

# Financial Policy

## 1. Document control

### 1.1. Approval

**Adopted on:** 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026  
**Review Dates:** 13<sup>th</sup> January 2027 (Check for updates)  
13<sup>th</sup> January 2029 (Full review)

### 1.2. Version history

Version	Date	Author	Change summary
4		M Farrer	Small amendment to sections 3.1 and 4

## 2. Trustees' financial responsibilities

The trustees of Goudhurst and District u3a are responsible for:

- Safeguarding the assets of the charity.
- Identifying and managing the risk of loss, waste, theft or fraud.
- Ensuring the financial reporting is robust and of sufficient quality.
- Keeping financial records in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation (e.g. Charities Acts, Companies Acts etc).
- Preparing Annual Accounts in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation.
- The accounts should show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the u3a.

Trustees are jointly responsible for keeping full financial records. These include those of the u3a and all the interest groups, sub-groups etc., where appropriate.

To enable the trustees to carry out these responsibilities, the financial procedures detailed below will be followed.

Newly elected/appointment committee members will be made aware of their responsibilities, and the policy will be made available to members on the website.

The policy will be kept under review and revised as necessary.

## 3. Banking

### 3.1. Bank accounts

- All bank accounts are in the name of Goudhurst and District u3a and operated by the trustees.
- New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the trustees, which must be minuted.
- Changes to the bank mandate may only be made by a decision of the trustees, which must be minuted.

- The authorised signatories are the [Chairman, Membership Secretary, Speaker Organiser and Treasurer].
- All cheques and internet transfers out of the account must be authorised by two signatories.
- The signatories are responsible for examining the cheque / internet transfer for accuracy and completeness.
- The signatories are responsible for examining the payment prior to signing the cheque or authorising an internet transfer.
- All bank statements must be sent to the Treasurer directly.
- Blank cheques will never be issued.
- Whenever practical two people should be involved in counting cash receipts.

### **3.2. Online banking**

Where online operation of the bank accounts is in place only trustees approved by the committee will have access to this facility. The security of the online system is in line with the arrangements offered by [Lloyds Bank] and in accordance with the mandated approval limits.

### **3.3. Payment by bank cards**

Operation of the online banking service is under the control of the Treasurer who has full access rights and is responsible for assigning the appropriate delegate rights, as agreed by the committee and in accordance with the bank mandate. All payments are authorised in accordance with the bank mandate. Access to the online accounts may be via a card reader and personal access card or by logging on to the bank system with a personal password and access code. The issue of any bank debit or credit card in the name of Goudhurst and District u3a will be approved by the committee. The use of these cards overrides the dual control aspect of the payment authorisation process, but is permitted, where agreed in advance in recognition that online purchases for certain goods and services represents the most effective, and in some cases, the only method of completing the purchase (e.g. theatre tickets).

Goudhurst and District u3a holds 1 business debit card. This is held by the Treasurer. All transactions made using this card appear immediately on the appropriate bank account (subject to the timescales for electronic banking transactions) and are subject to review by the nominated officers through the online banking service. All such payments must be supported by an invoice or receipt preferably made out to Goudhurst and District u3a.

### **3.4. Personal debit or credit cards**

The use of personal debit or credit cards is acceptable but needs to be closely managed.

Prior approval must be given by the committee for equipment and other items to be purchased for the use of Goudhurst and District u3a or specific interest groups. In these circumstances, it may be appropriate for a member to purchase the equipment themselves and then claim the cost as a personal expense claim.

All invoices must be issued in the name of Goudhurst and District u3a.

## **4. Groups' finances**

Interest groups are expected to be self-financing and can collect such sums of money as the group members and leadership deem to be necessary to undertake their activities. The funds of these groups belong to the u3a. Groups are permitted to make any expenditure deemed necessary from funds held by the group.

The Treasurer, Group Co-ordinator and Group Leader(s) need to agree what records they need to keep of the group's transactions in order to:

- Allow the group members to understand how their monies are being managed.
- Maintain transparency and trust for all concerned.
- Minimise the risk of error and potential loss of funds.
- Allow group leaders to maintain cash floats.

In addition, Groups are permitted to credit surplus funds into the u3a Social Account where it will be held on their behalf and minuted in the Executive Committee meetings.

#### **4.1. Receipts**

To manage the handover of cash and cheques to be paid into the Goudhurst and District u3a's bank account the committee has decided that:

- Where possible deposits should be made via the treasurer
- When collecting money for a trip or activity detailed records should be kept and be available to the group and treasurer if requested.
- Cash held back for cash flow purposes will be within the u3a's approved limits (they will vary by activity).

#### **4.2. Payments**

The committee will inform relevant group/activity leaders as to the approved process for payments relating to:

- When a trip is organised by and paid through the u3a or paid directly by the members to the trip organiser.
- When payments may be deducted from activity revenue
- When payment for venues, coaches, tutors, speakers etc must be paid by the u3a.

Outside speakers should be asked to state their fees and any travel costs at the time of booking and a cheque obtained from the Treasurer.

Where the committee has agreed the use of a paid tutor, they must invoice the u3a/group as agreed.

The committee (via the Treasurer) may monitor the income and expenditure of the groups. Group leaders need to provide information, as agreed, to the Treasurer. Where groups do not comply then the committee will review as to whether the group is legitimately operating in line with the insurance and financial requirements.

#### **4.3. Social activities**

Events such as theatre trips, visits or educational days out must be charged at cost and all participants pay appropriately. The costs paid by members must cover out-of-pocket expenses.

The organiser of an event must not benefit from any discount (e.g. a free place) offered by the organisation providing the event. The value of free places must be shared out among all participants to the event.

Out-of-pocket expenses can be paid to an organiser out of the money collected for the event. As all u3a members offer their services free to the movement, the organiser(s) must not get any pecuniary reward for organising an event.

#### **4.4. Payments to other charities**

In line with charity law, a u3a cannot raise funds for another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives. Goudhurst and District u3a will make payments to speakers who have indicated that they intend to donate their fee to a specific charity but not direct to their nominated charity.

*Personal donations from members at an event are permitted.*

#### **5. Expenses policy**

Out of pocket expenses incurred by the volunteers who are involved with running the u3a will be reimbursed. Expense claims must be submitted with receipts. Expense claims will be authorised by the executive committee and no committee member should authorise their own claim. Expenses will include – with committee approval – attendance at the Trust's AGM and Conference or national/regional workshops.

All claims need to be made to the treasurer accompanied by receipts giving sufficient detail as to the nature of the expense.

Expense claims should reflect the cheapest travel option available. Travel by car will be reimbursed at the current HMRC approved rate for the actual mileage travelled. Car parking and congestion charges can be reclaimed (with receipts) but parking or other fines will not be allowed.

Overnight accommodation will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and will need the prior agreement of the executive committee.

#### **6. Membership Fees and membership of more than one u3a**

The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis. Goudhurst and District u3a is committed to keeping the membership subscription as low as possible to ensure that the u3a remains accessible to all members. Goudhurst and District u3a do not offer discounts to members of other U3A's, however they may attend monthly meetings paying the guest fee and may attend two interest group meetings before joining.

#### **7. Asset register**

An asset register is maintained which records all assets held including their initial purchase price, date of purchase, estimated nominal value and location.

It should be noted that under a receipts and payments reporting system, all assets are fully written off against receipts in the year of purchase.

#### **8. Reserves**

Goudhurst and District u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover 12 months of regular operating activity. This is considered by the committee a reasonable level for this type of charity.

Social account activities are excluded from this figure as these activities are inflated by high-cost activities such as theatre visits and days out and are entirely self-financing.