

## TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

### NEW TRUSTEES

U3a members who are considering becoming a Trustee and joining the committee may be asked to attend a committee meeting to observe. The constitution also allows for the co-option of new members to the committee prior to formal appointment. Potential new Trustees can gain an insight into the work of the committee and the responsibilities of the Trustees before being formally appointed as a Trustee.

When committee members are elected at the AGM they take on the role of Trustees of the u3a.

Information must be provided to new Trustees about the advice and support available from the Third Age Trust, the Regional Trustee, Trust Volunteers, any relevant Networks, and or peer support groups as appropriate.

Alnwick u3a have a list of Policies which should be made available to each new Trustee

A new Trustee elected to or invited to take on a specific role or responsibility should receive a detailed handover from the previous incumbent.

The u3a run a number of online workshops to support Trustees, including '*Running your u3a – Information for Trustees*'. More information about these workshops and how to book can be found on the u3a workshops page. All members can also contact the u3a office for information and advice by calling 020 8466 6139 or emailing: [u3a.office@u3a.org.uk](mailto:u3a.office@u3a.org.uk).

### TRUSTEE ROLE

All u3as are charities whether they are registered with the Charity Commission or not due to the charitable purpose (object clause) that is contained within the constitution. This status means that all committee members are Trustees.

The Charity Trustee role is set out in the Charity Commission document ***Charity trustee: what's involved (CC3a)***. There are six main duties:

1. Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
2. Comply with your charity's governing document and the law
3. Act in your charity's best interests
4. Manage your charity's resources responsibly
5. Act with reasonable care and skill
6. Ensure your charity is accountable

The Trustee code of conduct is an agreement between the organisation and the individual committee member which clarifies the standard of behaviour expected in the performance of their role. Each new Trustee is to be given a copy of **Alnwick u3a Trustee Code of Conduct**.

### **INSURANCE**

u3a committees are covered by Trustee Indemnity Insurance provided through the Third Age Trust. The insurance protects u3a Trustees both individually and as a board, against a genuine mistake or error of judgement providing that they have acted responsibly and followed their u3a's constitution. Where this is deemed not to be the case, Trustees risk being held personally responsible and not being covered by indemnity insurance.

Trustees should also be aware that even if an allowable claim is made, an excess will apply. The indemnity insurance will not protect against a breach of criminal law. In the event of any irregularity at either main committee or group level, the Trustees are potentially liable if they have not taken all reasonable steps to minimise risks. Trustees must follow the requirements of the appropriate regulatory authority in relation to any reporting requirements. It is not possible for an individual Trustee to opt out of collective responsibility.

In addition, responsibility must never be given to a Group Leader/Convenor or Group Coordinator to operate a group that is in any way detached from the u3a. Trustees retain overall responsibility of the u3a and its activities. All money collected is the property of the u3a and it must all be accounted for to the membership at the AGM and to the appropriate regulatory authority, as required.

### **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Trustees are expected to read the agenda and all supporting papers prior to the meeting and strive to attend all meetings.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Trustees must declare a conflict or possible conflict of interest at the start of the committee meeting or at the earliest possible opportunity. The Chair will then decide whether to exclude the Trustee from a particular item or even from the whole meeting. In the event the Chair has a conflict of interest, the committee should request the Vice Chair to rule on the matter. If the Vice Chair is unavailable or unable to rule on this matter, then the Chair elected for the meeting should rule on the matter.

### **POWER TO MAKE DECISIONS**

This rests solely with the committee as a body; decisions can only be taken as a result of a majority vote in favour by those members of the committee present at the time. No Trustee has the authority to act in isolation.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In order to ensure all Trustees feel comfortable expressing their views and ideas it is essential that everybody always maintains confidentiality outside the committee. The decisions made by the committee must be minuted and once approved made available to members on request.

### **COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY**

No matter what individual Trustees' opinions or voting choices are, once an item is approved by the committee, all Trustees must accept it as decisive and final and not comment further outside the committee environment. If a Trustee is unable to accept a decision their only recourse, after due consideration, is to resign from the committee.

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**This Revised Policy was formally adopted on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026.**

**Review Date 7<sup>th</sup> February 2028.**