

Notes for Group leaders and Contacts

We hope you find these notes useful when running your groups. If you have any comments or if we've missed anything, please contact groups@farnhamu3a.org.uk. As a group leader and/or group contact, you will be invited to an annual meeting to discuss various aspects of running groups with other group leaders and the u3a committee - but don't feel you need to wait for this, your questions and feedback are welcome at any time.

1. Setting up a new group

The first step is to talk to the Groups co-ordinator. If it's decided to go ahead with the group, dates and times of meetings need to be arranged. The Programme Co-ordinator will be in touch with you about this. They will also ask for a brief description of the group, to put the group details on the website. Most of our indoor groups will be held in the Maltings.

Decide on your group format - groups may be self-led, led by a single person, or the leadership may be shared. All groups need a nominated contact to be responsible for the group administration, this may be the group leader *or a group member*. Groups are set up with a generic email address – such as loh1st@farnhamu3a.org.uk for Local History - to avoid listing members' personal email addresses on the website. Emails sent to these addresses will be automatically forwarded to the group contact. Telephone numbers are not published.

Decide on the frequency of the group meetings – monthly, fortnightly or weekly.

Decide on the size of the group. If your group is to be held in The Maltings, rooms are allocated according to group size, either small (seats up to 10 boardroom style), medium (seats up to 20 boardroom style) or large (seats up to 80 theatre style). If you are using a projector Maltings staff will pull down the screen and blackout blinds if required. Please do not operate the blinds in the Long Kiln Gallery yourselves. The Programme Co-ordinator will work with the Maltings to meet your requirements as best they can.

Please also remember that groups should be run by members, for members, according to the principles of the u3a. Paid tutors are only permitted in certain exercise classes.

2. Advertising your group

Website: farnhamu3a.org.uk

In early Spring you will be contacted to confirm that your group is continuing next year and later to check the details to go on the website, such as group contacts, meeting dates and description. Please try to respond quickly to these emails to help make managing the programme a little bit easier! No dates at the Maltings can be guaranteed until they have been booked into the Maltings' system.

Please contact the Programme Co-ordinator at any time if there are any changes to the group details so that the details on the website can be updated. Meeting dates, group contacts and group descriptions from the online programme are duplicated on each groups' web page and should only be changed by the Programme Co-ordinator. If you'd like to add

any other information to the group page on the website, such as the programme for the next few sessions, please contact the web support team at websupport@farnhamu3a.org.uk

If there are problems with the rooms once your group has started, please contact the Groups Co-ordinator at groups@farnhamu3a.org.uk to sort out the issue with the Maltings.

Open Morning

The July Open Morning is advertised to both existing and potential u3a members and is a good way of letting people know what the group is about. Even if you know a group has no space for new members, it should still be represented – so that we can gauge the interest and perhaps set up additional groups. You will be contacted about this in May with further details.

3. Registering Group members

Many existing group members will wish to continue in the same group from one year to the next. However, please make sure that you ask members to let you know if they wish to continue so that you know how many new members you can accommodate. After the July Open Morning, group registration will be open to all who have paid their membership fee for the following u3a year – members should email you, asking to join the group, after they have taken out their u3a membership. Keep a list of the names and membership numbers of people wanting to join your group. You can record group members on the Registration Sheets downloadable from the website - [Information for Group Leaders and Contacts](#) - or in hard copy in the Malting's cupboards.

For new groups, you can add members registering for the group directly into Beacon – our membership database. Details of how to do this are available in the Groups section of the website. Groups continuing from last year will already contain details of current group members – you should delete members who do not let you know that they want to continue.

You can probably afford to register more members than the room capacity, as not everyone will always turn up. When you reach capacity, move on to using the waiting list forms, or add members as 'waiting' on Beacon. Many group leaders use their own lists, often on Excel spreadsheets.

Please ensure that you use the Beacon system yourself, or that your group contact uses the system – if you don't you will be making extra work for someone else who will have to do this for you! It is important to register group members on Beacon so that the Groups Co-ordinator can, if necessary, contact group members – for example, in case of sudden illness or cancellation.

4. Contacting group members

You can easily use Beacon to email all group members securely. You can also see members' phone numbers in case you need to contact them and they do not respond to email.

If you don't use Beacon when emailing members, please ensure that you enter email addresses into the 'Bcc' field, not the 'Cc' field, to keep them private from other members (unless all members agree they are happy for their email addresses to be circulated)

amongst the group). Never give out a member's details to anyone without first checking that they are happy with this!

5. The first meeting of the year

Before the first meeting, please check Beacon to ensure that all group members have renewed their membership – if you find they haven't (these names are in red), please remind them to do so! You can't do this before September, as yearly membership lasts until the end of August.

It might be a good idea to email group members before the first meeting, reminding them of the meeting, the time and place, and asking them to let you know if they cannot attend. If it's a Maltings group ask them to check the notice board opposite the reception desk, to see which room the meeting is in.

Please make new members feel welcome. Introduce them to your group and tell them how your group operates e.g. arrangements for tea and coffee, policy on apologies for absence, etc. You may want to use a buddy system for new members or follow up after the meeting, asking how they found it.

Groups held inside should make members aware of the Fire Regulations at the first (and all subsequent) meetings. The fire regulations for the Maltings are on the [Farnham u3a website](#) and the u3a notice board. Make sure you know where the fire exits are, the meeting point and the procedure for people who can't use the stairs.

6. Managing group numbers and waiting lists

It's a good idea to keep a register of who attends group meetings, especially if your group is limited in size and you have a waiting list of people who would like to join. People tend to enrol for more groups than they can find time to attend, so you may well find numbers drop off after the first few meetings, allowing you to invite some of those on the waiting list.

If you have a waiting list and the attendance of some members is sporadic, it's a good idea to contact them and ask if they really wish to continue. They might be happy to give their place to someone on the waiting list. Any member that doesn't turn up for three sessions in a row, without giving a reason, should be made aware that they may lose their place in the group to someone on the waiting list.

7. Running your group

Try to get others to help with equipment, take the register, give talks and help run the group – this should mean that if you can't manage to get to a session the groups should be able to manage without you! And the more involved people are, the happier they may feel about running their own group at some stage.

8. Resources

There are many resources on the national u3a website www.u3a.org.uk including advice on setting up various subject groups and useful documents to download. These are available to you if you sign up for the members' section.

Information on data protection, dealing with complaints, insurance etc can be found on the Farnham u3a website – [About Us/Policies and procedures](#). It's worth knowing what's there.

9. Facilities at the Maltings

We are very fortunate to have most of our indoor groups at the Maltings while most other u3as meet in each other's houses or a variety of meeting halls – the Maltings staff try to be as helpful as possible so please try not to be too demanding! It's a good idea to familiarise yourself with what equipment we have and where it is kept. Do remember that the Maltings do not supply us with any equipment, so please don't ask them for anything.

Rooms

The Maltings have to juggle our requirements with those of many other hirers. We get very good room hire rates by agreeing to be flexible – so please note that no specific rooms can be guaranteed for your meetings – always check the noticeboard.

The Maltings staff will set up the room in the way you have asked. If you have any problems with rooms, please contact the Venues Coordinator - please do not raise u3a-related complaints at the box office! Your room layout and equipment requirements are carried forward from year to year and recorded on the Malting's room booking system. Notify the Programme Co-ordinator before the beginning of the year if you want to make changes and then the Venues Co-ordinator of any required changes or issues once the group has started.

It is important that groups do not exceed the numbers of members permitted in their room at the Maltings. Spot checks may be made. If you are unclear as to numbers permitted in your room, ask the Venues Co-ordinator.

Storage Cupboards

We have the use of various store cupboards in the Maltings (in the corridor next to the Long Kiln Gallery, outside the Cellar Bar and outside the South West Kiln), where all our audio-visual equipment is kept, also a photocopier for use by group leaders for material for their groups, and extra copies of group forms. The keys to these cupboards are held at the Maltings reception desk. Please return them as soon as possible and before the start of your class - so that other groups can use them. Please make sure that cupboards are properly locked when not attended, including securing top and bottom bolts of the tall cupboards, otherwise our insurance won't cover lost items

If using the photocopier, up to 50 pages may be used for any one meeting; beyond this please supply your own paper and pass the charge onto your group.

Flipcharts & Whiteboards

Many rooms are equipped with whiteboards, and The Maltings have two whiteboard/flipchart easels, and we have one. Please only use specific whiteboard pens on both flipcharts and whiteboards, to avoid disaster if you pick up the wrong one! There is a box of whiteboard pens available in the main u3a cupboard – the first on the left as you come out of the Barley

Room door, opposite the main entrance, and go down the corridor past the Maltings offices. Don't forget to return them!

If you want to use a flipchart, you should provide your own paper.

Audio / Visual equipment

We have a stock of audio/visual equipment, and on the website, under About Us/ Contact Us, you will find a list of people to whom you can turn if you need help with the equipment.

We have four boxes of projection equipment – including projector, laptop and all connectors – one in the cupboard by South West Kiln, one in the cupboard outside the Cellar Bar and two in the main cupboard in the corridor by the Long Kiln Gallery. Also in the cupboards are mats and mains extension leads. The projectors come with full instructions – look in the bottom of the box - and it is expected that group members will set up the projection system themselves. The technical team are always willing to come along and help you learn how to do this. There are also equipment set-up guides in the [Group Admin Forms](#) section of the website accessible from the [All Groups](#) menu.

Please make sure that the equipment is put back as you found it. Pay particular attention to ensuring all cables are returned to the equipment box. Let the technical team know if there is any problem.

Safety mats should be used to cover cables trailing on the ground to remove trip hazards.

Microphones can be used for large groups in those rooms with a built-in sound system – i.e. the Barley Room, Cellar Bar, and the Long Kiln Gallery.

Refreshments

A tea and coffee break, however short, is a welcome opportunity for groups to relax, get to know each other and visit the loo! Breaks also facilitate renewed concentration!

To avoid queues, for large groups the Maltings catering staff ask that that individual members pre-order and pay for drinks at the foyer café prior to the meeting for delivery to the meeting room during the break. The full range of Barista coffees and specialist teas is available with this service. Please notify the Maltings catering staff paula.barratt@farnhammaltings.com a few days before your meeting to ensure sufficient catering staff are available on the day. Please make sure that members and in particular new members understand the arrangements so that they do not help themselves to refreshments without having paid for them.

Drinks for Guest Speakers are not provided free but should be paid for out of group funds.

Unless otherwise agreed, only food and drink purchased on the premises should be consumed in the Maltings.

The Maltings catering staff are sometimes working under great pressure, and if there is a delay in the delivery of your order, or there is an apparent shortfall between what was ordered and what was delivered, any problems should be dealt with calmly and courteously.

10. Possible admin issues

Cancelling a meeting

If you wish to cancel a meeting at the Maltings, please inform the Venues Co-ordinator as well as all group members – they will inform the Maltings so that the Maltings staff do not unnecessarily set up the room, if it is not going to be used. Also please let the Programme Coordinator know so the dates in the on-line programme can be kept up-to-date. If the cancellation is last minute, inform the Maltings Box Office (01252 745444).

Admission of non-members – Non-Farnham u3a members wanting to try a group before joining u3a, may attend one taster session per group per membership year, if there is room for them. However, please note their contact details and pass these on to the Membership Secretary so they are covered by u3a insurance – this can be done after the event. No other guests should be allowed as they will not be covered by the insurance.

Disability and Inclusivity – u3a is fully inclusive and open to all those who meet the membership criteria. Please be aware of and sensitive to the needs of any of any members with physical or mental disabilities. The Farnham u3a committee has an Accessibility Facilitator to whom you or any disabled member can refer – See [Contact Us](#) details in the About Us pages of the website.

Please note that on all u3a field trips or outings, anyone with walking, visual or other difficulties must be accompanied by someone to assist them, who will need to purchase their own ticket for the event – carers need not be u3a members.

Problem members

Should you have a difficult member whose behaviour is regularly disrupting other members of the group please contact the Groups Co-ordinator – there are strict procedures for dealing with complaints which must be followed. If you have a serious problem in a session, it is acceptable to ask a member to leave, but contact the Groups Co-ordinator as soon as possible. Please also inform the Groups Co-ordinator if you have a member that you think is not able to cope independently.

11. Legal and Financial issues

Insurance

Our Public & Products Liability Insurance policy is provided by the Third Age Trust. The policy overview is on our website – About Us/ Policies / Procedures and Useful Links. Note that this insurance does not cover injury caused through the negligence of a paid tutor. If you are the leader or contact of a group which engages the services of a paid tutor (Pilates, Yoga and Tai Chi) then you must check that the tutor carries their own sufficient third-party insurance cover. Copies of insurance certificates should be passed to the Groups Co-ordinator annually in August.

In the case of an accident which either does or may result in injury or damage to property, complete an incident report form (downloadable from the website - All Groups/group admin forms – and send this to the Groups' Coordinator, including details of witnesses.

Remember personal accident insurance cover is not provided by the Trust.

Copying published material

We are covered by a copyright licence obtained through the Third Age Trust, which allows the copying and reuse of extracts from digital and print books, magazines, journals and websites for educational and teaching purposes. Copies must not exceed one chapter of a

book, one article from a publication, one short story or poem from an anthology, or one case report from a published report of judicial proceedings, or 5% of the total, whichever is greater.

Photographs, illustrations, diagrams or charts may also be copied where they are included in the body of the extract or article.

There are also umbrella u3a licences which allow us to show films and other audio-visual material and to play music in public. We are not currently licensed for choirs and singing groups.

Otherwise, unless the copyright has expired, please be very careful when using the works of others for presentations and talks. See the Copyright and Licences Guidance on the Third Age Trust website.

Except where the copyright holder has granted express permission it is not permissible to publish any items subject to copyright on our website. Any permission must be shared with the web-support team when they are asked to upload the material – any infringement of copyright may result in substantial penalties!

Finances

Farnham u3a subscription income is used to cover a number of central expenses, particularly the payments for use of premises. We do not reimburse Group Leaders' travelling and parking expenses.

All groups should be self-sufficient and charge members for any expenses incurred in running the groups, such as photocopying or expenses/gifts for visiting speakers. Many groups collect a small sum from each member at the beginning of the year. All group expenses should be recorded – to keep track of them you can use the Group Petty Cash Sheet – downloadable from the website – All Groups/ Group Admin Forms - or you can use the group ledger facility in Beacon.

For those Groups collecting and spending significant amounts of money, (for trips and outings, wine groups etc), arrangements should be made with the Farnham u3a Treasurer, to hold such funds in the Farnham u3a bank account. Individual group members can either:

1. pay by cheques made payable to the u3a, and collected by the group leader who deposits them into the u3a group bank account,
2. or pay by transfer of money online by the group member directly into the u3a groups bank account using the agreed reference so that the money is credited to the correct group.

Each group has a deposit book for banking cheques and should send details of transactions to the Treasurer. For online transfers by the group members, the group leaders should send the Treasurer a list of names, membership numbers and amounts.

Bills arising from the group's activities will be paid by the Treasurer against invoices raised on Farnham u3a and approved by the group leader. Individual members requiring payment should submit expense claims to the Treasurer supported by receipts and will normally be paid in arrears.

The Treasurer will maintain separate sub-accounts for each group using this facility and will keep leaders informed of their balances annually, at the end of the financial year.

External Paid Tutors

External paid tutors are only permitted for existing exercise groups which already use the services of a private tutor (Pilates, Yoga and Tai Chi). These groups are required to submit a copy of their tutor's insurance certificate together with confirmation of their HMRC tax status, e.g. self-employed, to our Groups Co-ordinator at the beginning of each membership year.

Last updated September 2024

Email: groups@farnhamu3a.org