



Malmesbury and District U3A
SETTLING DISPUTES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The U3A is a welcoming and non-judgmental organisation. It should be rare for groups to experience problems or disputes but should these occur, members are asked to follow the procedures below, adopted in line with National U3A guidance. This is important as Malmesbury & District U3A is a formally constituted charitable company with trustees who have an obligation to see that the organisation is properly run.

INCREMENTAL STEPS

The Group Leader must first discuss the area(s) of concern with the individual. This is to ensure that the member is aware of the difficulty as sometimes it is possible to cause offence without realising. The group leader should tactfully indicate the behaviour that is unacceptable and ask for an immediate improvement while taking account of the member's point of view. The member should always be given the opportunity to respond. If desired, the Groups Coordinator can be present at this discussion.

If the unacceptable behaviour continues the group leader should then (if they have not already done so) discuss the difficulty with the Groups Coordinator to see whether a solution can be found. If necessary, the Groups Coordinator will intervene at this stage, perhaps talking to the member separately or asking for a joint meeting.

If the problem remains and the leader wishes to exclude the member, the committee should be informed of this decision. The committee will also require the facts as to why this step is considered necessary. These facts will be supplied by the Groups Coordinator.

APPEAL

The member has the right of appeal to the committee against a leader's decision. At least three members of the committee (preferably including the chair) will hear both sides of the dispute, attempt to arbitrate and, if necessary, make a decision on the outcome. Should reinstatement be requested, group leaders are asked to respect the decision in the wider interest of Malmesbury & District U3A.

NOTE ~ CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

In the case of theft and or other criminal offences there is an automatic right to exclude the offender and report the offence in writing. **THE COMMITTEE MUST BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY.**