

## **Knutsford u3a Guidance for Members with Disabilities**

Knutsford u3a aims to be as inclusive as possible, both to our members and to people who wish to join our organisation. We want to provide access to our activities as far as reasonably possible.

As Knutsford u3a is a self-help organisation we do not provide care or carers for members attending our activities.

If you have a disability and require reasonable adjustments to access our activities or outings please contact our **Accessibility Officer** before you join to discuss these with them.

### **Carers**

If you are unable to manage activities without help you are welcome to bring a carer /companion to stay with you for the duration of the activity. This is on the understanding that they will assist you so that you can participate. If you have mobility issues your carer/companion must be able to assist fully and should not rely on the goodwill of members to assist them.

Your carer/companion will be covered by our u3a public liability insurance, unless they are a professional carer.

Your carer/companion does not need to be a member of the u3a and may attend any activity group with you at no extra cost.

Where your carer/companion accompanies you on an outing you must pay their cost for the outing as well as that for yourself. If the venue does not charge for carers we only ask you to pay for the transport.

If you do not have a carer and rely on the goodwill of another member to assist you in accessing premises or activities, please agree this in advance with the member and let the Group Leader or Outings Organiser know.

### **Monthly Members Meetings**

We do our best to carry out most of our activities, as far as possible, in places that are accessible to people with disabilities. Our monthly Members' Meetings are held in Knutsford Methodist Church, which is fully accessible to members with mobility issues, including those who may use wheelchairs or mobility scooters.

There is an accessible toilet, and a lift for access to the upstairs rooms that are used by some Activity Groups. The Church has a hearing loop system and good lighting. Information is shown projected on to the wall, and verbal announcements are made using a microphone which connects to the hearing loop system. Members are welcome to sit in the front rows if that helps them to see and hear well. We have

Welcomers to greet people as they arrive, and they will help people to find the most suitable seat if needed.

If you have particular needs to help you participate fully in the meetings please contact the **Accessibility Officer** in advance to discuss these and we will do all we can to provide them.

### **Activity Groups**

Many of these are held public rooms that are accessible to people with mobility issues. However, some smaller groups are held in members' own homes and they may not be accessible to someone with particular needs.

If you do have particular needs either to access premises or to help you participate fully in the activity please contact the **Accessibility Officer** to discuss these.

If you are unable to attend a group of your choice because it is not accessible to you, the Group Leader or Accessibility Officer will explore other options with you. This could include the possibility of the group meeting in a different place (possibly the new member's home), or joining a group in a neighbouring u3a if their venue is more suitable. If it is the activity that is not accessible to you and not the venue you could discuss setting up a new more suitable group with our Groups Co-ordinator.

### **On outings**

Organisers of outings will research accessibility as far as reasonably possible in advance of any trip, but they cannot guarantee that the venue will be accessible to you. Please contact the organiser before booking to find out if your particular requirements can be met.

Where your carer/companion accompanies you on an outing we will ask you to pay their cost for the outing as well as that for yourself. Many venues do not charge for carers when they are accompanying a person with a disability such as a significant visual or hearing impairment.

If the venue does not charge for your carer, we will only ask you to pay for their transport. Please make sure that you tell the organiser that you will be accompanied by your carer when you book.

### **Should difficulties arise.**

Our aim is to be welcoming and inclusive to all members, and to make reasonable adjustments to the way we operate to accommodate the needs of members with a range of disabilities.

There may be rare occasions where we may not be able to provide all the particular requirements you need because they are not feasible or because they override the successful running of the group as a whole.

The leader will discuss this with you and see if there is a way round this. If we are unable to find a way to enable you to be a member of the Knutsford u3a and participate in any of our activities, we will cancel your membership and refund your membership subscription.