

## Paddock Wood u3a Shared Groups Policy

### Rationale for a shared groups policy

A shared group is one where a member of another u3a can become a member of the group without joining the parent or host u3a. The purpose of having a policy on shared groups is to enable local u3as to work together, treating everyone fairly and consistently, for the mutual benefit of all members living in an area.

### Good Practice Guide

1. The arrangement should be available specifically for groups, or those large groups who hire a hall, which are unable to recruit enough members within their own u3a to make the group viable. There should be a reciprocal arrangement with local u3as regarding the setting up of shared groups so that all members are treated equally. This should be agreed by all relevant committees and signed by a representative of each u3a with copies distributed to all.
2. It should be the group leader's decision, with permission from their committee, to open up their group to other local u3as.
3. A decision must be made on which u3a is the host or parent u3a and so 'owns' the group, however, some shared groups may be shared 'ownership' between u3as. There must also be in place agreement on ownership of any equipment and/or resources purchased for the group. Also, there should be agreement on who owns any monies belonging to the group and all monies must be accounted for by the host u3a.
4. Persons joining a shared group must prove they are a paid-up member of one of the u3as party to this arrangement by showing their current membership card to the leader. Emergency contact details should also be provided. It is the leader's responsibility to record and monitor membership of the group.
5. There needs to be agreement on hall hire arrangements, and the recording of accounts. This will be done by the host u3a.
6. If an interest group becomes oversubscribed due to this arrangement, then non-registered members would be strongly encouraged to join the host u3a, as members of the host u3a must take preference – this should be made clear to them when they initially join the group and ensures that group leaders are able to offer places to paid-up members of their own u3a at all times.
7. It is recommended that risk assessments are in place and that 'outside' members are made aware of these as well as host members.
8. Clear guidance should be provided to all u3a members as to which specific groups, within which u3as, are available. These should be advertised to members by each u3a.

### Adoption and Review

This policy was adopted on 15 April 2024

Policy review date: April 2025