

Safety guidance

Introduction

It is the duty of every organisation to take care of the health and safety of its members. Common sense plays an important part in the reduction of risk but the committee feels that it would be useful to have written guidance.

The level and type of risk varies with the nature of activities and, as appropriate, Group Leaders are required to issue detailed safety guidelines for their groups. This is likely to be of specific relevance to those groups involved in physical, outdoor and other related activities.

This guidance is intended to apply to all U3A activities taking place in members' homes, hired premises or in the outdoors. All members who co-ordinate and/or lead activities should be familiar with this general guidance and all participants should be familiar with the section "Guidance for all members of groups below.. 'Group Leaders' are the people with overall responsibility for organising a group. 'Leaders' are the people responsible for overseeing a particular event on the day.

Guidance applying to all group meetings

- a. To be alert to the risks associated with the activities of their groups and to have taken appropriate measures to address these. In the case of indoor meetings these may be simple things such as tripping hazards.
- b. To ensure that venues are suitable for the group activity and are accessible for less able participants.
- c. To ensure that at each event there is a means of summoning emergency assistance.
- d. To ensure that a basic first aid kit (plasters, bandages, sterile wipes) is available at each group event.
- e. To be aware of which members are in attendance at any event. Whilst this is most important in outdoor activities it matters at indoor events if an emergency arises.
- f. In the event of an incident, to complete and submit an incident and accident report to the Secretary of Grange and District U3A within 7 days. The Leader should also ensure that the details of the incident are recorded in the accident/incident book of the venue concerned.

Additional guidance to leaders relating to meetings in hired accommodation

- a. To ensure familiarity with the emergency evacuation procedures for the venue.

Additional guidance for leaders relating to outdoor activities

- b. To familiarise themselves with routes and hazards associated with each event.
- c. To issue guidance about each event to group members to enable members to decide if they wish to participate and to ensure that they have the correct equipment. Leaders are to brief all participants on routes, weather, safety considerations prior to departure on the day.
- d. Leaders have absolute discretion to decide whether a member has the correct equipment and capability to undertake the activity. Factors such as (where appropriate) the weather, fitness of participants, equipment carried by participants are to be taken in account by the Leader on the day in deciding if the activity proceeds or not.
- e. Leaders should appoint a 'back marker' where appropriate and keep an informal tally of members during the outing. A formal headcount should be taken as soon as possible at the

end of the activity prior to leaving for home. The leader's mobile phone number should be issued to all participants in case of separation. The Group should consider purchasing a walkie-talkie system for use in areas of poor mobile signal.

Guidance for all members of groups

- a. All members of interest groups should understand that they are ultimately responsible for their own safety and equipment and must determine their fitness to undertake an activity.
- b. Group members are responsible for informing the leader of health problems which may affect, or be affected by, the activity and are responsible for bringing and keeping their own medication.
- c. Group members are responsible for familiarising themselves with the details of each event including routes and for ensuring that they have the equipment, clothing and food appropriate to the day.
- d. By signing up to the group, participants are agreeing to abide by the safety guidelines of the group and to accept the reasonable decisions of the Leader.

Members, especially on outdoor activities, should carry their next of kin contact details in case of emergency. It is not the Leader's responsibility to keep this information. The current membership card has space for this information on the reverse side.

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