

Welfare and Accessibility Policy and Procedures

(Supporting Members with Disabilities and Illness)

Saltburn District u3a (SDu3a) is committed to ensuring that its members are appropriately cared for when engaged in u3a activities. This care includes ensuring physical and emotional well-being and safety of all members, including those with disabilities.

The committee will endeavour to provide support to a group when needed. In doing so the principle of mutual aid and support by all members should be encouraged. Group activities should engender a feeling of warmth and friendliness to ensure that no-one feels isolated or alone. Given the age profile of members, instances of illness and death are inevitable. SDu3a will reach out to members who are ill, and their families in cases of death.

- **Members with physical difficulties** may find accessing venues problematic. Those with mobility issues should contact the Accessibility Champion beforehand to ensure that a particular event is suitable for them. The Accessibility Champion can liaise with the Committee, as necessary, regarding possible ways of either improving access or to consider arranging an alternative venue. Designated seating should be provided at Update Meetings near to the entry/exit for members with mobility issues.
- **Members with hearing/sight impairment.** Speakers should be encouraged to use microphones when available and to position themselves in a good light to aid lip readers and those with sight problems. Designated seats near the front should be available for those with hearing or sight difficulties.
- **Members with chronic/progressive illness.** In case of need, the Accessibility Champion will investigate what assistance, if any, would enable the member to have continued involvement and access to group activities. All members should be encouraged to support each other as much as possible. If a member requires more than nominal assistance, they may bring their own carer. The carer does not need to be a u3a member, will not be charged, and will be covered by the u3a liability insurance. The only exception to this is a professional carer, who must provide their own insurance.
- **Illness of a committee member or Accessibility Champion.** A relative or another member should inform the Chair or Secretary so that alternative cover can be made if needed.
- **Death of a member:** Information regarding the death of a member should be passed to the Group Leader, Membership Secretary and pastoral care officer. Group Leaders should liaise with relevant family members or an identified group member to pass on funeral arrangements and sympathies to the family (if information is available and the funeral is not private). Pastoral care officer will arrange to send a card from the Committee on behalf of SDu3a. It will be at the discretion of the group whether any further actions are taken. Membership secretary will update the membership database once it is confirmed that the relevant group leaders and members have been informed.

This policy works in conjunction with SDu3a Safeguarding Policy & Procedure.