

Crawley u3a Committee Procedures [As of 28th May 2025](#)

Guidance

These exclude matters dealt with as part of Trustees Induction ([Trustees' Handbook](#) and [Trustees' Induction Checklist](#)) or included within the [Essential Documents for u3a Trustees](#).

All the above can be found on included on the [Admin/For Trustees](#) page of the website.

Note that the **Committee Year** runs from AGM to AGM and is to be distinguished from the **Financial and Membership year** which runs 1st September to 31st August.

Key: Underlining indicates a Crawley u3a document (if not on the website then request a copy from the Secretary)

1) Key Documents for Trustees

(a) Trustees' Task Lists

1. A Trustees Task List, agreed by all Trustees, is maintained by the Secretary. This shows the ongoing tasks falling under each of the Trustee posts, both filled and vacant.
2. This list is intended to:
 - Enable new Trustees to be clear on what their responsibilities are;
 - Inform the Committee of which tasks falling under Trustee posts not filled need to be reallocated;
 - Prevent those tasks at the interstices of two operational areas (e.g. setting up website pages for new Groups) from being forgotten, or two Trustees both attempting to communicate with the same third party on the same matter.
3. Tasks performed by a support role assisting the Trustee will be included under the relevant Trustee, but if they wish other Trustees and Members to deal with the support role directly this will be made clear on the list.
4. The Task list will be made available to all Support Role holders as well as Trustees. It is recognised that it may need to be amended frequently, not least when new tasks arise. If two or more Trustees agree between themselves to reallocate tasks between themselves then other Trustees will be informed but do not need to approve the changes.

(b) Trustees Calendar

5. This is maintained by the Secretary and shows by day, for the remainder of the Trustee year and at least 6 months ahead, whichever is the longer:
 - Regular Formal Committee Meetings and Trustee Team Meetings
 - Group Leader Meetings agreed
 - All member events: Monthly Meetings, Coffee Mornings, Celebration Events, Christmas Party etc
 - Meetings of other u3a bodies (e.g. West Sussex Network) normally attended by the Chair
 - Newsletter publication dates
 - Deadlines for Trustees submitting inputs to Trustee, GL or other meetings
 - The AGM preparation timetable
 - Trustee planned holidays and other absences of four or more days

- Information on dates unsuitable for events or meetings requiring GLs or a large number of members, either because a group trip is happening on that day or it is a slot (e.g. Thursday mornings) on which a lot of Activity Groups meet.

2) Support for Trustees

(a) When starting and ceasing office

6. New Trustees, at whatever point of the year they take up office, should undergo an Induction process. A Trustee Induction Checklist exists, held by the Secretary. This covers, amongst other tasks, the relevant systems for which Trustees requires . A new Trustee should meet individually with each of the Chair, Secretary, their predecessor Trustee (if one exists) and any of the other Trustees depending upon the nature of their role.
7. For those who have ceased acting as Trustees there is a short checklist Trustee Changes on actions around revoking access to Beacon, transferring computer files, and ensuring they no longer hold any material with personal data subject to GDPR requirements etc. The Secretary should ensure this is completed (the Chairman when the Secretary steps down).

(b) Support Roles

8. Individual Trustees should be left to determine themselves the form and nature of the support they require to deliver the requirements of their role. This might be in the form of one or more support roles and/or working groups (covered under (c) below) depending upon what they consider to be most practical and availability of volunteers.
9. The Trustee is responsible for the following: (a Support Role Change checklist is available for this if required):
 - The induction of that support role
 - Arranging access to any systems required
 - Ensuring they have any equipment they require to undertake their role
 - Arranging for their appointment to be announced in the newsletter (along with the retirement of any predecessor)
 - Passing on to the Support Role/Working Group (WG) any actions or information from Committee meetings of which they need to be aware when performing their own role.
10. Similarly the Trustee is responsible for ensuring that when the holder of a support role ceases that:
 - Access to any systems is revoked
 - Any equipment or stocks in their possession belonging to the u3a is returned
 - Any GDPR sensitive data or documents they may hold are passed on to the new role holder or destroyed
 - The Trustee should inform the Committee at the next meeting (normally via their monthly report) of any new and/or retiring Support Role holders.
11. The Trustee should check with other Trustees that any new title for the support role/WG, including any generic e-mail address is not misleading to members i.e. it correctly represents the function of the role holder.
12. If it becomes apparent to other Committee members that a Trustee is experiencing problems in dealing with one of their Support Roles then the Committee should act as soon as possible to resolve the situation.

13. If a Trustee is forced to step back from their role for a period of a month or more, due to their personal circumstances, then one of the other Trustees should take over responsibility, on a temporary basis, for that Trustee's support team and ensure that its members are adhering to the Committee's standard processes and procedures. That Trustee with temporary responsibility will also take over the absent Trustee's responsibility for reporting back to the Committee on the progress of any ongoing tasks performed by the support team.

(c) Delegation to Working Groups

14. Clause 24 of our 2022 Constitution includes the following (references in paranthesis):
 - (i) *The Trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a working-group (WG) of two or more trustees but the terms of any such delegation must be recorded in the Committee minutes. Such a WG may have additional members who are not also trustees (24.1)*
 - (ii) *The trustees may [note: may, not must] impose conditions when delegating, including the conditions that:*
 - a. *the relevant powers are to be exercised exclusively by the WG to whom they delegate;*
 - b. *no expenditure may be incurred on behalf of the charity except in accordance with a budget previously agreed with the trustees (24.2)*
 - (iii) *The trustees may revoke or alter a delegation (24.3)*
 - (iv) *All acts and proceedings of any WG must be fully and promptly reported to the trustees (24.4)*
15. This implies that there are two types of Working Groups permitted by the Constitution:
 - (i) Those to which the Trustees may delegate specific powers and functions, and which must include at least two Trustees (as in 1(i) above). These will be termed Official Working Groups.
 - (ii) Those to which the Trustees cannot delegate any powers (either because they do not have at least two Trustees or because the Trustees do not wish to delegate any powers to them). These will be termed Unofficial Working Groups
16. For both types of WGs the Committee should approve brief Terms of Reference, the approximate timetable and appoint one or more Trustees responsible for overseeing the WG. There is no requirement to approve the appointment of individual members to the WG, unless it is of type 15(i) above.
17. The Responsible Trustee(s) should report back to the Committee regularly on progress made. If there are no decisions to be approved this can be brief.
18. The Responsible Trustee will be responsible for bringing to the Committee any reports and recommendations on which Trustee decisions are required.

(d) Difficulties

19. We are all human with lives and obligations outside the u3a and there will be times when an individual Trustee needs to step back for a while. Likewise at times a Trustee may struggle with the volume of work their role requires. In either case the Trustee should inform the rest of the Committee so it can consider how some of the more urgent responsibilities can be covered by others, and the Committee Timetable amended accordingly in respect of the non-urgent matters.

20. Whilst Trustees are normally expected to attend all Committee meetings (holidays and other important commitments permitting), the AGM, stand-alone Fees Approval meetings (if held), GL meetings, Coffee Mornings and Celebration Events they should not (apart from the Chair) feel obliged to attend all the monthly Friary meetings, apart from the Chair (as he introduces the speakers).
21. If a Trustee is experiencing problems dealing with the holder of a Support Role or WG for which they are responsible, then this should be raised with one or more other Trustees, who should try to suggest or broker a solution.
22. If a Trustee feels another person has acted or communicated something in a way which interferes with their own role or contradicts something previously agreed then they should try to speak with that person first to check whether their perception is accurate and to give them an opportunity to retract. Resist the temptation to send a critical e-mail copied into others. Sending a critical e-mail copied into others might be seen to breach the Trustees Code of Conduct.
23. If tension between two or more Trustees is starting to interfere with their working relationship then it would be prudent to arrange a quick call or longer meeting in an informal setting to resolve the underlying issues.

3) Communications

(a) Communications with Other Trustees and Members

24. When sending e-mails by Beacon make it clear in the subject line or at the top of the text to whom it has been sent (all GLs, all Trustees etc).
25. When posing a question or asking for some information or feedback in an e-mail make that clear, and by when, in the Subject Heading (e.g. Proposed Agenda for Meeting on 10th June: Respond with any changes by 2nd June).
26. Long and rambling emails should be avoided. The key information in an email, and the response (if any) expected, should be stated simply and clearly at the start.
27. Try to allow at least a week for any response, unless it really is urgent.
28. If a Trustee has no response to a question raised in an e-mail by another Trustee, or does not have time to respond by the required deadline, they should let the Trustee sending the e-mail know.
29. Messages concerning an event on the same day, or requiring an urgent response (e.g. approval of a purchase) within the same day should be posed via the Trustees' WhatsApp account. Use of the Trustees WhatsApp account should only be used for these purposes. E-mail is the standard means of communication.
30. Trustees should aim to check their email accounts at least twice a week and respond to any requesting a quick response?
31. If an e-mail has been sent by a Trustee to more than one other Trustees then the "reply to all" response option should normally be used when responding, unless sensitive information is being conveyed.
32. It is recommended that Trustees avoid sending e-mails to, or contacting internal Crawley u3a groups or members who normally fall under the responsibility of another Trustee's role (e.g. Secretary sending e-mails to Group Leaders) unless:

- This has been agreed in advance with the relevant Trustee, or
- Is the result of an action agreed at a Committee meeting, or
- Relates to a matter (e.g, Insurance in the case of the Secretary and GLs) for which the first Trustee is responsible.

In such cases the relevant Trustee should be copied in as a matter of courtesy.

(b) Communication with External Bodies and Persons

33. External Bodies and Persons comprise any organisation or person external to Crawley u3a:
 - To whom the Crawley u3a is legally or constitutionally obliged to report (Third Age Trust (TAT), Charity Commission);
 - With whom Crawley u3a has an ongoing financial and/or contractual commitment (venues hired, owners of software for which a licence is held, the bank, the Third Age Trust Trading Ltd, Group tutors engaged for a number of sessions);
 - Whose services Crawley u3a has agreed to use on a one-off basis in return for a payment or refund of expenses (meeting speakers, a coach company, a printing company);
 - Other community bodies with whom Crawley u3a may engage in the course of promoting its charitable objectives, and in playing its full part as a responsible provider of services for all people in their third age, whatever their background, in Crawley
34. The Trustee whose role is considered most closely aligned will be assigned to each of these External Bodies & Persons (or different sections of the body when dealing with the TAT). That Assigned Trustee will be the one who carries out any necessary reporting to, or correspondence and negotiation with, that External Body on behalf of the Committee.
35. Trustees should not contact or correspond with an External Body for which another Trustee acts as the Assigned Trustee unless authorised to do so in advance by the Assigned Trustee. On such occasions the Assigned Trustee should be copied into or forwarded any e-mails sent or received.

4) Formal Committee Meetings

(a) Constitutional Requirements (Constitution clause references in paranthesis)

36. *The quorum [for a Committee Meeting] shall be two or the number nearest to two-thirds of the total number of trustees, whichever is the greater or such larger number as may be decided from time to time by the trustees. In addition, at least two officers must be present for a Trustees meeting to be quorate (21.9)*
37. *No decision may be made by a meeting of the trustees unless a quorum is present at the time the decision is purported to be made (21.8).*
38. *The Secretary should call an additional meeting if two or more Trustees request this (21.5)*
39. *A trustee may not appoint anyone to act on his or her behalf at meetings of the trustees (17.10).*
40. *At least four Committee meetings must be held by the Trustees each year (21.3)*
41. *Questions arising at a meeting must be decided by a majority of votes. In the case of an equality of votes, the person who chairs the meeting shall have a second or casting vote (21.6 & 21.7)*

(b) Special Requirements for Specific Committee Meetings

42. The Trustees will agree on the ideal structure of the Committee (i.e. Trustee posts and titles) for the forthcoming year at their final meeting in the financial/membership year (i.e. in August or earlier) , to give plenty of time to advertise Trustee vacancies and talk to potential candidates.
43. At the first meeting following the AGM the following should take place:
 - (i) All Trustees (new and continuing) sign the Charity Commission Trustee Eligibility Form confirming their suitability
 - (ii) New Trustees sign and date the Trustees Code of Conduct
 - (iii) Agreement on the frequency (monthly, quarterly etc), the slot (e.g. last Wednesday of the month), start and finishing time, and preferred venue for the formal Committee Meetings until the next AGM (but there must be a minimum of four meetings a year – see item 40. above)
 - (iv) The new Trustees will state the progress made so far on their induction (see item 6. above)
 - (v) Agreement on the frequency of Trustee Progress Reports (see Section 5 below)
44. If any Trustee roles remain vacant the Committee will need to:
 - (i) Agree the strategy to be followed to fill these vacancies as soon as possible
 - (ii) Agree how the essential duties of the vacant Trustee roles are divided up amongst the existing Trustees until those vacancies are filled, using the current Trustees Tasks list.
 - (iii) The Committee will agree on its Aims for the year, as proposed by the Chair, will be made (a rough outline of these will normally have been included in the Annual Report and Accounts presented at the recent AGM).
 - (iv) Agree any changes to the bank mandate.

(c) Committee Meeting Agendas:

45. The Secretary maintains an outline Meeting Agenda Timetable showing the topics to be considered at each meeting for the Committee Year together with the Trustee assigned to each. This will include those topics we need to cover for governance reasons (such as the termly monitoring reports, update of policies especially the Safeguarding Policy which we are legally required to review annually) and those relating to new developments based on the proposed Committee Aims.
46. Individual Trustees contact the Secretary with any additional topics to be included. The Meeting Agenda Timetable will be updated and disseminated with the Trustees Calendar sent out by the Secretary to Trustees with each Trustees Progress Report
47. Given the time gap between Committee Meetings it will often be necessary to approve decisions (e.g. procurement, dates of all member events, significant changes to policies etc) between meetings, and this can be done by e-mail. The decision can be taken as approved once a majority of Trustees have confirmed their agreement.
48. Each meeting should include the following **standing items**:
 - (i) Apologies for any absences
 - (ii) Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes should state clearly any actions arising together with the Trustee(s) responsible for undertaking these.
 - (iii) The Latest Trustees Progress Report (see Section 5 below).

- (iv) Purchases, Procurements & Contracts for information and, if required, approval
To include requests for approval on purchases or contracts (> £100 or whatever is amount is specified in Financial Policy Delegated Decisions 5.4.3) which are not expected to require anything beyond a short discussion. Also to include the setting up of working groups on any proposed strategic contracts (as defined by the Trustee Task list) and reporting on their progress.
- (v) Other Committee Approvals Required for Matters not the subject of **Non-Standing** Items:
This is to formally approve any policies or other proposals which require formal Committee Approval (see section (M) below) but on which Trustees have already had the opportunity to comment and on which no issues have been raised which it is believed require further discussion. Trustees will be notified before the meeting of these items and will have the opportunity to object to this, giving reasons, and in such cases the policy or proposal will be moved to become a Non-Standing Item.
- (vi) Any Other Business. AOB should only be used to deal with developments occurring between the deadline for Trustee submissions (normally four days in advance of the meeting) and the meeting itself. Otherwise such matters should feature somewhere else in the agenda.

- 49. **Non-Standing items** should cover all matters requiring Committee Approval (as indicated in the Trustee Task List) and which are not to be dealt with under 48 (v) above..
- 50. To help other Trustees make it clear on any **Non-Standing Item** agenda item what is being asked of them e.g. to approve a report, to support (or not) a proposed decision, to approve suggested, to submit any comments by a particular date with the intention of bringing an amended version back for approval.
- 51. All Trustees should be informed in advance of, and given the opportunity to question, any issues which create a legal, contractual or financial obligation on the part of the u3a, subject to the financial approval limits set out in the latest version of the Financial Policy – Delegated Decisions under section 5.4.3. Whether such consultation takes place via e-mail communication or in the form of a draft copy of an agenda item depends upon the urgency and nature of the issue. In either case the decision should be formally noted at the next Committee meeting.

(d) Formal Committee Meetings: Protocols

- 52. If a Trustee knows in advance that they cannot attend a meeting then they should let the Secretary know as soon as they know this, so if a meeting is expected to be inquorate the meeting date can be changed.
- 53. Any Trustee needing to leave a meeting before the end should inform the Chair or Secretary at the start of a meeting, if not before, so the order of the agenda items can be rearranged accordingly.
- 54. The Chair should ask at the start of the meeting whether anybody has Any Other Business (AOB) and what this comprises so he can leave sufficient time.
- 55. Trustees should ask to speak ‘through the Chair’. This means putting their hand up if they wish to speak and waiting for the Chair to ask you to speak. The Chair should be vigilant in checking whether any hands are raised.
- 56. When a Trustee is presenting to the Committee they should indicate when they have finished so the Chair knows he is free to ask anybody with their hand up to speak, or to move on.

57. Trustees should avoid bringing up other matters incidental to the subject being discussed. If they believe it is important they should request it be covered under AOB, so the Chair knows to leave adequate time..
58. If a u3a member is observing a committee meeting and a matter with implications for a members' privacy is to be discussed the observer should be asked to leave the room until the discussion of that item has finished.

5) Trustees' Progress Reports (TPRs)

59. The Secretary co-ordinates these. They are intended not just to inform other Trustees of progress of individual Trustee's initiatives but are also adapted and placed on the web to update Group Leaders and Support Roles (and any other interested parties) of Crawley u3a developments.
60. **Section 1** covers each of the Committee aims for the year. Each aim is reported on in every report, even if there is nothing new to report, to keep these aims at the forefront of the Committee's attention.
61. **Section 2** reports updates on each of the standard activity areas, such as Groups, Communications, Finances, Membership etc and also covers events and meetings taking place since the previous Progress Report, and those expected to take place before the next one.
62. **Section 3** covers briefly updates from the Third Age Trust and other u3a bodies.
63. A brief mention will suffice where a matter is the subject of either an Agenda Item at the next Committee or a separate report.
64. The Secretary retains an updated draft, completing it to the best of their knowledge. It is then shared with Trustees a few days before publication, for them to amend and add to.
65. A TPR is produced for each Committee Meeting, and at intervals between, depending upon what was agreed at the start of the Committee year.
66. Timings for Submission of Documents for Committees
 - (i) The Secretary will remind the Trustees of the agenda items, and the deadline date for submission for of any items for which they are responsible. This deadline date will normally be four days before the meeting.
 - (ii) The Secretary aims to circulate the meeting material at least three days before the meeting.
 - (iii) On Non-Standing items, Trustees are encouraged to circulate any draft new or amended policies well in advance of the meeting, to give other Trustees an opportunity to submit comments and questions (allow a week for this) which can then be incorporated for the final version.

6) Content & Style of Committee Documents and TPRs

67. Avoid including an individual member's name in any Committee documents (e.g. when reporting an incident), unless this is in relation to something which would be expected to be known across Crawley u3a and/or displayed on the web e.g. announcing a new or retiring GL or Support Role holder. This is because the meeting papers and minutes are placed on the web and so available to the public. When it is necessary to include a members' name then the relevant section should be clearly indicated as being "Confidential" and the Secretary will remove that section for the version placed on the web (though a full record will be retained for future Committee use).

- 68. Avoid vague actions such as “we must think about” - state what you propose should be done next, by whom and by when. Otherwise give a list of potential options. People appreciate a list of ideas to get them started rather than having to conjure ideas out of nowhere.
- 69. Do not state “we” without it being clear to whom “we” refers
- 70. To help Trustees absorb any information:
 - (i) Avoid a series of long paragraphs. Break up text by using headings (e.g background, objectives, situation at current time, proposed next steps....)
 - (ii) Number lists of more than three or four items, rather than just using bullet point, to make it easier for others to refer to individual items.
- 71. In order to keep the volume of meeting papers to a minimum trustees should avoid, as far as possible, repeating any documents which the Trustees have received on a previous occasion or which exist on the website (but be clear as to which documents these are, their dates, where they appear on the website etc).

7) Trustee Team Meetings

- 72. These are informal meetings of Trustees taking place between the Formal Committee meetings, normally in a café or pub, arranged by any Trustee who feels a catch-up and/or an opportunity to discuss a matter in an informal setting would be useful.
- 73. Can be joined by one or more support role holders or other volunteers (but to be distinguished from Working Groups relating to specific Events)
- 74. Meetings between two Trustees for “catch-up” or general communication purposes (e.g. as when the Secretary and Chair meet briefly before a Formal meeting to go through the agenda) are not Trustee Team Meetings and are outside the scope of these guidelines.

Margaret Lloyd, Secretary 28th May 2025

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Description of changes	Date
1.0	1 st version approved	13 th Dec 2023
1.1	Addition of Items 12 & 13 Action 5 from 10 th July 2024 Committee Meeting	3 rd August 2024
2.1	1. Reordering to make the document easier to use 2. Adaptation and inclusion of sections 5 & 7 for move towards less frequent Committee Meetings as Action from 13 th Nov 2024 Agenda Item 9.3	28 th May 2025