

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

1. INITIAL PRINCIPLES

Countesthorpe u3a has a duty to ensure the health and safety of all who are associated with the organisation. This duty of care is primarily about managing and reducing risks.

Risk is about two principles; a) the probability or likelihood of an occurrence, and b) the consequences resulting from the occurrence or hazard (i.e. illness, injury or death).

Risk management involves four steps:-

- a) identifying hazards by finding out what might cause harm,
- b) assessing risks by understanding the likelihood of a hazard causing harm and how serious it could be,
- c) controlling risks by implementing the most effective control measure, so far as is reasonably practicable, in order to eliminate or minimise such risks,
- d) reviewing any control measures put in place to ensure they are working as planned.

By focusing on prevention, as opposed to reacting when things go wrong, it is possible to reduce or prevent accidents and injuries. Inevitably, when assessing risks, judgements will need to be made regarding what precautions can reasonably be taken within the circumstances prevailing.

2. PROCEDURES

Countesthorpe u3a offers its members a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. These vary from small groups meeting in private houses; day trips and holidays; larger meetings in halls, and those which are based on physical effort and exercise. Those responsible for facilitating such activities, for example Group Leaders, should be mindful of identifying and reducing any hazards which might pose a risk to participants.

The consequences of providing a wide variety of activities results in a diversity of associated risks. In order to rationalise procedures it is assumed that similar types of activities contain similar hazards. Attached to this policy is a series of Appendices (recommended by the Third Age Trust) which attempts to make it easier for those assessing risks on behalf of their members. These are as follows:-

- a) Venue Risks
- b) Walking and Rambling Risks
- c) Remote Activity (Physical) Risks

The Appendices are provided as guidance for what should be included in a Risk Assessment. They are not intended to be slavishly followed on every occasion that a group meets. For example, where a venue is used on a regular basis, it may be appropriate to use the relevant checklist once a year, unless significant changes have occurred to the venue. In the case of walks or other physical activities, much will depend on the actual group circumstances, but the checklists offer guidance as to what should be considered.

Reference must also be made to Countesthorpe u3a's policies relating to Safeguarding and Accessibility.

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APPENDIX A: VENUE CHECKLIST

NAME OF GROUP:

GROUP LEADER:

Hazard	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1 Is the access suitable for the group attending the activity especially anybody with limited mobility?				
2 Is wheelchair access adequate?				
3 Is the area free from obstructions & trip hazards?				
4 Are there adequate means of escape in an emergency?				
5 Are there appropriate direction signs to aid escape?				
6 Is there a Fire Alarm?				
7 Is there Emergency Lighting?				
8 Is there a designated assembly point? Where is it?				
9 Is there an emergency procedure for the building? Do you have a copy?				
10 Is seating always laid out?				
Is it a u3a responsibility before and after the activity to lay out seating?				
11 Is there a kitchen?				
Is the kitchen adequate and hygienic?				
Are food safe cleaning materials available?				
Has the kettle been visually safety checked?				
12 Are the toilet facilities adequate & accessible?				
13 Is equipment being brought to the venue?				
Has it been checked?				
14 Is there a First Aid box and if so where is it located?				
15 Does it have a sound system with an induction loop?				
16 Other (Specify)				

Additional action/changes required (e.g. for exceptional circumstances):

Covid-19 Precautions: Advise re: social distancing, face coverings, touching surfaces, sanitiser etc

Additional information:

SIGNED: **DATE:**

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APPENDIX B: VENUE ON THE DAY CHECKLIST

NAME OF GROUP:

GROUP LEADER:

Check		Yes (<input type="checkbox"/>)
1	Emergency Exits unobstructed	
2	Emergency Exits unlocked	
3	Fire Extinguishers in place	
4	Toilet facilities open, clean, paper available etc	
5	Walkways free from trip hazards	
6	Kitchen facilities accessible & clean	
7	Kettle leads in good condition, free from wear and fraying, plug securely attached	
8	Refreshment items available if required	
9	First Aid equipment accessible	
10	Safety Briefing given a. Emergency exits b. Assembly point c. What to do if fire discovered d. What to do if the alarm sounds e. Accident / injury reporting f. Toilet and washing facility location	
11	Other (specify)	
12	Other (specify)	
	Additional action/changes required (e.g. for exceptional circumstances): Covid-19 Precautions: Advise re social distancing, face coverings, touching surfaces, sanitiser etc Additional information:	
SIGNED:		DATE:

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APPENDIX C: WALKING/RAMBLING CHECKLIST

NAME OF GROUP:

GROUP LEADER:

Before the walk		(✓)
1	Provision of information to prospective walkers: Location and Distance Timing Linear / Circular Route Terrain/height and climbs involved Level of fitness required Identification of any 'break off' points (e.g. if members feel unable to continue) Appropriate footwear & clothing Toilet / refreshment facilities en route What to bring – food / drink / compass / map / mobile phone Dogs permitted? Meeting point Public transport options Car parking facilities Need of walkers to bring emergency telephone numbers for next of kin and relevant medical details	

On the day		(✓)
1	Check first aid kit & emergency blanket. Identify any first aiders.	
2	Briefing before starting out: a. Route b. Duration c. Terrain d. Known Hazards e. Emergency Arrangements – illness, exhaustion, accident, weather problems, terrain problems, lost contact with group f. Be prepared to advise inadequately equipped walkers not to go but they must make the final decision	
3	Appoint a backmarker	

During the walk		(✓)
1	Stay at the front but make sure you can always see the backmarker	
2	Set an appropriate pace for the level of walk	
3	Check the route frequently	
4	Periodically count the number in the group	
5	Covid 19 Factors: Physical distancing; group size; narrow/pinch points; touching hard surfaces; transportation; face coverings; contact details for tracing purposes; hand sanitiser; non-sharing of food/drink etc.	
6	Other (Specify)	

SIGNED: DATE:

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APPENDIX D: REMOTE ACTIVITY CHECKLIST

NAME OF GROUP:

GROUP LEADER:

In exceptional circumstances some exercise activities are being run remotely. This poses additional hazards for participants as group leaders may not be able to see if a participant is having problems or issues with their fitness levels for certain activities. Also there is the risk that someone could hurt themselves whilst taking part in the class and, if home alone, they may be unable to raise the alarm. It is advisable therefore to conduct a remote activity assessment in addition to any standard risk assessments that have been carried out for the activity. Consider also if it is advisable for anyone who has not taken part before to commence this activity.

Before the activity		Yes (<input type="checkbox"/>)
	Asses the following with participants: a) Level of fitness required b) Taken part in this activity previously and have no health problems from doing so c) Mindful not to overdo things and stay well within the limits of what is comfortable for their ability and fitness level d) Appropriate clothing & footwear	

On the day		Yes (<input type="checkbox"/>)
	Before starting and during the activity group leaders and participants should: a) Inspect area prior to start of session, remove/isolate any hazards b) Keep a telephone close by if they have any difficulties c) Arrange a safe and comfortable chair to sit in (if appropriate) d) Check at intervals if members feel able to continue e) Have in place a verbal or texted check-in for all participants to ensure at the end that everyone completed the group activity safely	

Other Considerations (Specify)		Yes (<input type="checkbox"/>)

SIGNED: DATE:

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APPENDIX E: FINANCIAL CHECKLIST

NOTE: For full advice and guidance on financial matters, reference should be made to The Third Age Trust policy ‘Financial Matters: u3a-KMS-DOC-033’

It is the responsibility of the committee and its trustees to ensure that the quality of financial stewardship is regularly monitored, and that all accounts are efficiently and effectively managed in order to reduce risk.

Below is a summary of accepted procedures and actions which, if followed, will help to secure the organisation’s financial stability.

Responsibilities of Trustees to mitigate risk		(✓)
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Safeguarding the assets of the charity – which includes all accounts b) Identifying and managing the risk of loss, waste, theft or fraud c) Ensuring the financial reporting is both robust and comprehensive d) Keeping financial records in accordance with e.g. HMRC and Charity Commission e) Preparing detailed annual accounts which are externally inspected f) Declaring any conflict of interest when involved in decision/policy making g) Reviewing membership numbers and fees annually to ensure adequate reserves h) Ensuring the u3a is not vulnerable to litigation regarding unforeseen incidents i) Ensuring compliance with relevant financial laws, regulations, codes of practice j) Employing strategies to maintain essential volunteer levels (committee/GLs etc) k) Ensuring that adequate, quality venues are available for all u3a activities 	

Financial Governance		(✓)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All official bank requirements and documentation (mandates, signatories, etc) must have committee approval and minuted b) All cheques must be signed by two signatories who are responsible for checking the validity of payments c) All financial records and receipts must be kept for a minimum of six years d) All accounts should be reconciled on a regular basis – ideally monthly e) Cash balances, wherever held, must be kept to the minimum. Collected cash must be forwarded to the treasurer as soon as possible f) Standing arrangements for premises hire should go through the u3a’s bank a/c g) Use of personal debit/credits should be limited as far as possible. Committee approval must be sought for their use if no other viable way of payment is possible h) The treasurer, on behalf of the committee, will advise Group Leaders and those responsible for organising trips and holidays of the agreed financial protocols. Close liaison between treasurer and account holders is essential, 	

	<p>reinforcing the relevant financial provisions contained in the 'Group Leader Handbook'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Approved out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed following the submission of relevant receipts to the treasurerj) Declarations to HMRC regarding Gift Aid must be kept for a minimum of six yearsk) The treasurer will maintain an asset register (or inventory) of all assets held by the u3a which indicates purchase date and price, and its locationl) The committee and its trustees will aim to keep a level of reserves which will cover approximately six months of regular operating activity.	
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