

Disability & Accessibility Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

West Wolds u3a will take steps to review accessibility needs for individual members and makes reasonable adjustments, where possible, to accommodate the needs of members with disabilities and/or health related needs. West Wolds u3a recognises its responsibilities and legal obligations in ensuring, as far as is reasonably possible, that people with disabilities or health related needs are afforded equal opportunities and are not discriminated against for a reason relating to their disability and takes into account the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010.

The policy will act as a reference point for Committee Members, Group Leaders and individual members in terms of the steps WWu3a will take. The policy will also identify the parameters of the adjustments that can be made. West Wolds u3a is a membership charity and not a service provider, therefore whilst reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals can participate and can attend with carers to support their needs, there will be certain needs that the U3A will not be able to accommodate due to the level of care that an individual may need.

To this end we will take reasonable steps to develop procedures and practices that enable those with disabilities to participate fully in the organisation. WWu3a has a duty of care to all members and this may mean that difficult decisions have to 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 in order 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.

Members with disability or health related needs will be referred to as D/HRN from here onwards.

Responsibilities

Every member of the organisation is expected, and encouraged, to show consideration towards D/HRN and to help implement this policy and related procedures. Discrimination on the grounds of D/HRN will not be tolerated. If any member has any queries about this policy, please contact the Business Secretary.

Service to Members

Accessibility will be reviewed regularly annually, and reasonable steps to improve accessibility will be taken. When identifying reasonable steps, the following will be considered:

- whether taking particular steps would be effective in overcoming the difficulty that D/HRN people face in gaining access to a group or activity;
- the extent to which it is practicable for the organization to take the steps;
- financial and other costs of making the adjustment;
- the amount of disruption caused by taking the steps;
- the extent of our financial and other resources;
- money already spent by the organization on making adjustments;
- the availability of financial or other assistance.

In addition, at the monthly members meetings the front row of seats will be reserved for members who have impaired hearing or vision. General meetings will, as far as possible, be held at a well lit, fully wheelchair accessible venue, spacious enough to cope with wheelchairs and mobility scooters, with wheelchair accessible toilet and hearing aid loop system, and with a sound system in use.

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Group Leaders running groups that require a certain level of fitness and/or mobility will be asked to provide this information to members in advance so that members can decide as to whether the group is suitable for them.

Group Leaders will liaise with the Groups Coordinator where there are concerns about an individual's ability to participate.

Any changes will be incorporated into a plan where appropriate, and implemented according to a realistic timescale.

Members will not discriminate on the basis of D/HRN and will not treat a member less favourably for reasons of D/HRN. Where activities take place in peoples' homes it might not be possible to provide facilities for a D/HRN person.

Members are encouraged to:

- be aware that D/HRN take a variety of forms and are not always visible;
- offer assistance to members where necessary;
- familiarise themselves with any emergency evacuation procedures and how D/HRN members are helped from the premises;
- avoid cluttering venues with obstacles such as bags or boxes;
- treat all members with dignity and respect and bear in mind that D/HRN people have a right to our activities, just like anyone else.

DISABLED ACCESS AT THE FESTIVAL HALL

Wherever possible we aim to accommodate all members and visitors regardless of any D/HRN. If there are any special requirements not covered by the information below, members/visitors should see a Greeter (in the Blue sash) or a committee member who will be happy to help.

GENERAL ACCESS - access to the hall is DDA* compliant as the building is on the ground floor and access to the main building is via double doors.

TOILETS - a DDA compliant toilet and hand washing facility is accessible down a corridor from the main hall.

KITCHEN - is accessible through double doors from the main hall.

STAGE AREA - there is no access to the stage for wheelchairs and therefore is not DDA compliant.

* DDA - Disability Discrimination Act 2005.