

# Towcester u3a

## Information for New Executive Committee Members

### 1. Before Joining the Committee

Before you agree to become a Towcester u3a Committee Member, here are a few things for you to consider.

#### 1.1. Constitution

If you have not already done so, familiarise yourself with the Towcester u3a web site: <https://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk/>

On this web site in the section “Documents” under the drop-down menu “About” there is a list of available documents. Of particular relevance is the Towcester u3a Constitution: <https://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Towcester-u3a-Constitution-2021-signed-.pdf>

Sections 8 to 11 of the constitution relate to the executive committee.

#### 1.2. Trusteeship

Of particular note is the statement in section 8i of the constitution that the executive committee is the governing body and the board of trustees. By joining the committee, you will become a trustee, and will be registered as such with the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission has issued a document entitled “The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do” which is available here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/866947/CC3\\_feb20.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866947/CC3_feb20.pdf)

This document outlines the duties and responsibilities of trustees. It should be noted that the Towcester u3a is an unincorporated members association, and as such, the trustees can be held personally liable in certain circumstances (see section 10 of the Charity Commission document). For this reason, the Third Age Trust provides insurance cover for Towcester u3a, as detailed in the two documents “Insurance Overview” and “Public Liability Insurance FAQ” on the Towcester u3a website:

<https://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Insurance-Overview-Sept22.pdf>  
<https://www.towcesteru3a.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Insurance-FAQs-Sept2022.pdf>

## 2. After Joining the Committee

The committee consists of at least six, and not more than twelve members. The constitution requires the committee to meet at least four times each year, but in practice it generally meets once a month.

### 2.1. Officers

The committee includes several officers. The officers required by the constitution are the Chairman, one or two Vice Chairmen, the Treasurer, and the Secretary. Other officers may be appointed as seen fit by the committee. The current offices of the Towcester u3a are listed below, with a brief description of their responsibilities. Details of the current committee members and officers is available on the web site.

#### 2.1.1. Chair

- Chair Committee Meetings.
- Liaise with minutes secretary to set and approve the agenda for committee meetings taking into account representations from members both within and outside the committee.
- Chair Monthly meetings including making announcements and introducing guest speakers.
- Thank the speaker following their presentation.
- Deal with enquiries via post email and telephone
- Chair the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and any Special General Meetings that may be called.
- Prepare and deliver the Trustees report for the AGM.
- Liaise with the Third Age Trust and Northants Network as required.
- Authorised signatory for Towcester u3a bank account.
- Ensure activities comply with Towcester u3a Constitution.

#### 2.1.2. Deputy Chair

- To be aware of all the requirements of the Chair's role in order to be able to deputise for him/her as required
- Act as a sounding board for any decisions made.
- Proof read Bulletins and other documents.
- Backup Admin for the Membership database
- Assist at Monthly meetings with AV equipment setup and other requirements
- Authorised signatory for the bank account.

#### 2.1.3. Treasurer

- Oversee/Manage:
  - Financial records and bank statements.
  - Financial audits
  - Income from subscriptions, groups monthly meetings etc.
  - Expenditure e.g. rents equipment speakers etc.
- Liaise with membership secretary
- Prepare budgets for committee meetings year end accounts AGMs etc
- Provide financial statements for committee meetings and the AGM
- Maintain up to date authorised signatories for bank accounts.
- Ensure Charity Commission records of Committee members are up to date.
- Submit annual reports as required by the Charity Commission.

#### **2.1.4. Business Secretary**

The role of the Business Secretary is to support the Chair by ensuring the smooth functioning of the committee:

- To deal with postal and electronic correspondence
- Receive and disseminate to Committee members any information from the Third Age Trust
- Ensure all licences are up to date.
- Attend committee meetings and the AGM.
- Distribute minutes of meetings
- Maintain a file of agendas and minutes.
- Maintain a file of important correspondence.
- Manage bookings for Towcester u3a committee meetings.
- Manage bookings for Monthly meetings, Coffee Mornings, New members meetings, etc.

#### **2.1.5. Membership Secretary**

The Membership secretary is key to the success of the u3a as it involves managing the u3a database. The role requires a good working relationship with the Treasurer liaising regularly with them on financial matters. The role also involves working directly with people where required on a personal level. Key tasks are:

- Prepare and organise annual membership renewals, sending out reminders as required and helping Group Leaders to identify lapsed members. Amend record of existing members details as advised by them.
- Maintain the Membership Database using the on-line Simple Membership System.
- Collect, record and bank membership subscriptions for those members who prefer to pay manually.
- Produce Application forms for on line applications and for those members who do not use on-line applications.
- Provide membership statistics for the committee as required and email to members before committee meetings.
- Maintain u3a Matters mailing list to u3a specifications and deal with enquiries
- Attend Monthly Meetings and be available to new members who may wish to join, arranging cover when the Membership Secretary is unable to attend in person.
- Sign up new members and allocate member numbers.
- Organise New Members meetings as scheduled by the committee (usually 3 per year).
- Provide support to new members as may be necessary.

#### **2.1.6. Speaker Seeker**

- To arrange speakers for a series of talks for 11 meetings each year
- To arrange details with each speaker such as date and equipment required
- To arrange and agree the fee and travel expenses and liaise with the treasurer regarding these fees
- To meet and greet the speaker at least half an hour before the meeting and ensure they have equipment required.
- Possibly To introduce the speaker to members and offer a vote of thanks at the end
- If the speaker seeker cannot be present at the meeting to ensure a committee member is responsible for the above

#### **2.1.7. Publicity Officer**

- To deal with all matters relating to publicity for Towcester u3a.

- Prepare regular pieces for Focus Magazine and the Town Crier.
- Edit, publish, and distribute the monthly Towcester u3a Bulletin.
- Liaise with the membership secretary to make sure all members receive a copy of the bulletin.
- Admin to our Main Facebook page, including reviewing (with others) new posts and reviewing comments.
- Admin to the Facebook photo-sharing page
- Monitoring requests to join our Facebook pages and admitting those who are eligible.
- Updating message boards for monthly meetings.
- Produce signing in lists for each Monthly Meeting and keep attendance list.

#### **2.1.8. Webmaster**

- Organise and maintain the website including SSL certification, webhosting, and domain name through our website company Wingnut Website's Ben Morrell
- Maintain content including changes and links to publications.
- Receive and respond to incoming messages.
- Keep software updated.

#### **2.1.9. Interest Groups Liaison Officer**

The purpose of the role is to promote the smooth-running of the existing Interest Groups of Towcester u3a and to assist in the development of new groups as interest is identified.

The main tasks are as follows:

- Maintain and update the list of groups and their coordinators, with the help of the webmaster.
- To advise and support coordinators as necessary.
- To hold any accident reports that are necessary.
- To assist with risk assessments as necessary.
- To assist in the identification of a new coordinator should one need/decide to resign.
- To assist in the setting up of new interest groups by
  - Maintaining a list of those interested,
  - Holding an initial meeting to identify a coordinator, agree a time and venue for the group and the manner in which it will run.
- Arrange the Christmas lunch for the coordinators.
- Report to the Committee as required on issues regarding the interest groups.

## **3. Further information**

Further information can be found on the national u3a website:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/>

There is a "Support for u3as" section under the 'Members Area' heading, but you will have to create an account in order to access it. Once having created an account you will find a range of documents covering most subjects in which you may be interested.