

Groups Coordinator - Role Description

1. Role Summary

- To facilitate the setting up of new interest groups
- To support and advise the Group Leaders
- To ensure good communication between the Group Leaders, the group members, the Committee and the Barnstaple u3a as a whole.

2. Main Responsibilities:

A. New interest groups

- Recruitment and induction of new Group Leaders
- Encourage shadowing and handover for 'exiting' Group Leaders
- Maintaining a detailed and accurate list of local venues
- Support in setting up new interest groups e.g. making lists of interested members, having 'sign-up' tables at monthly meetings, arranging start-up meetings etc
- Maintaining regular contact with newly established groups to discuss and review progress.
- Monitoring interest groups where there are waiting lists and encourage existing members to start new groups.
- Encouraging members with known skills and interests to become Group Leaders.
- Inviting members' suggestions for new interest groups, discussing options with them and encouraging interested members to set up a group themselves with the workload being shared.
- Introducing new Group Leaders to existing Group Leaders doing similar subjects.
- Helping to publicise new groups via the website, newsletter, monthly meetings etc

B. Support and advice to Group Leaders

- Oversee the production of a handbook/set of guidelines for Group Leaders, to cover amongst other things:
 - i. venue hire and payment
 - ii. managing group monies
 - iii. policies and procedures eg. Safeguarding, GDPR, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - iv. accident and incident reporting
 - v. use of equipment
 - vi. dealing with problems
 - vii. group members and communicating with group members

- Ensure that Group Leaders have a copy of the handbook or guidelines as well as access to or copies of all relevant forms e.g. accident reports, expense claims
- Inform Group Leaders about the educational resources available nationally including from National Office, national website, Subject Advisors and the resources available online e.g. Massive Open Online Course's (MOOCs), U3A online etc.
- To be the first point of contact for any queries/problems that might arise in the running of an interest group.
- To resolve any minor conflicts that might occur in groups, referring more serious matters to the Committee for consideration
- To have regular Leader Group meetings so knowledge, issues, problems and new ideas can be shared and discussed.
- To organise an annual social event for Group Leaders to show appreciation for their contribution to Barnstaple u3a.

C. Communication

- To maintain an accurate programme of interest groups, including title, content, frequency, venue, day and time and the contact details of the Leader
- To liaise with Group Leaders and provide the Committee with updates on the progress/development of the interest groups.
- To collect information on group numbers, members and vacancies and ensure the Membership Secretary is kept fully informed.
- To communicate all relevant information to Group Leaders from the Committee, the Link, the region and National Office.
- To help to publicise new groups via the website, newsletter, monthly meetings etc
- To advertise 'vacancies' for Group Leaders when existing ones retire
- To encourage and assist Group Leaders to promote and profile the work of their groups via the website, sources online, the Trust newsletter, through local press and social media and Third Age Matters.

3. How To Set Up A New Group

When there is interest in forming a new group, provide a sign-up sheet at the monthly meeting at the back of the hall. Additionally, encourage the Group Leader to announce the new group at the monthly meeting or inform the Committee Chair so they can make the announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Inform the Web Administrator and Newsletter Editor. If required, discuss the next steps with the Group Leader to find an appropriate venue or other venues that do not require a fee. Be available to assist in convening the first meeting of a new group at a central venue.

Explain the process of hiring rooms:

- The Group Leader must inform the Treasurer when hiring a venue.
- The Group Leader must inform the Treasurer of any venue cancellations or changes in room hire.
- The Newsletter Editor must be informed of venue details, time, and date of regular meetings, which will be included under the newsletter heading of New Groups.
- The Group Leader should generate an Attendance Register to cover fire regulations, check u3a membership, and manage charges for the venue.
- For data protection purposes, if not using Beacon, the Group Leader should ensure group members are comfortable sharing their email addresses within the group (cc), or use blind carbon copy (bcc) if not. WhatsApp groups could be established with everyone's consent.
- Introduce the new Group Leader to the Beacon Administrator on Barnstaple u3a website, highlighting the importance of these facilities and the training available for their use.

4. Supporting Existing Groups and Group Leaders

- If a group becomes over-subscribed, assist in setting up a second group.
- Keep our members informed about groups by:
 - i. Informing the newsletter editor and web administrator of new groups and changes to existing groups.
 - ii. Encouraging Group Leaders to update group descriptions and membership via the web administrator and regularly update entries on Beacon.
 - iii. Supporting the Committee in organising meetings or coffee mornings for new members to meet Group Leaders and discover new interest groups, if necessary.
 - iv. Keeping a record of Group Leaders in Beacon and maintaining files of correspondence on a laptop or desktop, as well as information on venues, to be handed to the new Group Co-ordinator.

5. On completion

- To carry out a comprehensive handover to the new Group Coordinator, when applicable.