maybe around the Christmas period and summer/ Bank Holiday times.
- ◆ Ensure that all members of your group are paid up members of Thornbury U3A. This is an insurance requirement. The simplest way of doing this is to check the Group Beacon database which shows current paid up members. Prospective U3A members may attend up to two (in total) U3A group meetings - to find out what goes on and whether he or she wishes to join our organisation.
- ◆ We are a very inclusive U3A and as such wish to encourage members' attendance whenever possible. No additional fees are charged for voluntary carers attending with members and these carers will be covered by our U3A liability insurance cover. No additional fees are payable in respect of professional paid carers attending, although they are not covered by our U3A liability insurance cover and will need to evidence their employer's liability insurance cover with the Group Leader.
- ◆ Don't feel that being a leader is an open-ended commitment! If you enjoy it so much that you want to go on indefinitely then that's fine, but, running a group for, say, three years is a splendid effort and well deserving of a break. Please let the Group Coordinator know in good time if you decide to stand down, so that steps can be taken to find a replacement. Hopefully someone within the group would be willing to take up the role.
- ◆ It is essential that any health related guidance (such as for Covid 19) given by both the Government and Thornbury U3A (as advised by the Third Age Trust) is followed. Please see our website for details.

6. Style and Organisation of Groups

The style and organisation of groups varies enormously depending on the type of activity. The leisure groups are straightforward with the leaders organising sessions and all members participating. However, within specific subject focus groups, there is considerable variety. Some groups are taught by a single teacher - either the leader or another nominated member; some are self-taught following a published programme; some have a variety of internal and external speakers on a different topic each month, while yet others involve participation by all members equally - each taking the lead for a specific session.

The leader is free to choose which style best fits the subject and members of the group.

Many Group Leaders and members prepare their own materials for teaching or talks. Others borrow materials from within their group or from a range of other sources including The Third Age Trust Resource Centre (see Section 7).

7. The Third Age Trust (TAT): Information and Materials

Our parent organisation (TAT) is an excellent source of all kinds of information and materials which you may find useful in your group activities. In particular, it has a Resource Centre (resource.centre@u3a.org.uk) which produces lists of printed resources and DVD loan materials, covering a wide range of subjects. It publishes a magazine, "Third Age Matters", five times a year

which is distributed to each Group Leader free of charge and which can also be delivered to individual group members for a small fee to cover postage. TAT also has a Website (www.u3a.org.uk) which is well worth visiting.

8. Copying Documents

You may sometimes want to copy or scan copyrighted printed material for use in your group activities. The Third Age Trust, the U3A Headquarters organisation, pays the Copyright Licensing Agency for a "blanket" copyright licence (our Treasurer holds a copy) and this allows all U3As to do a reasonable amount of such copying/scanning whilst remaining within the law. Full details can be found on our website.

9. Financial Matters

Groups are responsible for running their own financial aspects but these are subject to periodic overview by the U3A Committee, who are the Charitable Trustees and thus legally accountable to the Charity Commission. Each group needs to be self financing with the aim of breaking even, albeit the build up of a modest float is sensible and fully acceptable. If, however, this becomes excessive for group needs, then it should be scaled back by, say, allowing the occasional free meeting, or if appropriate recalculating the cost per meeting going forward.

Typically, members pay a fixed sum at each meeting they attend which should be sufficient to cover the cost (if any) of using the venue, provision of refreshments if provided as well as any ongoing incidental costs such as postage, stationery or materials used on a regular basis. If there are one off costs before meetings can commence, then a Start-up Grant can be applied for by approaching the Group Coordinator.

Groups may operate their finances by way of cash (please be mindful of security issues if doing this) or a U3A designated bank account. We would recommend that there are at least two members authorised to sign cheques in case one is unavailable at any time. Groups should not pass their financial transactions through the personal account of a member, as the position could be difficult to unravel in case of need. While groups can exercise full control over their finances without any ongoing involvement of the U3A Committee, it should be appreciated that the funds held are technically the property of the U3A as a whole (rather than just the group members) and, as such, where appropriate, some oversight will take place by our Treasurer. In the event of a group ceasing to operate, any funds remaining should be returned to the U3A Treasurer.

The Group Leader (or Treasurer if one is appointed) should maintain a record of all moneys received from members and all payments to third parties suitably categorised. *NOTE - If financial transactions are minimal, typically where meetings are held in members' homes and only nominal cash passes hands towards refreshments, then no recording needs to take place.* Records can be kept in any format although a simple spreadsheet would assist in reporting to the U3A Treasurer (see later). Alternatively, receipts and payments can be recorded on the Beacon system (Ledger tab). These records and supporting invoices/receipts for payments should be retained for six years. Once a year a Financial Summary should be prepared and shared with the members for their information.

Once the exact financial arrangements have been decided upon, the Financial Information Form shown in Appendix V (also on the Website) should be completed and forwarded to treasurer@thornburyu3a.org.uk.

Once a year, the U3A Treasurer will request financial information from every group in order that this can be incorporated within the U3A Financial Report which is presented at the U3A AGM and submitted to the Charity Commission. The format in which this information should be reported is

set out on Appendix VI (also on the Website) along with the deadline(s) for submission. The information should cover a 12 month period which, ideally, ends on 30 September in order to match the financial year end for the U3A itself. However, it is acknowledged that new groups may decide, in common with many existing groups, to have a summer break and recommence meetings in September, so for these it would be acceptable for the 12 months to end on 31 July or 31 August each year.

For groups with income above £20,000 pa, an interim review part way through the financial year will also be undertaken in conjunction with the Treasurer.

If Group Leaders/Treasurers have queries over any aspect of financial matters, please contact the U3A Treasurer (see Useful Contacts in Section 17).

10. Communicating with the Membership

We have several means of communicating with the membership. These include our Beacon online system, Newsletters, a Website and taking a table at our New Members' Welcome Meeting or one of our Coffee Mornings.

Our key method of communication is however the Beacon on line email system which should be used for all within group correspondence. This system records all members and the groups to which they belong. Use of the Beacon system ensures we all comply with GDPR requirements. Personal member details should not be stored and used for communication without specific written members' permission (GDPR requirement). The Beacon Administrator will provide initial training, set up new group records and give any required ongoing guidance to ensure that new Group Leaders are fully comfortable with using the system. Group Leaders are responsible for maintaining the accuracy of their group records on Beacon.

It is particularly important for Group Leaders to update their group Beacon records when a member passes away, and also to inform the Membership Secretary who will ensure that any further U3A updates are completed.

The Newsletters are published in January, April, July and October and contain any group updates that leaders may feel need communicating, plus items of current news. Leaders are expected to provide any appropriate written inputs to the Newsletter Editor in good time to meet the publication deadline which is given in the previous Newsletter.

Each group is allocated space on the Website to describe its activities, give a synopsis of meetings, and display a photograph or two – ideal for encouraging new members. This will not reach all the membership, which the Newsletter does, but about 93% of our members now have access to the Internet. It does have the great advantage that the members who check the News page regularly learn very quickly of anything new. The Website Manager will provide guidance to ensure that new leaders are comfortable with using the Website.

11. Meetings for Group Leaders

There are two meetings a year when it is hoped that either a Group Leader or a representative from the group will attend.

The first is the Annual General Meeting, held as soon as practical after the completion of the Consolidated Financial report for the Thornbury U3A individual group and Committee run accounts

The second meeting is the annual Leaders' Lunch. This event is by way of a small thank you for the Group Leaders' efforts during the year. Leaders are served a good lunch, prepared by Thornbury

U3A's own culinary team, drink a glass or two of excellent wine chosen by one of our wine groups, mingle with fellow leaders, share experiences and meet informally with passing Committee members with whom they can raise any U3A matters.

12. Equipment: General

We own a useful selection of equipment, items of which can be borrowed by leaders to help them with their group activities. The equipment is very wide ranging, from laptop computers through to digital projectors. An up to date list of the equipment we hold can be found on the Website together with the current Custodians. To borrow a piece of equipment, simply contact the Custodian with the dates on which you need it. If the item is free on those dates you can arrange to pick it up. The equipment is fully insured and must only be used by, or under the supervision of, a U3A member who is competent in its use.

All of our equipment is pretty easy to use. If you want to use an item of equipment but are not sure how, then please contact the Equipment Coordinator who will arrange for one of our experts to give the necessary guidance.

If you feel the purchase of a new piece of equipment would benefit both our U3A as a whole and/or your own group, then please raise the matter with the Equipment Coordinator who will pass your suggestion to the U3A Committee for consideration.

Members should be made aware that using their own equipment, such as a laptop, a digital projector or a camera, at U3A Group Meetings is at their own risk. U3A insurance will not cover it against accidental damage, so it is advisable for these members to check that their Household Insurance policy covers this risk.

Lots of our members also belong to other organisations and we occasionally get requests from such organisations to borrow an item of our equipment for a brief period. We allow this, and our insurance is not affected provided the equipment is used by, or under the supervision of, a U3A member who is competent in its use. We normally charge a small fee for such a loan. Contact the Equipment Coordinator for details.

13. Health & Safety

A leader or deputy has to be aware of the Health & Safety (H&S) procedures of the venue in which the group meetings are held and also the guidelines given by Thornbury U3A. Please see [Appendix IV](#) for further details.

14. Insurance

Whilst attending a U3A activity every member (and voluntary carer) of every U3A in the country is covered by an insurance policy taken out by The Third Age Trust. The insurance cover is known as Public and Products Liability Insurance. It insures a U3A member (and voluntary carer) against compensation claims arising from injury or damage to property suffered by a third party, or claims arising from the failure of a product, for which failure a U3A member is held to be legally liable.

The above is intended to be only a brief description of the insurance and is in no sense authoritative. The Third Age Trust has circulated to all U3As a set of Frequently Asked Questions (with answers) about the insurance, and a copy of this can be supplied to any interested Group Leader by the Treasurer.

15. Accidents

One consequence of the insurance referred to above is that, in the event of a member of your group suffering an accident whilst attending a U3A activity, he or she must complete an accident report form which you as group leader will need to supply. A copy of the form is available in the Group Leaders Section of the Thornbury u3a web site. Completed forms should be returned to the Health and Safety Officer.

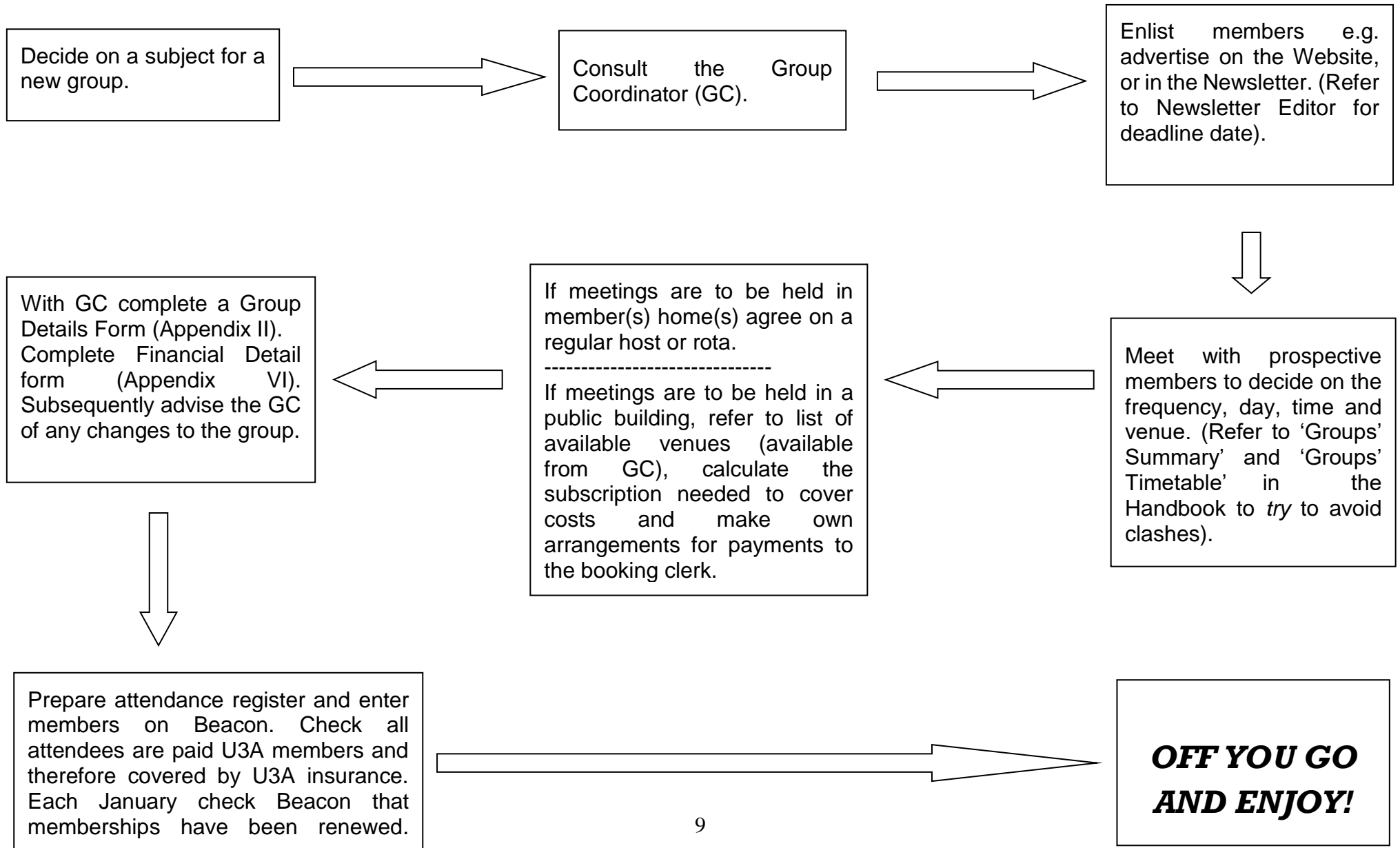
16. Group Leader change

There will come a time when the Group Leader wishes to stand down, leading to another member taking over. This can be a smooth operation if the following points are addressed:-

- The outgoing Group Leader should inform the Group Coordinator of the change. The Coordinator will inform the Beacon Administrator and Webmaster so that the new Group Leader's details are updated on Beacon and the website.
- The new Group Leader should confirm their email address to the Beacon Administrator.
- The new Group Leader should update the Group's webpage with their details and any other group changes which result from the leadership change.
- The new Group Leader should inform the authority that organises the place at which the group meets, of the change in Group Leader, particularly if invoices are sent to that person.
- Both the new Group Leader and outgoing Group Leader should consider if any Bank account arrangements require changing.
- The new Group Leader should inform the Equipment Coordinator if any of the U3A equipment has changed hands.

Appendix I

HOW TO SET UP A NEW U3A GROUP



Appendix II
GROUP DETAILS FORM



1. GROUP NAME

2. E-MAIL CONTACT

3. NAME OF LEADER TEL.
ADDRESS

4. NAME OF DEPUTY TEL.
ADDRESS

5. VENUE FOR MEETINGS

6. DAY AND TIME OF MEETINGS

7. FREQUENCY

8. MAXIMUM SIZE OF GROUP

9. CURRENT SIZE

10. DO YOU HAVE A WAITING LIST?
IF YES, NUMBER ON LIST

11. DOES YOUR GROUP:
KEEP A REGISTER OF ATTENDANCE?

12. YEARLY – CHECK BEACON TO ENSURE MEMBERS HAVE PAID SUBSCRIPTION

13. IS YOUR VENUE ACCESSIBLE TO MEMBERS WITH DISABILITY?
IF NO, PLEASE GIVE BRIEF DETAILS

Appendix III

COPYING DOCUMENTS: THE U3A CLA LICENCE

Introduction

Almost all educational activities these days involve copying documents of one kind or another. Strictly speaking, all such copying requires permission from the copyright holder and possible payment of a fee. To ease this problem for the country's U3As, The Third Age Trust, the national organisation for the Universities of the Third Age in the UK, has negotiated what is called a "blanket" copying licence with the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA), the UK body which handles such matters. Within certain limitations, which are spelled out below, this licence allows all of the country's U3As to do the copying they need to do without seeking formal permission, and free of charge. The details of the CLA licence are given below exactly as distributed by the Third Age Trust to all U3As.

Do I need a Licence?

The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act (1988) together with the EU Copyright Directive (2003) provides copyright protection to all creators. All and any systematic single copying or multiple copying to spread education and learning is likely to require Rights Holder permission on each and every occasion. In practice this means that the Copier needs, on each occasion:

Permission in advance from the rights owner

Payment of whatever fee the rights owner wishes to charge: (no ceiling on expenditure)

Maintenance of proof of permission

Constant review and update of permissions

Awareness of rights owner contact details

Accounting with every rights owner

Fee negotiation with rights owner

What will the CLA Licence allow me to do?

The CLA "blanket" licence permits the blanket copying and scanning of copyrighted print material for educational purposes without having to approach the individual rights holder on each occasion. This CLA Licence offers the following rights:

Right to photocopy from any publication (book, journal or magazine) published in the UK (and other countries)

Extracts up to 5%, one chapter, or one article – whichever is the greater

Right to copy onto acetate or enlarge copies

Right to digitally copy (scan or retype) and to use these digital copies with digital whiteboards, within Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), e-mail and so on

Right to store copies for one year

Copying entire works for visually-impaired students

One fee per annum for all licensed copying

No records to maintain

List of excluded categories

- ◆ *Works published outside the United Kingdom and the Mandating Territories*
- ◆ *Works published by US publishers that are not on the list of participating US Publishers*
- ◆ *Maps, charts or books of tables*
- ◆ *Printed music (including the words)*

- ◆ *Works specifically excluded by a special notice mentioning CLA, either on the work itself or by inclusion on the list below*
- ◆ *Tests or public examination papers whether published individually or in a collection*
- ◆ *All newspapers*
- ◆ *Privately owned documents issued for tuition purposes and limited to clientele who pay fees (except those published by the Open University or the National Extension College)*
- ◆ *Workbooks, work cards, or assignment sheets*
- ◆ *Industrial house journals*

Additional restrictions on scanning

Please note that CLA licences currently only permit the scanning of works originally published in the UK so that any works originally published outside the UK are excluded.

The details given in this Appendix are from TAT but in cases of doubt, use the search facility on the CLA website whereby users can check if individual publications can be copied. Website: cla.co.uk , go to 'Education', then 'Check what can be copied'.

Appendix IV

GUIDANCE TO GROUP LEADERS ON HEALTH & SAFETY AND RISK

INTRODUCTION

The vast majority of the membership of the Thornbury U3A are retired from paid work and join groups to learn and enjoy life with others of similar interests. We are, generally, not involved in high risk activities, our “motto”, on safety, should be “use your common sense” and we should keep everything as simple as possible. We do not want to generate a mountain of paperwork or the electronic equivalent.

Most meetings take place in homes or local halls which will almost always be low hazard and low risk.

Activities such as cycling or sailing are clearly more hazardous and higher risk and should comply with the Highway Code and the maritime equivalent.

This guidance is intended to apply to members during any group activity ONLY and not travelling to or from meetings.

Group leaders are assumed to run their groups in good faith, unless they behave recklessly, and group members are responsible for their own participation at all times. Each member should be aware of their own safety situation and that of other members of the group.

The Third Age Trust, to which Thornbury U3A is affiliated, provides third party insurance for group activities. Any non-U3A member is not covered, unless such person is attending a group on a trial basis as per the Constitution. This is why only paid-up members may attend activities.

VENUE ASSESSMENT

Any venue should be assessed for safety and risk. (Where a venue is hired, details should already be available from the operator.)

The following list of questions should be asked by the group leader or designated person: -

Is access suitable including for limited mobility members?

Is the area free from trip hazards and obstructions?

Is there adequate emergency egress? Are exits signposted?

Is there a fire alarm? Emergency lighting? Emergency procedure? A meeting point?

If there is a kitchen which will be used, is it clean and hygienic?

Are toilet facilities adequate and clean?

Are all portable electrical appliances in good order and “PAT” tested, labelled AND is the label up to date?

Is there a first aid box?

Are there any relevant Government directives relating to viruses or other issues?

This list is not necessarily exhaustive, there may be other factors specific to the location.

Please see attached report form.

It is suggested that a quick visual check should be completed before each meeting on those items which may change, e.g. trip hazards. At each meeting members should be briefly reminded of safety issues, highlighting emergency exits and procedures.

HIGHER RISK ACTIVITIES

Generally outdoor activities including sailing, cycling and some forms of walking may involve higher risk.

We suggest that you produce a brief on risks involved and how you would deal with any incidents including accidents or persons going missing. Please send a copy to healthandsafety@thornburyu3a.org.uk

THIRD PARTY OPERATIONS

Where you are using third parties such as coaches or travel agents you should ensure that they have adequate insurance and emergency procedures.

If you find problems obtaining such information please report to healthandsafety@thornburyu3a.org.uk and the Committee will decide if any action is necessary.

REPORTING ACCIDENTS OR INCIDENTS

Where an accident or incident occurs during any Thornbury U3A group activity take all necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of all persons involved including calling emergency services when necessary.

Where appropriate, incidents should be reported to healthandsafety@thornburyu3a.org.uk

The following information should be included: -

Which group.

Names, addresses and contact details of the person reporting the incident, persons involved, witnesses.

The location, time and date.

Details of what occurred.

Involvement of emergency services.

Outcome.

Any further action required.

Any other information considered appropriate.

Please do not report any incidents involving members travelling to or from meetings.

SUMMARY

These guidelines have been kept concise to reduce workload and paperwork. They are intended to keep us all aware of the need for assessing risk and health& safety issues during our group activities. Stay safe.

Any suggestions for improvement from group leaders would be welcome. Please write to: -
healthandsafety@thornburyu3a.org.uk

Appendix V
Financial Information Form for New Groups

Date completed		
Group Name		
Group Leader & Treasurer (if any)		
Proposed Financial Year End (ideally July, August or September)		
Start Up Grant requested? If so, purpose and amount		
Brief description of financial processes, how income will be collected, where held, what costs will be incurred, who will pay these and how.		
Details of bank account (if planned)	Bank & Branch Sort code Account number Signing Instructions	
How will financial records be kept e.g. paper records, spreadsheet, Beacon?		
If paying for a venue, please advise name of venue, rental terms, period covered, cancellation notice period		
Please acknowledge that financial records kept for at least 6 years?	YES/NO	

Appendix VI Annual Financial Information Reporting

Specific requirements vary depending upon the scale and complexity of each Group as follows:

- Groups with total annual income over £5,000
 - Income & Expenditure statement with surplus/shortfall linking in to change in reserves from prior year, and backed up by a scanned copy bank statement as at the end of the financial year.
 - Please email to treasurer@thornburyu3a.org.uk
 - Deadline - 31st October.
 - If any Groups require help in compiling these figures, please contact the U3A Treasurer as soon as possible after the year end.

- Groups that do not need to keep financial records
 - a simple 'Nil Return' is requested
 - **either** email to treasurer@thornburyu3a.org.uk
 - **or** phone U3A Treasurer on number in Handbook/on website.
 - Deadline - 15th October

- All other Groups that keep financial records
 - **either** a copy of the spreadsheet used for recording transactions
 - **or** completion of the form below (pasted into an email)
 - Please email to treasurer@thornburyu3a.org.uk
 - Deadline - 15th October

Group Name:	Contact:	
Opening Reserves (date:))		£ (a)
Income for 12 months (to date:))	£ (b)	
Less Expenditure for 12 months	£ (c)	
Surplus/Deficit for 12 months	(b) - (c)	£ (d)
Closing Reserves (date:))	a. +/- (d)	£
Bank Account held: If YES, Bank & Branch:	YES/NO	

If any clarification on the above is required, please contact the U3A Treasurer.