

Policy and Guidance document on Accessibility

Buckhurst Hill u3a aims to be as inclusive as possible and to provide equal rights of access to our u3a activities, as far as reasonably practicable.

Our policy has been developed in line with guidance from the Third Age Trust. Members with a disability are encouraged to contact the Accessibility Officer (contact details below), who will try to ensure that everything reasonable is done to make life easier for them whilst they are participating in u3a activities. Members requiring assistance should also speak to the Group leader of the relevant they wish to attend.

Any Group leader who is briefed on disability matters will report back to the Accessibility Officer any outstanding problems.

Because there is such a wide range of disabilities (some obvious, some hidden), members should be encouraged to talk to their Group leader to express their individual needs.

Members who are unable to participate in their chosen u3a activities without help may be able to bring a companion/carer with them, who, for the time that they are in attendance, will be covered by the liability insurance provided by The Third Age Trust.

The only exception to this is a professionally employed carer who would have to be covered by an individual liability policy. The ability to bring a carer with them should allow all members with a disability to continue to be able to participate and enjoy u3a and at the same time avoid other members getting involved in providing assistance which they are not insured to do.

Disabled members should note that, for u3a trips, we are happy to include them wherever possible. However, it is important that any disabled member who wishes to travel makes their own arrangements for care sufficient for their needs. The organiser is not responsible for anyone who cannot manage without help. A carer may accompany a member on a u3a trip.

Accessibility for Members with a Physical Disability

We attempt to be as accessible as possible both to our existing members and to third agers who may wish to join. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people with disabilities can attend the interest groups of their choice and will support them and make their attendance as easy and stress-free as possible.

Venue for General Meetings – Roding Valley Hall

Our venue complies with the following criteria:

- Served by public transport.
- Adequate car parking facilities onsite.
- Level access, with good disabled access, including for wheelchairs / mobility scooters.
- Ground floor accommodation.
- Accessible and usable disabled toilet facilities.
- A sound system
- Good lighting

Venues for Interest Groups

A number of our groups are held in private venues or whose activities involve walking and / or visiting places of interest where accessibility may be a problem. We advise that before joining a group you contact the Accessibility Officer or the Group Leader to discuss your needs and assess if the venue is suitable.

If a disabled member cannot attend a group of their choice, they might be assisted and encouraged to set up a group at a location suited to their needs.

As noted above, disabled members may bring a carer with them to any group they attend if that is necessary.

Accessibility Officer – Hilary Wrightman

Telephone: 07836 671582

Email: access@buckhillu3a.org