u3a Chalfonts

CHALFONTS U3A FINANCE POLICY

Updated and adopted 2 July 2025

1.Trustees' financial responsibilities

The trustees of Chalfonts u3a are responsible for:

- Safeguarding the assets of the charity.
- Identifying and managing the risk of loss, waste, theft or fraud.
- Ensuring the financial reporting is robust and of sufficient quality.
- Keeping financial records in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation (e.g. Charities Acts, Companies Acts etc).
- Preparing Annual Accounts in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation.
- The accounts should show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the u3a.

Trustees are jointly responsible for keeping full financial records. These include those of the u3a and all the interest groups, sub-groups etc., where appropriate.
To enable the trustees to carry out these responsibilities, the financial procedures detailed below will be followed.
A copy of this policy will be given to all trustees on their election/appointment to the committee and made available to members on the website.

The policy will be kept under review and revised as necessary.

2. Banking

2.1 Bank accounts

- All bank accounts are in the name of Chalfonts u3a and operated by the trustees.
- New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the trustees, which must be minuted.
- Changes to the bank mandate may only be made by a decision of the trustees, which must be minuted.
- The authorised signatories are the Chairman, Treasurer and Finance Officer. This responsibility cannot be delegated.
- Any cheques must be signed by two signatories. The signatories are responsible for examining the cheque for accuracy and completeness.
- A signatory is responsible for examining the payment documentation (purchase invoice etc.) prior to signing the cheque or authorising a bank transfer.
- All bank statements must be sent to the Treasurer directly.

2.2 Online banking

Only trustees approved by the committee will have access to this facility. The security of the online system is in line with the arrangements offered by NatWest and Lloyds Banks and in accordance with the mandated approval limits.

2.3 Payment by bank cards

Operation of the online banking service is under the control of the Treasurer who has full access rights and is responsible for assigning the appropriate delegate rights, as agreed by the committee and in accordance with the bank mandate. All payments are authorised in accordance with the bank mandate. Access to the online accounts varies from bank to bank and may be via a card reader and personal access card or by logging on to the bank system with a personal password and access code. The issue of any bank debit or credit card in the name of Chalfonts u3a must be approved by the committee.
There are currently no debit or credit cards in the name of Chalfonts u3a.

2.4 Personal debit or credit cards

The use of personal debit or credit cards for interest group activities is not recommended. Permission must be sought from the Treasurer where a group feels that there is no other viable way to make payments.
Prior approval must be given by the Treasurer for equipment and other items over £25.00 to be purchased for the use of Chalfonts u3a. In these circumstances, it may be appropriate for a member to purchase the equipment themselves and then claim the cost as a personal expense claim.
All invoices must be issued in the name of Chalfonts u3a.

3. Groups' finances

Interest groups are expected to be self–financing (other than any agreed subsidy for room/accommodation hire/gratuities) and can collect such sums of money as the group members and leadership deem to be necessary to undertake their activities. The funds of these groups belong to the U3A. The Treasurer, Finance Officer, Group Co-ordinator and Group convenors(s) need to agree what records they need to keep of the group's transactions in order to:

- Allow the Treasurer to keep accurate accounts for presentation to the AGM, for discussion with the trustees and to meet regulatory requirements.
- Allow the group members to understand how their monies are being managed.
- Maintain transparency and trust for all concerned.
- Minimise the risk of error and potential loss of funds.

3.1 Receipts

To manage the handover of cash and cheques to be paid into the Chalfonts u3a bank account the committee has decided that:
Group convenors will not normally pay sums due by issuing their own cheque or paying online through their own bank account.

Where applicable receipts will need to be given to group convenors or acknowledged by email.
Where net sums are being paid over this needs to be fully demonstrated to the Treasurer.

3.2 Payments

In order to share the banking, payment and accounting workload, with effect from 1 October 2019, Chalfonts u3a operates two separate bank accounts, one for Member Outings and the other for member activities using CSPCC and/or the CSP Leisure Centre and general administration.
The committee (via the Treasurer and the Finance Officer) will monitor the income and expenditure of the groups. Group convenors need to provide regular information, as agreed, to the Treasurer and Finance Officer. Where groups do not comply then the committee will review as to whether the group is legitimately operating in line with the insurance and financial requirements.

3.3 Paid tutors

Where the committee has agreed the use of a paid tutor, they must provide evidence of their self-employed status and invoice the u3a as agreed. Convenors of groups using paid tutors will ensure funds are paid to the u3a to cover the cost of the tutors. Tutors will be paid by the u3a Finance Officer on receipt of an invoice.

3.4 Member Outings account – NAT WEST

The objective remains that all member outings are self-funding and that in theory the member outings bank account, subject to timing of payments and receipts, will have a zero balance. In practice there will often be surpluses or deficits on individual activities and payments and receipts may overlap financial years.

The account with NatWest will be for member outings, for banking, payments, accounting and reporting for member outings e.g.
Excursions
Theatre Trips
Garden Visits
London Walks
New Experiences
Textiles
Annual Walking Weekend
Ad hoc activities

BACS is the preferred payment method for members and for supplier invoices/expenses related to such activity. Any invoices / payment requests for these activities should be directed to the Treasurer via the group convenor or their representative. The NatWest bank account will be used only for these activities. The Treasurer may produce standardised forms for group convenors to complete in order to support the monitoring of financial expenditure and income from the above interest groups.

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Outings such as theatre trips, visits or educational days out must be charged at cost and all participants pay appropriately. The costs paid by members must cover out-of-pocket expenses.
The organiser of an event must not benefit from any discount (e.g., a free place) offered by the organisation providing the event. The value of free places must be shared out among all participants to the event.
Out-of-pocket expenses can be paid to an organiser out of the money collected for the event. As all u3a members offer their services free to the movement, the organiser(s) must not get any pecuniary reward for organising an event.

3.5 Member Activities and Admin Account - LLOYDS

Income includes: Membership subscriptions, Gift Aid, member activity hire and tutor cost contributions, Riviera donations, teas, miscellaneous and any non-member activity income.

Payments include: venue hire, Third Age Trust charges and conference, speakers, IT, publicity, newsletters, membership and administrative costs, reimbursement of expenses

The Lloyds account will be used for member activities, admin receipts, membership subscriptions, Gift Aid, hire cost contributions, Riviera donations, teas, miscellaneous and any non-member activity income.

Outside speakers should be asked to state their fees and any travel costs at the time of booking which will be reimbursed by a BACS payment made by the Treasurer or Finance Officer.

All reimbursement requests for admin related to activity groups should be submitted for payment through this account. The Finance Officer will maintain this account and any receipt and payment requests should come to the Finance Officer.

This bank account will include transactions which contribute to the annual financial surplus or deficit.

4. Authority Levels

4.1 Finance Officer: any invoice or payment over £1500 needs prior authorization from a second appointed signatory. This should be in writing (usually an email) and a hard copy be retained, alongside the invoice, for audit purposes. The Finance Officer may also pay invoices from CSPCC and Everyone Active for room hire without further authorisation.

4.2 Treasurer: any invoice or payment over £3,000 needs prior authorization from a second appointed signatory. This should be in writing (usually an email) and a hard copy be retained, alongside the invoice, for audit purposes.

5.0 Bank Mandates

Any cheque payment requires two signatures. At present the Chalfonts u3a only has cheque facilities through Nat West. At present Cu3a do not use cheques for payments, all payments are made through BACS.

The appointed signatories for cheques and on-line activity are:

Chair
Finance Officer
Treasurer

6.0 Payments to other charities

In line with charity law, a u3a cannot raise funds for another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives. Chalfonts u3a will make payments to speakers who have indicated that they intend to donate their fee to a specific charity but not direct to their nominated charity.

7.0 Expenses policy

Out of pocket expenses incurred by the volunteers who are involved with running the u3a will be reimbursed. Expense claims must be submitted with receipts. Expense claims will be authorised by a member of the Executive Committee (Officer) and no committee member should authorise their own claim. (Treasurer's expenses to be authorised by the Chair; Chair's expenses to be authorised by the Treasurer; Finance Officer's expenses to be authorised by Chair). Expenses will include – with committee approval – attendance at the Trust's AGM and Conference or national/regional workshops.
Expense claims should reflect the cheapest travel option available. Travel by car will be reimbursed at the current HMRC approved rate for the actual mileage travelled. Car parking and congestion charges can be reclaimed (with receipts) but parking or other fines will not be allowed.
Overnight accommodation will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and will need the prior agreement of the executive committee.

8.0 Membership Fees

The membership fee is reviewed annually. Chalfonts u3a is committed to keeping the membership subscription as low as possible to ensure that the u3a remains accessible to all members. There is no discount offered to members who belong to more than one u3a.

If someone is a registered carer (and proof is provided) of a paid up Cu3a member, then their membership is free.

9.0 Reserves

Chalfonts u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover six months of regular operating activity. This is considered by the committee a reasonable level for this type of charity and is in line with The Third Age Trust recommendation.
The Outings account is excluded from this figure as these outings are inflated by high-cost outings such as theatre visits and are entirely self-financing.

Related documentation
The following documents are available on the Chalfonts u3a website www.chalfontsu3a.org.uk to support this policy:
Finance for convenors

u3a	**BANKING AND PAYMENTS PROCESS**	**Chalfonts u3a**
Version	**Description of changes**	**Date**
1.0	COMBINING FINANCE POLICY AND BANKING AND PAYMENTS PROCESS INTO ONE DOCUMENT	2 JULY 2025