

Arnold U3A

Policy on dealing with the death of a member

Given the age profile of the U3A movement it is inevitable that from time to time members and former members will pass away. This can pose a problem for U3As and it is important that Arnold U3A has a policy in place so we know how to deal with this issue in what can be distressing circumstances.

First steps

How the U3A gets to know of the death of a member can vary. If the member is an active member of a group, then it is often the case that the first point of contact will be the Group Leader. If that is so, the Group Leader is asked to notify the membership secretary, so that adjustments can be made to membership records. Secondly the Group Leader is asked to contact the Committee member with responsibility for welfare issues so that a sympathy card may be sent to the family. The Group Leader could also pass on the news to other members of the group

If the notification is made to either a committee member or another U3A member, then a similar procedure is to be followed. Whoever receives notification should notify the membership secretary without delay.

Announcements

Generally speaking no formal announcement will be made by the U3A concerning the death of a member, either orally at the main meeting, in the newsletter or on the website. The reason for this approach is that to do so may become somewhat depressing for the rest of the membership if there is a steady stream of such announcements. The only exception to this rule will be if it is felt that the member has played a major role in the running of the U3A over time, by, for example, service on committee or some other such similar role and is known to the wider membership. This may well apply to former members who are no longer active in the U3A but will be remembered by many current members.

Funeral arrangements

Once the funeral arrangements are known, there is no reason why an announcement cannot be placed on the website, as this is the most accessible medium to get the message across to the general membership. Announcements of funeral arrangements will not be published in the newsletter for the same reasons as above. Who should place the announcement on the website? This can be any member who knows the relevant details, and who has access to the website, but that member must have the express permission of the family to place such an announcement. The notice will be in the name of the person posting the notice, and not in the name of Arnold U3A as an organisation.

Attendance at funerals to represent the U3A, or a more personal approach to a bereaved partner, family member or close friend, will depend on circumstances and will be a matter of personal choice for the member involved.

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