



## Disability and Accessibility Policy Statement of Intent

Swanland u3a is an inclusive organisation and as such is committed to ensuring that all of its activities are as accessible as possible to all members including those with disabilities. We will take all reasonable steps and develop procedures and practices to ensure that people with disabilities can attend the meetings and Interest Group activities of their choice without necessarily needing a companion/carer with them.

### Aims of the policy

The policy seeks to ensure that the accessibility needs of individuals 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.

Every member of our u3a is expected and encouraged to show consideration towards disabled members and to help implement this policy and related procedures. We should all be aware that disabilities take many forms and are not always visible.

Discrimination on the grounds of disability will not be tolerated.

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### **A. Executive Committee**

1. To work with members, convenors and (where applicable) outside agencies to implement 'reasonable steps' so that a disabled member can access activities. Swanland u3a is a membership charity and not a service provider and there may be certain needs that the u3a will not be able to accommodate due to the level of care that an individual will need.
2. When identifying 'reasonable steps' the following will be considered:
  - a) Whether taking particular steps would be effective in overcoming the difficulties experienced by member(s) in gaining access to the group or activity.
  - b) The extent to which it is practical for Swanland u3a to take the steps.
  - c) Financial and other costs of making the adjustment.
  - d) Financial and other costs already spent on adjustments.
  - e) The amount of disruption caused by implementing the scheme.
3. To make members aware that a hearing loop is installed at St Barnabas Church Hall. As far as possible speakers should consider the fact that not all members will be able to see and read slides easily and should take account of this during their talk.
4. To ensure that examples of good practice in managing activities for all including disabled members are publicised on our website.
5. Our work on accessibility and disability will be regularly monitored and reviewed annually.
6. To follow the u3a National Office insurance position regarding carers which states: Members who cannot manage to participate in their chosen u3a activities without help may bring a companion/carer with them who for the time they are in attendance will be covered by the liability insurance provided by the u3a National Office.

The only exception to this is a professionally employed carer who would have to be covered by an individual policy or a carer working for a company who would be covered by their insurance.

The Committee will implement and monitor all necessary administration connected with implementing the above.

7. The work will be led by Committee members as and when required.

## **B. Convenors**

1. Convenors will be responsible for supporting and implementing the policy as it impacts on members of their group. They should make sure that members, or prospective members, of their group know what the activities entail especially the level of fitness and mobility required to participate in groups that involve physical activity.
2. They will liaise with the Committee as required.
3. To use DDA compliant facilities for meetings outside peoples' homes. If a new facility is used Convenors should ensure that this is the case, and if in doubt, contact a member of the Committee.
4. Where activities take place in members' homes Convenors should take all reasonable steps to make this accessible for disabled members. However, this may not always be possible due to
  - a) The nature of the disability,
  - b) The suitability of the accommodation for the disability e.g. stairs, toilet facilities, wheelchair access etc.
  - c) Risks to other group members and their equipment
  - d) In this case Convenors should consider using homes that can accommodate the disability providing the home owner is happy with this or, if there are sufficient members to warrant it, consider moving to a DDA compliant venue.

## **C. Members**

1. All members should support the policy and seek clarification when required from the Committee members.
2. Members should support Disabled members as far as possible. However:
  - a) All members of the group should be comfortable with modifications required to meetings if the venue is to be changed.
  - b) No member should feel pressurised into hosting a meeting more often than they would normally do just because their home is suitable.
  - c) There is no obligation for a member to accommodate a disabled member if they do not consider their home suitable
  - d) There is no requirement to make changes to a private home to accommodate a disabled member.
  - e) The disabled person is responsible for transport to and from the venue and for the provision of a carer if needed.
  - f) It may be necessary to discuss if a member should cease being a member of a particular group if they do not recognise that they are unable to participate as a member of the group due to their disability.

If any member has any queries about this policy or feels that Swanland u3a is not meeting its obligations to a disabled member or our members please contact the Chair.