

# Group Leaders' Forum

August 2021

# Financial Position

- ❑ Finances are currently healthy and in line with Third Age Trust recommendations
  - But in 2018/19 and 2019/20 small losses occurred
- ❑ Review conducted prior to lockdown (March 2020)
  - Conclusion: Fees need to increase to offset rising venue costs
- ❑ Majority of attendance fees unchanged for many years
- ❑ Reduced Membership
  - 20% down during the pandemic
  - Could impact on group income and exacerbate the situation

## Proposed arrangement

- ❑ Our review concluded that a small increase in charges is needed
  - Majority of groups using paid indoor venues made a loss
  - Act now to prevent bigger increases later
  
- ❑ Fee for groups currently paying £1 to increase to £1.20

# Proposed arrangement

## Pre-Payment of Fees

- Payment in advance for multiple meetings
- No refunds for non-attendance
- Prepay rate per meeting to be lower than “pay on attendance”

# Benefits of Prepay

- ❑ Greater flexibility for small changes in charges
  - Also easier to predict income for planning purposes
- ❑ Reduces leader workload
  - 30,000 session fee payments were made per annum
- ❑ Reduces the need to handle cash
  - A pandemic problem in particular
- ❑ A fairer system regarding absence
  - Room charges have to be paid regardless of attendance

## Group Leader Options (By Agreement with Groups Coordinator)

- Whether or not their group uses a prepayment scheme
- Number of meetings covered by each prepay period
- Whether everyone in the group must prepay or some members are still allowed to pay separately for each meeting attendance

# Charges

Category	Examples	Current Charge	New Charge	Prepay rate (Discounted)
Non-Paid-Venue Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday Lunch Discussion</li> <li>• Walking Cricket</li> <li>• Groups meeting in Leader's Homes</li> </ul>	50p	50p	40p
Paid-Venue groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Astronomy</li> <li>• Book Groups</li> <li>• Circus Skills, etc</li> </ul>	£1	£1.20	£1
Higher Charging Rate Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needle Crafts 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>• Sewing</li> </ul>	£1.50/£2	£1.50/£2	TBA
Groups Using Paid Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardening</li> </ul>	£2.50	£3	NA
Bowls Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bowls 1 Winter</li> <li>• Bowls 1 Summer</li> </ul>	£3 Winter £2 Summer	£3 Winter £2 Summer	NA
Paid Tutor Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tai Chi</li> <li>• Yoga Groups</li> </ul>	Individually Calculated	Individually Calculated	Prepay to be the "Norm"

# SWISH Inputting

Meetings	22-Jul	29-Jul	5-Aug	12-Aug	19-Aug	26-Aug	2-Sep	9-Sep	16-Sep	23-Sep
139 - Brenda Cowslip	✓ £10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3511 - Chris Bailey	✓ £10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
122 - Gordon Banks	✓	✓	✓ £10			✓	✓	✓		✓
354 - Shirley Banks	✓ £10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
130 - Betty Nelson	✓ £10		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
63 - Fred Oldbody	✓ £10		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
133 - Jill Ratcliffe	✓ £10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
25 - Simple Simon	✓ £10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
528 - David Smith		✓ £10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
104 - James Watt	✓ £10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total Attendees	9	8	10	9	9	10	9	10	7	10
Total Session Fees	£80	£10	£10							
Bank Remittances				£100						



# Questions & Answers - 1

- ❑ Q. What happens if some members of a group want to have a pre-payment system and others want to pay each session?
- ❑ A. In most circumstances the Group Leader will make a decision for the whole group, taking into account the circumstances for that group. However, if individual members wish to act differently this shouldn't be a problem. Where most of a group pre-pays, individual members should be able to pay on a drop-in basis. Where most of a group pays on a drop-in basis, individual members should be able to pre-pay. The discount applies to pre-payment only.

## Questions & Answers - 2

- ❑ Q. Who decides how long the payment period is?
- ❑ A. The GL decides, taking into account the circumstances for that group. The payment period might be a month, a half term, a term, a year, or any other period that seems suitable for that group.

## Questions & Answers - 3

- Q. What happens if a member turns up to the first session for the group and doesn't have enough money with them to pay for the block of sessions?
- A. They pay for the block at the next session.

## Questions & Answers - 4

- ❑ Q. What happens if a member doesn't bring payment for several sessions because they never have enough money with them to pay for the block of sessions?
- ❑ A. If any member owes fees for a period of two months or more then their membership of Sand-bach U3A is automatically suspended (see Constitution, clause 5 iv)

## Questions & Answers - 5

- Q. What happens if some sessions have to be cancelled after members of a group have pre-paid?
- A. The cancelled sessions will be taken into account as advance payment for the next payment block for that group. If this is not feasible, refunds may be given.

## Questions & Answers - 6

- ❑ Q. What happens if a member misses some sessions after they have pre-paid for a block of sessions?
- ❑ A. Nothing. There is no refund. The reduced fee for the pre-payment option takes into account that most members will have an attendance of less than 100% and that venue fees have to be paid whether or not that member attends a particular session

## Questions & Answers - 7

- ❑ Q. What happens if someone joins a group partway through a block of sessions?
- ❑ A. GLs use their discretion to decide on a suitable level of pre-payment, e.g.: charging the discounted prepay rate times the number of remaining weeks. This does not mean that existing members of the group who miss some sessions can negotiate a reduced pre-payment fee

## Questions & Answers - 8

- ❑ Q. What happens if the GL prefers to run drop-in sessions, where members attend occasionally rather than every session?
- ❑ A. Pre-payment is probably not a suitable option for that group. The GL should continue to collect fees at each session, though some members may still prefer pre-payment



The End