

## Notes from Meeting for O&A Group Leaders and Others: 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**Location & Time:** St Pauls Room 7, 2pm.

### Members Present

Jim McGough	Chair Crawley u3a (acting as Chair of this meeting)
Margaret Lloyd	Secretary, Crawley u3a (acting as Secretary of this meeting)
Carol Allen	Group Leader (GL), O&A 8
Isabel Baker	Member O&A Working Group Phase 2 2023
Peter Beckley	Joint Group Leader, O&A 6, until Sept 2025
Maggie Berrill	Group Leader, O&A 4
Phil Light	Group Leader, O&A 7
Janet Newson	Chair O&A Working Group Phase 2 2023
Jean Manuel	Group Leader, O&A 1
Maureen Wicks	President, Crawley u3a

### Apologies

Maureen Bufton	Treasurer, O&A 4
Graham Friday	Treasurer
Sue Pay	Group leader, O&A 6 (wef Sept 2025)
Liz Tennant	Seasonal Coach Trips Organiser (pending replacement)

### 1. Chairs Opening

The Chair opened the meeting by stating that, judging from conversations with potential and new members, the opportunity to participate in outings is an important feature in attracting people to the u3a. Whilst the current arrangements seemed to be working reasonably well, he believed there was more we could do to improve how the trips were organised, in terms of both efficiency and equity, and in ensuring that when existing group leaders stand down, replacements are available, so avoiding the any further group collapses.

### 2. Discussion on Member Participation & Planning in Advance

1. The strategy of making it clear to potential members of an O&A Group that they must be prepared to organise some of the trips seems to have failed, judging by the experience of O&A8. Carol had fond trying to get members to make suggestions for trips, let alone getting them to organise trips, very discouraging. Members simply did not respond.
2. Other O&A Leaders echoed Carol's experience, saying that over the past year or two they had also noticed a decline in the % of their members electing to attend any particular trip – whether this was due to cost-of-living pressures, members getting older, societal change imposing more pressure of older people to look after grandchildren was unclear.
3. Similarly, those involved in organising trips (including the Walks and Amblers groups) involving cars had noticed a similar drop in members volunteering to act as drivers on trips.
4. Groups which aimed to set up a programme several months in advance always found themselves having to amend the dates, either due to factors beyond the u3as control such as a venue closing down or changing its opening days or train strikes, or as a result of too few members volunteering to make it a trip worthwhile.

- O&A 7 is the only group which tried to stick to a regular day of the week (Tuesdays) though this has to be changed when a venue does not open on Tuesdays.

### 3. Trips involving nights away

It was agreed that these trips could be highly enjoyable and appreciated, and, if arranged via a third-party professional tour operator (as recommended by the Third Age Trust) do not involve an undue amount of work, since the tour operator collects the funds from members and makes the bookings.

Phil uses Tailored Travel Ltd <https://www.tailored-travel.co.uk/> for his trips.

Such trips arranged by a third party are not treated as u3a activities for financial or insurance purposes (see [Financial Policy - Delegated Decisions](#) 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023 and 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023, and [Insurance Guidance](#) section 3(c)) but the Committee has agreed to allow them to be advertised within Crawley u3a (in the Newsletters, by Beacon emails, at meetings) as condition that:

- Only u3a members attend these trips (any spouses of u3a members wishing to participate in such trips will need to become a u3a member for the relevant year, the cost of which is a fraction of the cost of the trip) and;
- The advert makes it clear how spare places, once the members of the group(s) arranging the trip have applied, are allocated. For example, places on seasonal and theatre trips are allocated on a “first come, first serve” basis and this is made clear at the time of allocation.

### 4. Decisions Made

- That Group Leaders would all open out their trips to members of other groups, when they did not have sufficient members attending from their own group to make them viable financially or in terms of organisational effort. To date, O&A Groups 1, 6 & 7 have been doing this, but not other groups. It is appreciated this involves a little extra work in terms of communications and administering the payments but:
  - O&A Group Leaders (GL)s should send any notifications advertising spare places on their trips to all other O&A GLs, for them to disseminate to their members;;
  - It is suggested that the organising GL contacts Peter Beckley asking him to set up a temporary Group for the trip on Beacon.
- GLs would inform Janet Newson when there is any change in the Group’s status on the Groups webpage i.e. whether the Group is Full or Active (recruiting). Jean Manuel confirmed that O&A 1 should be amended from Waiting List to Active, until further notice.

### 5. Closure of Meeting

Jim closed the meeting at 4pm. He thanked attendees for coming, saying that it has been useful to hear O&A GLs’ experiences and thoughts and, although little in the way of decisions had arisen, he believed that should problems arise in future this he could call on this team to find a way forward.

Margaret Lloyd, Secretary Crawley u3a, 11th May 2025

Minor amendment made 30<sup>th</sup> May 2025 to 4.1(i) to insert “all” before “other O&A GLs”.