Swanland u3a Accessibility Policy

Swanland u3a is a charity for retired people of any age that enables them to share creative, educational, leisure and social activities vital for mental and physical well-being. The principles of self-help and peer to peer learning are fundamental to all that we do.

Swanland u3a is an inclusive organisation and as such is committed to ensuring that all its activities are as accessible as possible to all members. Fundamental to that is policy review; when reviewing this policy the Committee will consult with:

- Committee members - Convenors
- Membership

All of the above are invited to feedback on any aspect of the policy as appropriate - this feedback will be considered at the yearly review.

The policy is displayed on the website and will be reviewed yearly. The following policies are relevant:

- The Disability Policy
- The Safeguarding Policy.

Aims Of This Policy.

The policy seeks to ensure that the accessibility needs of individual and groups of members are met as far as possible and that any reasonable adjustments required are cognisant with the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010.

Swanland u3a recognises the need to avoid discriminating either directly or indirectly against members with disabilities and/ or health related needs therefore the policy will act as a reference point in conjunction with the Disability policy.

The policy will also identify the parameters of the adjustments that can be made. Swanland u3a is a membership charity and not a service provider - therefore whilst reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals and groups can participate and attend with carers to support their needs if required there will be certain needs that the u3a will not be able to accommodate due to the level of care that an individual will need.

Roles And Responsibilities.

We have appointed an Accessibility Officer who currently is Patricia Simmons (comm-ps@swanlandu3a.org.uk). There is an expectation that this role will be approached in a proactive manner and will have the support of all Committee members, Convenors and members.

A. Executive Committee

John Munson - Chair (chair23@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

John Peck - Secretary (sec23@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

Glenn Aitken - Treasurer (treasurer@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

Graham Whitaker - Membership Secretary (memsec@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

Joyce Knox - New Groups Coordinator (jknox@jknox.karoo.co.uk)

Brenda Wilson - Minutes Secretary (minsec@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

Patricia Simmons - Committee (Accessibility) (comm-ps@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

John Bailey - Committee (committee2@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

John Scotney - Committee (comm126@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

Keith Taylor - Website Administrator (webadmin@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

Paul Chambers - Committee (comm-pc@swanlandu3a.org.uk)

The Committee will endeavour to ensure that there is a wide range of functioning groups thereby increasing the likelihood of members with accessibility issues being able to participate.

The topic of Accessibility will be reviewed yearly by the Committee.

The Membership Secretary or Convenor will interview each new member to ascertain if they have any disability or health issues that may impact on them accessing activities

The Committee and Convenors will encourage and may require members to bring carers with them to group activities. There will be no additional cost to the carer. Carers will fall under our liability insurance but if they are a professional career then they will be covered by their employer's insurance.

The Web Manager will maintain a database of venues and their facilities in conjunction with the AO.

The Committee will endeavour to fulfil its duty of care to all members to the best of its collective and individual ability. Difficult decisions may have to be taken after assessing a member's ability to participate in group activities or the u3a as a whole. These decisions will be taken after discussion with the member and, if relevant, the carer to ensure that a fair and considered decision is taken. This may include developing a risk assessment with the member regarding their ability to participate.

The Committee will seek additional advice and support from both the regional and national infrastructure of the u3a as and when required.

B. Convenors

1. To monitor accessibility issues for their group and individuals and take appropriate action seeking the support of the AO where appropriate.

2. To liaise with the Membership Secretary/AO regarding new members (3 above)

3. To ensure that any agreed action is implemented and monitored.

C. The Accessibility Officer

The expectation of the Executive Committee is that the AO will act in a proactive manner at all times and will in his work with individual members consistently display our values.

1. Liaising with Convenors on an ongoing basis to ensure that group activities are accessible; that they are aware of this Policy document and the general / specific expectations around accessibility issues and what adjustments may need to be made in specific circumstances e.g. relocating a group from home meetings to a wheel chair accessible venue.

2. To regularly remind all members of the role through use of the Bulletin and Website and to use these to establish a clear line of communication with our membership so that any accessibility concerns can be raised.

3. To liaise with Membership Secretary and Convenors regarding needs of any new members.

4. To audit venues for general meetings to ensure: mobility scooter/ wheelchair accessibility; disabled toilet available; hearing aid loop system and any other relevant equipment is present and functioning. The AO will keep a brief record of such audits.

5. To develop working relationships with those members confident in using technology e.g. sound systems, projectors so that they could help on access issues if required.

6. To remind any speaker giving a visual presentation to give precise descriptions of slides, photographs etc. to help visually impaired members.

7. The organisation of training on Accessibility issues for new Convenors and Committee members.

D. The Membership

Our members are our strength. Every member will be responsible, as appropriate and when required, for helping to ensure that fellow members with accessibility issues are sup- ported and made to feel welcome. This could range from holding a door open; assisting with technology; explaining an activity or just a friendly greeting.