

Whitworth U3A Welfare Policy

Whitworth U3A is committed to ensuring the wellbeing and support of all its members when engaged in U3A activities.

This policy document outlines the principles, support systems, and procedures in place to promote a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for both the physical and emotional wellbeing of our members.

At each monthly meeting a team of Meeters and Greeters fulfil a variety of roles to make the experience as warm and welcoming as possible. In particular is our determination to include all and to strive to ensure that nobody feels alone or “left out”.

Given the age profile of our members, instances of illness and death are possible. Whitworth U3A will endeavour to show concern and care for members who are ill and for their families, in the case of bereavement.

Accidents

Whitworth u3a is not required to have qualified First Aiders, however some members of outdoor activity groups have chosen to participate in short First Aid courses, financed by Whitworth u3a. In the event of an accident or injury during any u3a activity, advice should be sought from any medically qualified member or first aider present, before taking any action regarding the casualty. In the event of serious situation, the emergency services must be contacted.

All Group Leaders are issued with blank accident forms. On completion, these should be returned to the Chair for separate filing for future reference.

Incident and accident forms appear in the Health and Safety Policy.

Risk Assessments and Health and Safety Risk Assessment Checklist forms produced by the Third Age Trust are held by Group Leaders to determine any issues of safety during a u3a activity, whether it be indoor or outdoor, with regular reviews should activities, conditions or members change. (See Appendix 2)

Whitworth u3a subscribes to Public and Products Liability Insurance arranged by the Third Age Trust which indemnifies u3a members against claims they could become legally liable to pay in connection with u3a business as a result of:

1. accidental injury or death of any person; or
2. accidental loss or damage to property

This indemnity is not personal insurance and would only apply in cases where negligence could be proved.

Welfare Secretary?

A member of the committee appointed as Welfare Secretary has responsibility when notified that members may have fallen ill or have died; or physical difficulties and additional needs become apparent. Appropriate action can then be taken.

This role is undertaken currently by the Membership Secretary

Physical Difficulties & Additional Needs

If a member requires more than nominal assistance, they may bring their own carer, who will be covered by u3a liability insurance while they are with the disabled member. Professional carers would have to be covered by their own member/employer liability insurance. A carer accompanying a vulnerable adult to meetings does not have to be a u3a member and will not be charged for attending any u3a meetings. Whitworth u3a has a separate Safeguarding Policy agreed at Committee on 21st August 2023 adopting guidance from the Third Age Trust. To be reviewed in November 2025.

Whitworth U3A aim to:

- Ensure a safe and inclusive environment, free from discrimination, harassment, or bullying.
- Provide clear guidance on support structures and reporting mechanisms for welfare concerns.

Principles

- **Respect and Dignity:** Every member shall be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of background, identity, or status.
- **Equality and Inclusion:** The organisation is committed to creating an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- **Confidentiality:** All welfare matters will be treated sensitively and confidentially, in accordance with data protection laws and best practice.
- **Support and Empowerment:** Members will be encouraged and supported to seek help and guidance when needed, without fear of stigma or reprisal.

In Reporting and Responding to Welfare Concerns

- Members are encouraged to raise any welfare concerns with their committee or group leader, who will report to the Welfare Officer, (the Membership Secretary) or through the organisation's designated reporting channels.

- All concerns will be taken seriously and investigated promptly, fairly, and impartially.
- Appropriate support will be offered to those affected, and necessary actions will be taken to address any issues identified.
- No member will be victimised or disadvantaged for raising a welfare concern in good faith.

Responsibilities

- **Organisation:** To provide resources, and training where necessary and monitor and review welfare provisions regularly.
- **Group leaders and Welfare Officer:** To act as points of contact, offer guidance, and ensure swift action on welfare matters.
- **All Members:** To treat others with respect, to be aware of their own wellbeing, and to support fellow members where appropriate.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed as required to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Feedback from members is encouraged and will inform future updates.

Contact Information

For further information or to raise a welfare concern, please contact the designated Welfare Officer at: Whitworth and District U3A or see Safeguarding Policy for agency contacts.

Approval and Implementation

This policy was approved by the Whitworth and District U3A Committee on 21/11//2025 and is effective immediately. All members are required to familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy and adhere to its principles.