



Guidance notes for group leaders

July 2009

Editing the Mansfield and District U3A website will be easier, both for me and for leaders wanting me to amend their pages, if the material is always submitted in a consistent way:

1. I can only accept changes via email as I'm not a fast typist and I can't take responsibility for the accuracy of group pages.
2. Please write in an informal, first-person style as if you were writing a letter to a friend, which I hope all U3Aers are, not a formal notice.
3. Your email will be copied immediately to your group page on my computer for editing as time permits and uploading to the web site in batches so please don't be disappointed if it doesn't appear within hours!
4. Please check and double-check the spelling of names, in particular, email addresses and phone numbers as my spell-checker won't recognise any errors.
5. I am using conventional English spelling so please be careful about Americanisations, such as color, organize and capitalization, which my spell-checker may not correct either!
6. My capitalisation style is conventional too, I.E. for the first letter of sentences, proper names and titles only – but never for headings or emphasis, which I will achieve through a larger type size or with colour.
7. I do not use full stops at the end of headings.
8. The editing process between your email and the web page is a publishing one, not a secretarial one, so the less layout preparation you do the better as the software will 'typeset' your text automatically into the style I'm using. (If I don't have to remove typewriter-style double spaces between sentences first!)
9. I can copy from the body of any email, and from most attachments if you prefer to send material in that way. But please do not use the word processing function of Microsoft Works or Office as these save files in the proprietary docx format by default and can only be read by the same software, which I don't have!
10. All photographs on the website are low-definition compressed jpps so that they load as quickly as possible; thus anything you send me from the lowest definition setting of your camera will be fine, as will anything from a reasonable camera phone. You do not need to edit them first.

Some dos and don'ts

Do try to write in short sentences and short paragraphs.

Do write in a conversational, chatty style.

Do use bullet points for lists.

Do keep it simple.

Do keep entries for the Interest Groups page to between 30 and 50 words and expand on that on your group page, which can be any length you want.

Do send me photos of your group doing its thing and remember that the site is about people, not places or things.

Don't assume that everyone knows what or who you mean. ("The next meeting is at Fred's home at the usual time" may mean something to somebody, but it looks cliquish to everyone else!)

Don't decorate your emails with fancy type and colour as those will delay the editing process because I'll have to strip them out first.

Don't hesitate to ask!