



Learn, laugh, live

Starting an Interest Group

Thank you for agreeing to start an Interest Group for Wollaton u3a. We hope you will find it rewarding, but it may be a little daunting, so here are some notes to help you start. However, please contact, Carol, the Interest Groups Coordinator if you need any help.

We cannot divulge personal details without permission and if you do not want to use your personal email for u3a purposes, please use: groups.coordinator@wollatonu3a.co.uk

Only members of Wollaton u3a are entitled to membership of our Interest Groups as we do not have reciprocal arrangements with other clubs.

When you are ready to start your group:

- Will you please speak for **one or two minutes** at the Main Meeting to explain your plans? If you prefer the Interest Groups Coordinator to do this, then please ask.
- Please forward details of your plans to: groups.coordinator@wollatonu3a.co.uk so that they can be published in the *Monthly Update* and on our website.
- Arrange a planning meeting with all interested members to decide what will be studied, when, where and how. Will it be a fixed term or continue until interest wanes? What would you like to do? How can this be achieved?
- What study, learning methods can be used?
There is a wealth of information on the u3a website, but you need to register www.u3a.org.uk You will need to decide on a User Name and a Password.
- To join your Interest Group the person must be a member of Wollaton u3a.
- Identify any accessibility needs members may have - see *Accessibility document* and refer to the u3aPlus website for advice and guidance www.plus.u3a.org.uk
- Agree costs for running the group – see notes below and Treasurer's *Financial Rules Applicable to Interest Groups*.
- Discuss how group members will communicate with each other bearing in mind data protection. **When emailing members use BCC – a blind copy so that email addresses are not visible. To do this – address the email to yourself then select BCC and list the members' email addresses.**
- If your group members intend to share lifts, the following advice is given:
u3a guidelines suggest that there should be a Policy concerning giving lifts without obligation - this avoids embarrassment and should not affect the driver's insurance. For further details contact the Interest groups Coordinator.

Following this initial meeting, please send the following information to the Interest Groups Coordinator:

1. Title of group
2. Time and meeting place
3. Cost of room and cost to members
4. Actual number of members and maximum number of members
5. A membership list – surnames and numbers only.

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First Meeting

Only members of Wollaton u3a are entitled to membership of our Interest Groups as we do not have reciprocal arrangements with other clubs.

- Ensure you know the postcode of the meeting place in case you have an emergency.
- Carry out an inspection of the room for any safety risks. See *Risk Assessment check lists*.
- Enter names and membership details on the register: their contact details, including emergency contact numbers, are already entered on the Beacon system.
- **If you do not use Beacon** collect contact details and Membership numbers – there is a form for this purpose. You do not need to collect addresses if members do not want to give them to you. Only members of Wollaton u3a are entitled to membership of our Interest Groups as we do not have reciprocal arrangements with other clubs. Ask for emergency contact details, ICE, but if a member refuses to give them, please ask them to record their refusal on the form.
- Emergency contact details are essential for Walking groups.
- Keep a Register at each meeting – there is a form, but you do not have to use it if you want to design your own. **For Insurance purposes, it is essential to record attendance at each meeting.**
- Point out the location of toilets and emergency exits. N.B. Please check to see if any member of your group need Disabled facilities – access, toilets etc.
- Please send details of your first meeting to the Interest Groups Coordinator and include him in any group emails.
- Agree some ground rules e.g.
 - a) be punctual
 - b) let someone know if you are unable to attend
 - c) listen to each other
 - d) every contribution matters
 - e) agree to disagree amicably
 - f) have patience and encourage those who are slower to learn.

Starting a Group. It has been found that Interest groups have a better chance of success if group members share the responsibility.

After this meeting, please contact the Interest Groups Coordinator to confirm the details for your group.

If you may have more members wishing to join your group than you can accommodate and you do not wish to book a larger room, please record their names on a *Waiting List* and inform the Interest Groups Coordinator who will try to find a Convenor for another group. Please inform the Coordinator if you are willing to offer advice to a second group.

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