Health & Safety Policy

Let us keep Stowmarket u3a a safe and healthy environment!

Members of the Committee are responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the policy. The Committee has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that members adhere to this policy and to keep up to date with any new legal requirements as they come into force. It is also required to comply with the u3a insurance requirements.

Details of the insurance covered by u3a is available from the Chair of the Committee or their web site *https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice

It is equally the duty of every member to exercise responsibility and to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of any other person who may be affected by their actions or omissions (HSW Act 1974 Section 7). Members are expected to do everything practicable to prevent hazards and injury to themselves and others when engaged in u3a activities.

The Committee is aware that Members are mature and responsible people and that the provisions of this policy are most likely being followed as a matter of routine. It, therefore, addresses the need for constant safety awareness and care by all its members and assumes their routine compliance in the context of mutual regard and insured risk.

For the purpose of this document Group Leaders include anyone organising, co-ordinating or convening a group or event.

Group Leaders have an important role to play in this regard and we ask that all leaders review what information your group members need. This should include procedures for using special materials or equipment as well as more general reminders such as the location of fire exits and means of raising the alarm.

Stowmarket u3a will arrange meetings in an environment for all members that is as healthy and as safe as may be considered reasonably practicable.

Stowmarket u3a will:

- Book suitable premises for meetings and events.
- Ensure that any equipment provided is safe and that instructions/training are given on the use of any equipment being used.
- Supply information so that members at u3a events and meetings are aware of the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire or other emergency situation.

Importantly, no-one is expected to make expensive changes to their own homes or equipment but to be aware and where it's not practicable to remove the risk, make group members aware of possible risks that exist. Group leaders are expected to run their groups

healthily and safely. In addition, all Group members and their guests are responsible for their own actions at all times.

Risk Assessment checklists for venues, walks and electrical testing have been produced by the u3a. Copies are available from the Chair of the Committee or from their web site *https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice . These are to be customised by the Group Leader to suit Stowmarket u3a's activities and all events. The checklists help to make us aware of possible risks but 'common sense' is the key phrase.

The individual leading an activity must keep a record of attendees for the duration of the activity and acquaint themselves with the Fire Policy Procedures of any premises which are being used, such as:

- Identifying all fire exits and the outside Assembly Points.
- Ensuring that means of escape are known to all members, are unlocked and clear of any obstructions.
- Ensuring that personal baggage, cables etc. are tidied away and any spillages are cleared immediately to avoid slips and trips.

In the event of an evacuation, the person holding the record of attendees must take the record with them to carry out a rollcall to:

- Ensure that all people have left the building.
- Inform the emergency services if anyone is unaccounted for or still inside the building.

Group Leaders or persons leading an outdoor activity also need to:

- Advise members where necessary of the need for appropriate clothing and footwear suitable for the activity undertaken.
- Identify hazards and recommend measures to reduce or eliminate them.
- Reconnoitre walks etc. in advance and warn members of potential hazards.
- If necessary, take responsibility to modify or cancel an activity according to the prevailing conditions at the time (e.g. floods, heat wave, underfoot, vegetation, livestock).
- Ensure a responsible person is identified as co-leader/deputy to take over the activity in the event of an emergency.

Any accident, injury or illness at u3a meetings or events shall be reported to the relevant Group Leader, who shall:

- Complete an Incident Report Form.
- Copy the Incident Report Form to the Chair of the Committee.
- The Leader should retain a copy.
- A copy should be sent to the injured party.

A template of the Incident report form is available on the website

*https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice

This Incident report shall be periodically updated regarding the status of the injured party and copied to the Chair of the Committee.

Health & Safety shall be on the agenda for all Committee meetings and the Committee shall be kept updated on all reports of incidents.

Completed copies of Incident Report Forms are to be appended to minutes of the next Committee Meeting so they may be retained by the u3a.

This policy, based on guidance from the u3a, was adopted by the Committee of Stowmarket u3a on 8th March 2023. This policy shall be reviewed annually at the first full Committee meeting following an Annual General Meeting.

First adoption: **08/03/2023**

Reviewed by Committee: **08/10/2025** (minor amendments made)

Reviewed by Committee: **14/10/2026** (no changes made)

*It will be necessary to log in to the national u3a 'Homepage' website link above and scroll down to access the relevant documents.