

Ravenshead u3a: Trips Booking Policy

1. Purpose of this policy

This policy sets out how Ravenshead u3a will manage the booking, payment, and administration of day trips and should be considered in conjunction with the '*Ravenshead u3a Trip Refunds Policy*' (Appendix I) and the '*Guidance for Organising Trips*' (Appendix II). It includes all trips organised by the Trips Co-ordinator and by Group Leaders. It ensures fairness, transparency, and compliance with charity law and the Ravenshead u3a Constitution. **Trips that include an overnight stay are not included in this policy.**

2. Principles

- Day trips are run on a **not-for-profit, break-even basis**.
- All financial arrangements must comply with **charity law** and be overseen by the **Committee and Treasurer**.
- Bookings must be managed through the **Beacon system** wherever possible or other agreed process.
- Payments should be **cashless** (for preference), using bank transfer or debit / credit card, and PayPal if appropriate. Where cash is taken this should be to a process agreed by the Treasurer.
- Surpluses must be used **only for the benefit of the membership**; refer to **Appendix I, Ravenshead u3a Trip Refunds Policy** for criteria for offering a refund.

3. Advertising and opening bookings

- Trips organised for all members will be advertised via the **monthly meeting, newsletter/bulletin, website, Beacon events list emails and social media etc**
- Bookings open on a stated date and time to ensure fairness. Any variation to be agreed by the Executive Committee.
- Members must be **fully paid-up Ravenshead u3a members** including Associate members at the time of booking **and** at the time of the trip. Carers may accompany members at the **same cost** as other participants. (**NB** carers don't have to be a member of Ru3a).

- Bookings for a trip organised by a Group Leader for group members may be taken from group members first and then [offered to the wider membership](#)¹ where appropriate. However, if the GL organising the trip invites members of another group to fill any available places, such a trip is still seen as a group trip. As part of the planning, [GLs must initially contact the Trips Co-ordinator](#) to ensure their trip doesn't clash with any other planned trip.

4. Booking process

- Trips open to all members will be made available to book on Ticket Tailor on the same day as the designated Monthly Meeting with members paying the full cost up front except where the trip involves a coach, when a deposit can be taken to secure the coach booking and guage interest initially with the balance paid nearer the time. Between monthly meetings, tickets will be available to buy on **Ticket Tailor**.
- All bookings are taken in accordance with this policy and the Trip Refunds Policy as part of the terms of booking.
- Members who have booked and paid for a trip are recorded on **Beacon** by setting up a Trip Group.
- Bookings are taken **in order of receipt of payment**. If all tickets are sold, by whichever means, a **waiting list** will be maintained on Beacon. The SAT team will need to check the waiting list on TT regularly and update Beacon accordingly.
- A full balance sheet must be completed for all trips and presented to the Treasury Team or shown on the Beacon group ledger.

5. Payment

- Payment on Ticket Tailor is by credit or debit card; payment at the monthly meeting should be made by **credit / debit card, cheque** payable to the Ravenshead u3a Social Account, **bank transfer (wifi or data connection permitting)** or cash.
- The **payment reference** (in the case of bank transfer) **must include the trip name**.
- Cash payments are discouraged.

¹ If offered to the wider membership, the trip becomes a **Hybrid trip**; click the link to take you to the definition of a Hybrid trip

- Payment must be made at the time of booking otherwise the place may be offered to someone on the waiting list.
- Where a trip is organised by a group leader, they should ensure that payments to transport or service providers are invoiced to the treasurer.

6. Cancellations by members

- If a member cancels then the onus is upon them to find someone to take their ticket/place and notify the Trips Co-ordinator or, for trips organised for a group, the trip organiser. If successful, the onus is equally on those members to sort the financial arrangements between themselves. **NB** the Trips Co-ordinator or the SAT² team can provide names of people on the waiting list who may be interested, subject to them agreeing to their contact details being shared.
- If the place **cannot be filled**, no refund will normally be given where costs have already been committed.
- Exceptional circumstances (serious illness, bereavement) may be considered by the Committee or delegated officers in accordance with the Trips Refund Policy.

7. Cancellations by Ravenshead u3a

- If Ravenshead u3a cancels the trip, members will receive a **full refund** of all monies paid to Ru3a.

8. Surpluses and deficits

- Organisers must aim for **break-even**, but small surpluses may arise.
- Surpluses will **not** be refunded to individuals unless due to an overpayment and only then over a threshold of **£5 per person**.
- Any other surplus will be used for the **benefit of the membership**, such as subsidising future trips or supporting general running costs.
- Deficits must be reported to the Treasurer and Committee for review.

² SAT team = Social Account Treasurer team

9. Record-keeping and financial oversight

- All bookings, payments, refunds, and waiting list movements must be recorded in **Beacon** where appropriate and the trip organiser must provide the Treasurer with a **full financial summary** for each trip.
- All payments must pass through the **Ravenshead u3a Social Account**.
- Personal bank accounts may be used at the account holder's own risk.

10. Conduct and responsibilities

- Members are responsible for ensuring they are fit to travel and able to participate in the trip
- Members must follow any instructions given by the organiser or venue staff
- Ravenshead u3a accepts no liability for personal property or injury, or for events outside its control
- Members should carry **ICE** information on them (In **C**ase of **E**mergency details)

11. Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Committee or sooner if required by changes in charity law, Third Age Trust guidance, or the Ravenshead u3a Constitution.

u3a	Ru3a Trip Booking Policy	Ravenshead Committee
Version	Adopted	Date:
1.0		31-08-26
2.0		
3.0		

Appendix I: Ravenshead u3a: Trips Refund Policy

1. Purpose of this policy

This policy sets out how refunds will be handled for Ravenshead u3a (Ru3a) day trips to ensure fairness, transparency, and compliance with charity law and Third Age Trust guidance. It includes all trips organised by the Trips Co-ordinator and Group Leaders.

2. General principle

Ru3a day trips are run on a not-for-profit, break-even basis. Costs are calculated carefully in advance, with a small contingency, but circumstances may occasionally change resulting in a

surplus of funds. Where this situation arises, refunds will be given only in the situations described below.

3. When refunds will be given

Refunds will be issued when:-

- a) Ru3a cancels the trip for any reason
- b) There has been an overpayment or administrative error

4. When refunds may be given at committee discretion

A partial or full refund may be considered if:

- a) A member cancels due to serious illness, bereavement, urgent medical appointment or other emergency.

Such decisions will be made by the Committee or delegated officers to ensure consistency and fairness.

5. When refunds will not be given

Refunds will not normally be issued when:

- a) A member cancels and does not find another member to take their place (refer to Booking Policy which stipulates that the onus is upon the member to find someone to take their ticket/place and notify the trip organiser).
- b) The trip runs but is affected by circumstances beyond the u3a's control (e.g. traffic delays, weather).

6. Surpluses

Small surpluses may arise due to unavoidable rounding or minor cost variations.

To avoid unnecessary administration:

- a) Surpluses will not be refunded unless they are £5 or more per individual.
- b) Any surplus will be retained in the Social Account by Ru3a and used for the benefit of the membership. It is recommended that Group Leaders adopt the £5 refund threshold; however, if they choose to give smaller refunds, they must do the refunds themselves and provide a full financial statement to the Treasurer.

This is in line with charity rules and Third Age Trust guidance.

7. Method of refund

Refunds will normally be made by bank transfer.

Cash refunds will not usually be issued.

8. Transparency and record-keeping

All refunds will be recorded in Ru3a's accounts.

Trip organisers must provide the Treasurer with financial details for each trip.

9. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Committee or sooner if guidance from the Third Age Trust changes.

	Ru3a Trips Refund Policy		Ravenshead Committee
Version	Adopted	Date:	
1.0		31-08-26	
2.0			
3.0			

Appendix II: Guidance for Organising Trips

(NB: This document was originally adopted by the Ru3a committee in May 2023; it is partially reproduced here as it contains a lot of helpful clarification regarding the planning and organisation of trips; references to Booking and Refunds have been superceded by the above policies and have been left out of this Appendix.)

INTRODUCTION

It is envisaged that four types of trip might be organised:

1. **Trips** organised by the Trips Co-ordinator (TC) or other trustee **for all members** of the Ru3a
2. **Trips organised by a Group Leader** (GL) for the members of their group
3. **Trips organised by two or more GLs** for members of their groups
4. **Hybrid trips**³ – a trip which starts out as a Group trip but is not viable and is then offered to the whole membership. Administration of hybrid trips will then be assumed by the Trips Co-ordinator and the Social Account Treasurer (SAT) team, but the GL retains the lead role on the day of the trip. **All Hybrid trips are subject to the terms of these Booking and Refund policies.**

³ Consideration should be given to this definition if a trip organised by a group is opened up to the wider membership. See page 2: 'Bookings for a trip organised by a Group Leader'

GENERAL

Trips in the name of Ravenshead u3a may be organised only:

1. By the Trips Co-ordinator or another trustee open to all members using the u3a Beacon system.
2. By Group Leaders for their group members using the u3a Beacon system for their group.

In the absence of the TC or GL on the day of the trip, a member will usually be requested to act as trip assistant and will be provided with limited information and contact details (including telephone numbers) of members attending. Trip assistant is the person who keeps the list of people going on the trip and checks attendance.

The GL or TC organising the trip needs to check viability and obtain the venue's Terms, Conditions and arrangements, and risk assessments. These need to be copied by the GL to the TC or other trustee for approval before committing to or advertising any such trip. The Executive Committee is happy to support such activities provided the following guidelines have been followed.

Coach trips for large numbers using a commercial coach company can involve Ravenshead u3a in liability for large sums of money.

Where a financial commitment is required and payment by members is involved, permission must be sought from the Trips Co-ordinator or a member of the SAT Team if such an event is proposed.

A trip is defined as a visit no longer than 24 hours. Any trip lasting longer than 24 hours must be organised through a recognised Tour Operator.

All trips must be self-financing, all costs being calculated in advance.

Examples: Houses, Gardens, Museums, Art Galleries, Seaside, Eateries, Industrial sites, etc.

RESEARCH AND VIABILITY

Once a GL has decided to organise a trip they must initially contact the TC to avoid a clash or duplication and then follow these steps:

- (i) Determine dates when the venue is available to visit, the entry fees concessions, carpark charges, etc.
- (ii) The benefit of any free places must be shared between all the participating members.
- (iii) Obtain the venue's Terms, Conditions, arrangements and risk assessments for visitors and communicate them to the TC.

- (iv) Determine availability of transport on the proposed date.
- (v) Determine the budget transport costs, including a small contingency. The contingency element is important as there may be unforeseen delays and mileage costs incurred through incidents on the planned route needing a diversion.
- (vi) Based on the number of members interested, calculate the total cost of the trip. At this point if breakeven point has not been achieved, consider other options that may enable the trip to go ahead:
 - (a) Reduce size of bus
 - (b) Consider using mini bus (calculate mileage using AA route or similar)
 - (c) Consider using shared transport.
 - (d) Consider inviting a second Group to join the trip.
 - (e) Consider referring the trip to the TC who will open up the trip to the whole membership if it is thought to be viable at which point the trip becomes a hybrid trip.

Only when all these options have been exhausted then, with regret, the trip must be cancelled

ARRANGEMENTS AND BOOKING

Once it is clear the trip is viable the following steps should be carried out:

- (i) Communicate clearly to the TC the terms of the bookings/contracts required to be entered into by the Ru3a. From this stage onwards liaise closely with the TC. Firm up the booking with the transport provider for the appropriate transport. The transport provider and/or venue to invoice the Ru3a Treasurer for payment. Financial transactions must go through the Treasurer and the Ravenshead u3a Social Account.
- (ii) Inform all members who have expressed an interest in the trip, and take payment. This can be by cash for which a receipt must be given, by cheque or BACS payable to the Ravenshead u3a Social Account or through Ticket Tailor. Ensure everyone is aware that there will be no refunds following payment unless their place can be resold.
- (iii) Ask the Treasurer to pay any deposit required by the provider through the Ravenshead u3a Social Account.
- (iv) Keep a waiting list in the event of late withdrawals. If a member is unable to take up their booking they may sell their ticket to the next name on the waiting list. If there is no waiting list a member may be entitled to a refund of any entrance fees not paid in advance by the GL. Coach costs which have already been paid cannot be refunded. If the GL believes there are

exceptional reasons why a particular member should have a refund, and there is no waiting list, the circumstances should be referred to the Executive Committee for consideration.

(v) If a GL accepts cash a receipt must be given and the Ru3a cash holding procedure must be followed.

(vi) If the member requires a ticket or confirmation ahead of the visit they must provide a stamped addressed envelope with the booking payment. NB Tickets bought through Ticket Tailor will be sent via email.

(vii) A full balance sheet must be completed for all trips and presented to the Treasurer or shown on the Beacon group ledger.

COMMUNICATION

It is important that all communications about all trips to participating members must be comprehensive, clear and accurate and include trip arrangements, risk assessments/checklists, costs, deposits, refunds and if possible the contact details of the designated trip assistant for the day.

TRIPS IN SHARED CARS

If members' own cars are used to go on a trip, it is suggested that 45p per mile should be paid to the driver, and that the costs of such payment be shared amongst all those travelling (including the driver).

Example:

(a) Trip distance calculated – 40 miles

(b) Car passengers, including the driver = 4

(c) Total Cost $\text{£}0.45 \times 40 \times 2$ (round trip) = $\text{£}36$

(d) Cost per passenger $\text{£}36/4 = \text{£}9$

(e) The 3 passengers give $\text{£}9$ each to the driver.

However, it is recognised that the receipt of such payment is at the discretion of the driver.