

## **THAMES VALLEY REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2008**

### **Group 3: Interest Groups**

Leader            Clive Bray (Chinnor U3A)  
Recorder        Mike Midgley (Greater Thame U3A)

How a group starts:

- An enthusiast will wish to share his/her skills & expertise.
- A number of people show enthusiasm to learn more about a particular subject.
- Someone must be prepared to act as a figurehead for the group.
- The chosen leader must have the full support of the group and members must be prepared to actively participate.

Getting Going:

- Ensure that all the U3A members know of the existence of the group by announcing at meetings, noting in the newsletter and even advertising locally. Remember not all members attend all U3A main meetings.
- Timetable to avoid clashing with other groups.
- At first meeting find out group members expectations.
- Find out what individual members can offer.
- Be aware that there will be a range of knowledge, from beginners to improvers, right through to those with extensive know how and skills.

Running the groups:

- Decide where and when to meet.
- Frequency of meetings.
- Cost. Who pays? Groups should be self supporting but the parent U3A may give financial assistance with early meetings.
- Group leaders should be aware of Health & Safety issues.
- Try and build in variety – invite a speaker, make a visit, change the venue.
- Some groups will have a finite time and their usefulness will be over. Consider re-launching on a different day with new members.
- Don't forget the help that is available from the Third Age Trust Resource Centre.