

Cotgrave & District U3A



Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy

In line with the policy guidance from the Third Age Trust, we note that everybody has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time. All members who may be vulnerable have a right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.

In all of our U3A activities we will:

- Value, listen and respect members who may be vulnerable.
- Ensure that all members feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse.
- Recognise equality amongst people and relationships.
- Do all we can to help members who may be vulnerable, to be and to remain active contributors within U3A, and if they are, or become unable to participate independently, encourage them to bring a companion/carer with them so that they can continue to enjoy their U3A membership.
- Ensure all members are aware of their responsibilities to protect vulnerable adults.

WITHIN U3A ACTIVITIES:

Any allegation or suspicion of abuse, neglect, harm or poor practice within U3A activities will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately. Such allegations/suspicions should be reported immediately to the group leader or to any committee member for formal investigation.

COMPANIONS/CARERS:

For members who are dependent on carers, it is expected that the carer will remain as the responsible person with the member during the U3A activity with attendance, at no additional cost, recorded as an associate member along with the member.

ABUSE SITUATIONS EXTRANEEOUS TO U3A:

In the event of some information arising which suggests that a U3A member may be suffering abuse extraneous to U3A, the person receiving this information should record notes of the information, its source, and place, time/date of the conversation, and then report in confidence to a U3A committee member to agree any further action, such as reporting to social care authorities.

CHILDREN:

The nature of U3A adult membership means that children are not normally present at our activities. But if so, the member with the child is responsible for their welfare. This policy applies to children as well as to any vulnerable adults.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Cotgrave & District U3A Executive Committee on 17th June 2022 and will be reviewed at least every 2 years.

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE PEOPLE - A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE:

What to do if you have concerns about possible abuse:

- *Consult an executive committee member.*
- *Decide together whether to seek advice or make an immediate referral.*
- *Keep a record of what happened, your concerns and your actions.*
- *Only tell others who need to know.*
- *If in an emergency respond immediately.*

Responding to an adult who shares with you about abuse:

- *Never promise to keep a secret.*
- *React calmly; be aware of your non-verbal messages.*
- *Don't stop someone who is talking freely about what may have happened.*
- *Don't ask leading questions.*
- *Reassure the person that they have done the right thing by talking to you.*
- *Avoid making judgmental comments.*
- *Tell the person what will happen next.*
- *Record, using the person's own words as far as possible, and noting any important dates and times.*
- *Report an executive committee member.*

Remember good practice:

- *Treat everyone with respect, setting a positive example.*
- *Respect people's personal space.*
- *Ensure your actions cannot be misinterpreted.*
- *Challenge unacceptable behaviour in a constructive way.*
- *Do not put yourself or other people in vulnerable situations.*
- *With a vulnerable person it is advisable to avoid being completely alone if possible.*
- *Do not have inappropriate physical contact with adults.*
- *Always share safeguarding concerns.*

Behaviours to be considered as not acceptable with vulnerable adults or with children:

- *Bullying or humiliating.*
- *Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact.*
- *Having an intimate relationship, developed as a result of being in a position of trust.*
- *Making sexually explicit comments or sharing sexually explicit material.*
- *Excessively consuming alcohol whilst responsible for.*
- *Manipulating to be alone with.*

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