Ashby u3a Accessibility Policy

Statement

Ashby u3a is committed to treating all people equally and with respect irrespective of any disability. We aim to design our activities, services and decision making processes specifically to encourage and support participation from all people including those who possess a disability of any kind that may restrict them in any way.

Ashby u3a is committed to making sure our group is as inclusive and welcoming as possible, and considers that no member should suffer disadvantage, or receive less favourable treatment on the basis of disability.

Practical Approaches to inclusion

Ashby u3a is open to all third-agers (Defined by the Third Age Trust not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full time employment has ceased.) and we will make sure all new members are aware of our Accessibility policy and our Code of Conduct.

Ashby u3a will take reasonable measures and practical approaches to ensure a wide range of people can take part in our activities and meetings. These may include:

- Consideration of the time of day of meetings
- Consideration of venues for meetings including:
    - Accessibility for wheelchair users and those of limited mobility
    - Access to a PA system & hearing loop
    - A location which can be reached easily by public transport and with nearby parking.
- Reminding and encouraging meeting organisers to use the provided PA and hearing loop systems
- Publicity and course material:
    - Making it easy to read
    - Making it available to people who don't have access to the internet

Venues

Since the introduction of the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995 and latterly the Equality Act 2010, buildings open to the public should have reasonable access for the disabled. We will, wherever possible, only use venues offering access to all.

Members' homes may not however have level entrance access, nor will there necessarily be sufficient room to manoeuvre a wheelchair. Toilets may be on the first floor and almost certainly will not have wheelchair access.

We will try to have a balance between groups which meet in members' homes and those which meet public venues.

Anyone with limited mobility, hearing, vision or other disability which may make participation difficult in a group which meets at a member's home should discuss with the Groups Co-ordinator and the homeowner to see whether it is currently suitable and if not, what can be done to improve accessibility for them.

We will try to keep a list of members' homes which are accessible because they have a level entrance or a wide doorway or a ground floor toilet or no internal stairs and for which the owners are prepared to allow their use as group venues.

If a house, which hosts a group which a disabled member wishes to attend, proves despite our best efforts to be unsuitable for that person, we will investigate whether there are any other options available. For example, could the group meet at a public venue or another house or could the group be hosted by the disabled member at their own home.

Although it may be possible for the group to move its meeting place to a public venue, this may be at an unacceptable cost or inconvenience to the other members of the group. The committee will consider whether the venue cost can be paid for or subsidised by Ashby u3a.

Public venues regularly used by Ashby u3a

Below is a list of venues that are regularly used by Ashby u3a. Members should check the timetable on our website or in the newsletter to see where individual groups meet.

Details of their facilities and accessibility are listed in Appendix 1 of this Policy:

Congregational Church, Kilwardby St, Ashby – used for our monthly meetings
Ivanhoe Social Club, 1 Wilfred Place, Ashby
Hood Park Leisure Centre, Ashby
Packington Memorial Hall, Packington
The Bull and Lion Inn, Packington
The Bull's Head, Market St, Ashby

Outdoor Activities

Ashby u3a welcomes everyone to participate in outdoor activities such as the walking groups. Some of the walks are strenuous and are not necessarily suitable for all members, depending on their level of fitness and/or mobility. Other walks are designed to stick to paved pathways and without any stiles.

Trips and Outings

All members are welcome to join our Trips and Outings. Some trips are made using members' own cars to car-share. If a member needs to take a wheelchair or other mobility device we will try to find a car which can accommodate it. If the member has their own adapted vehicle, they could perhaps use that and maybe share it with other members.

Accessibility to coaches, where used, will depend on the coach company and the vehicle it provides. We will attempt to find suitable transport for any member, given sufficient notice, but it cannot be guaranteed.

Old or ancient buildings visited may not offer full access to all or any parts of the building to those in wheelchairs or with limited mobility. We will endeavour to determine the level of accessibility when arranging the trip, and make sure this information is made available to members at the time of booking.

Code of Conduct

Ashby u3a has a Code of Conduct. Offensive and/or inflammatory remarks or behaviour towards persons with disability are not acceptable. These constitute harassment, and have no place in Ashby u3a. If a member sees or hears offensive or inflammatory behaviour by another member, they should raise this with a committee member.

If any member of Ashby u3a feels they have been discriminated against by Ashby u3a or any of its members or harassed at an Ashby u3a event they should raise this with a committee member.

The committee will then investigate the complaint in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedures.

Ashby u3a reserve the right in extreme cases, and after consulting with the National Office and the complainant, to refer the matter to the Legal Authorities.

Ashby u3a will support the alleged victims and the alleged perpetrators of any harassment or discrimination as well as any volunteer who becomes aware of the matter in so far as this does not compromise any enquiry or investigation into the allegation.

This policy was implemented on	30th October 2018
Reviewed and revised	13 February 2024
Venues revised	28 October 2024
Next review date	February 2027

Appendix 1

Details of the facilities at, and access to, venues regularly used by Ashby u3a. The details were correct at the time of reviewing this document but could change at any time.

The Congregational Church, Kilwardby St, Ashby.

Access:
There is a bus stop for the Arriva # 29 right outside.
There is very limited parking on-site. (Approx. 3-4 cars) A space could be reserved for disabled persons or those with limited mobility given notice.
Parking in the nearby Co-op is restricted to 1 hour free parking but thereafter paid parking for as long as required. Nearby street parking is also free but limited.
There is a ramp at the entrance to the building to enable wheelchair access to our meeting room.
There is a further ramp into the back room where refreshments are served.
The toilets are on the ground floor and accessible to all and a separate disabled toilet also available.
Audio visual:
There is a PA system and speakers are encouraged to use a microphone.
There is a loop system for those with hearing loss.
We use a projector to display accompanying images when they are available, however bright sunlight and a lack of blinds in the church can sometimes make images difficult to see even for those with good eyesight. We could encourage the church to provide more and better blinds.

Packington Memorial Hall, Packington.

Access:
Various groups meet here including the Gardening, History, Science and Craft groups.
There is limited on-site parking with one disabled parking bay. Street parking close-by can also be limited.
There is level access into and throughout the building.
Toilets are fully accessible.
Audio visual:
There is a PA system and speakers are encouraged to use a microphone.
There is a loop system for those with hearing loss.
We use a projector to display accompanying images when they are available.

Ivanhoe Social Club, Ashby

Access:
The Bridge, French and Rummikub Groups meet in a room on the ground floor.
There is free disabled parking right outside.
Wheelchair access is via a ramp to the entrance door
Toilets available in entrance lobby

Bull's Head Ashby

Access:
Used by the Scrabble Group
There is a rear car park (you pay but if you bring the ticket into the pub they will reimburse you the cost) and rear entrance is accessible from car park
Rear entrance also accessible for wheelchairs
Available room(s) to use are at ground floor level
Disabled toilet available

Hood Park Leisure Centre, Ashby (currently not used by Ashby u3a)

Access:
There is a meeting room on the first floor. There is a lift.
There are two free disabled parking bays right outside.
There is wheelchair access throughout the building.
Toilets are fully accessible.
There is free disabled parking.

Bull and Lion Inn, Packington (currently not used by Ashby u3a)

Access:
The former Quiz Group met in the pub lounge.
There is free parking but no specific disabled bays.
Entrance for wheelchairs via main door from car park
Toilets available