



## Discussion ideas for the new committee members' workshop:

1. A chairman won't delegate jobs and tries to influence what people in various roles do, antagonising members. How would you deal with that situation?
2. A U3A discovers it has 2 constitutions – one approved by the steering committee but which hasn't been approved by National Office and an AGM and one that has been approved by both. Which constitution should the U3A be using and why? How should the situation be remedied?
3. a) A member of your U3A is becoming disruptive, embarrassing people at meetings and on trips by saying rude and ill-considered things. What should you do?  
b) If, following the initial action taken the member still does not change. What could you do next?
4. You have a member who is a wheelchair user. They cannot make some of the group meetings as the host member's house has steps up to the front door.  
  
What can you do?
5. A member likes to go on all the away day trips and brings her husband with her every time, who is not a U3A member. What are your thoughts about this?

6. A group leader is concerned about data protection and does not want their contact details put on the website or in the newsletter. Should they be worried? Why?
  
7. The chairman of a U3A committee is making decisions alone and changing the minutes to reflect his views. Is that allowable? What can you do?
  
8. A committee member was elected but repeatedly fails to attend committee meetings. The U3A's constitution does not have an action in place to deal with the situation. What should you do?



### Answers:

1. The committee have to speak to the chairman. He/She must be told that the committee is meant to be collaborative and work as a team.  
Committee members need their roles and responsibilities recognised and to be allowed to deal with them.
2. The constitution must be approved by N.O. and ratified by the members at an AGM/ EGM. This should be made available to any member who wishes to see it.  
Use the approved constitution.

3. In the first instance the Groups Coordinator and one of the group leaders for her group should try to resolve this issue informally. A meeting should be arranged with the member to talk through what the concerns are and how these need to be addressed. It is recommended that the member is given a copy of the member code of conduct. The member should be informed as to what steps may be taken were the behaviour to persist.

Were the behaviour to persist then it may be necessary to follow a formal procedure via the complaints, disciplinary or grievance procedure.

Template procedures are available via the advice section of the website.

4. Suggest a more accessible meeting place or that the wheelchair user hosts the group.  
Explore other possibilities with group leader, move somewhere else, use electronic communication, possibly get ramp if appropriate, hold meeting in another group member's house. The important point here is what is 'reasonable' for the U3A to do as the Equalities Act requires 'reasonable adjustments' to be made.

5. The husband can come once or twice but then must join the U3A or not go on the trips. The insurance will not cover him and his attendance could invalidate the insurance for the whole group.

One or two occurrences could be taster sessions, more than that, they must become a member, insurance issue, conduct random membership checks at meetings.

6. They have a right to be concerned. A generic email address could be used or a 'deputy' in the group who does not mind their contact details being used.

An individual's preferences need to be respected if their personal data is going into a public domain.

7. This is not acceptable. The chairman cannot alter the minutes, no-one can without approval of the whole committee. The committee need to address this issue with the chairman. If the Chairman is not listening then it can be useful for the whole committee to review the trustee code of conduct and documents such as the guidance on how to run meetings on the Trust website, the Essential Trustee and the Code of Good Governance. Further support, if needed, can be sought from the Regional Trustee or National Office.

8. The member should be invited to attend a meeting with two members of the committee to discuss his/her non-attendance. There may be good reasons but even if there are it may mean that right now is not the time for him/her to be a committee member. The U3A needs people who are able to commit. It should be explored as to whether or not s/he will be able to attend future meetings. If they can then the role can continue but if not then the committee should ask whether the person is willing to stand down. If they are not willing and continue not to attend then the committee may need to follow a formal procedure to remove them from the committee. The procedure is important to ensure that the committee remains covered by the insurance.