

Farnham u3a – Carers Policy

Introduction

Farnham u3a recognises the important role that carers play in the life of members and in society generally. The Third Age Trust, the central body of the u3a takes the view that a carer should be seen as an extension to an individual member where it would not be possible for a member to otherwise benefit from their membership. Inevitably, there are nuances around this approach, and this policy seeks to identify those issues and clarify our position as Farnham u3a.

Farnham u3a members and carers.

1. When reading this policy please bear in mind that Farnham u3a is a membership charity not a service provider.

Consequently, there may ultimately be some conditions and facilities that are not, for a variety of reasons, available to a member needing a carer. Farnham u3a will try to minimise the occasions when this is the case.

2. Purpose of this policy

This policy has been drawn up to clarify the responsibilities of Farnham u3a towards a carer who is not a member of the u3a but provides essential support for a member to enjoy the range of activities provided by Farnham u3a.

The policy considers the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and the need for Farnham u3a to avoid discriminating directly or indirectly against members with disabilities and who may require the support of a carer.

3. Guidance

This policy provides guidance for Committee Members, Group Leaders and individual members in terms of the steps Farnham u3a will take to ensure the status of a carer is clear and how the role is accommodated within the organisation.

Where relevant and possible, it will make reasonable adjustments, to accommodate the needs of members who require to be accompanied by a carer.

The frequency with which the guidance of the policy should be reviewed will be set by the Committee.

4. Risk Assessment

Farnham u3a has a duty of care to all members and this may mean that difficult decisions must be taken in assessing an individual's ability to participate either in the u3a as a whole or within individual activities. These decisions will always be taken through discussion with the individual member and his or her carer to ensure that a fair and considered decision is taken. This may include developing a risk assessment with the individual regarding their ability to participate.

It might also be the case that a member is perceived by a Group Leader to be at risk by attending a group session without a carer or assistance. This might result in a Group leader discussing with the member their concerns for that member.

If the member does not feel they need an assistant or the services of a carer and the risk to that member is still felt to be serious enough to warrant further action, then the situation should be raised with the Chair and shared with the Committee. A way forward would then be agreed by the Committee. It would be hoped that in this way a mutually agreed solution can be reached.

The responsibility for the Health and Safety of members lies with the Committee. Ultimately, a member may be asked to leave Farnham u3a if the potential liability is thought to be too great. It would be hoped to avoid the involvement of expert help, but this may prove necessary.

5. Access to Farnham u3a Activities for Carers

Farnham u3a will encourage and may require members to bring carers with them to u3a activities, as needed, with no additional cost for the carer. In most instances a carer will attend as a support to a member. There is no implied membership as a carer for a member. A carer may not attend activities alone, unless they are a member.

6. Insurance Cover for a Carer

Where a member cannot fully participate in an activity without the support of a carer then the carer is covered by u3a insurance as they are regarded as an extension of the member.

The carer will fall under u3a liability insurance unless they are a professional carer, in which case the individual will be covered by their employer's insurance cover.

If a carer wishes to take part in an activity independently (even though they are acting in their role as a carer), they must become a member; otherwise, our insurance will not cover them. Their participation even with this caveat will still be at the discretion of the Group Leader.

7. External Trips

Insurance cover becomes more complex when activities involve travel to external venues.

Firstly, obtain written agreement from the Committee or its appointed representative e.g. the Group Leader organising the trip.

Additionally, in common with our existing policy on trips, emergency contact details for **both** member and carer must be provided before departure.

Where an external trip involves a per-person cost, agreement should be reached with the organisers on how this additional cost will be met. In almost all cases it will be the responsibility of the individual member who requires a carer.

Please see para 6. above when considering attending an event. A carer cannot attend independently, nor can the role of carer be used as a vehicle for what would otherwise be a member only event.

8. Emergency procedures

Members should ensure that their carer is familiar with the relevant fire evacuation procedures at Farnham Maltings and if appropriate at any venue used by Farnham u3a. More detail about Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedures can be found on the Farnham u3a website.

9. Further information

Farnham u3a will seek additional advice and support from u3aPlus, the Regional Trustee, National Office, the national website and external specialist organisations as required.

This policy is owned by:	The Groups Team
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