

## WHAT TO DO IF YOUR GROUP GETS TOO LARGE

It is u3a policy not to exclude members from joining groups where at all possible. Therefore all groups must provide advice on their website entry to possible new members if it seems likely that the group is going to be oversubscribed.

In these circumstances you should follow these steps in sequence:

1. Inform the Groups Co-ordinator (GC) that you have members wishing to join your group who cannot currently be accommodated.
2. Make a list of the names and contact details of these individuals and tell them they will be placed on a waiting list.
3. Share these details with the GC.
4. If you already have a deputy, approach that person to see if they would be willing to take on the running of a second group. If so, announce this to the group and the GC. If that person is not willing, move on to step 5.
5. If you do not have a deputy – or one who is unwilling to take over – but feel that any other group member would be a good group leader, please approach that person. If she/he agrees, then announce this to the group and the GC. If none of those you approach is willing, then move to step 6.
6. Announce to your group that there is a need for a second or supplementary group to be formed and ask if any current member would be willing to take on its leadership. If one person is willing and this seems to be acceptable to the group, please choose this person. If two or more people should show interest, then it would be best to ask the full group (including those who may not be present on that occasion) to choose their preferred leader by secret ballot in a first-past-the-post system.
7. If still after all these attempts, no-one comes forward to be group leader of the supplementary group, inform the GC who will then approach those who have shown interest, but are not currently in the existing group.

In all cases, once a new person has been designated to take over as the leader of the second or supplementary group, please do the following:

- a. Pass on your understanding of all the aspects of being group leader to the new person. You should also direct them to the information provided for group leaders on the website.
- b. Inform the GC who will be able to provide any further back-up required by the new leader. This will probably include organising a start-up meeting for the extra group and discussing meeting times and possible venues. It may also include a meeting with the current group as some members may need to move to the newly created group, in addition to the new people, to create a balance of numbers over both groups.

If no member is willing to take on the role of extra group leader, it can be suggested to members that one of them can become the “contact” person to field web queries about the group and liaise with the GC and other members of the Committee. This may well finally get someone to come forward. This may then work as a short-term interim measure, if not being sustainable in the long run. But it can help to start up the new extra group, which with support from the GC will hopefully eventually find someone to take on the leadership.