Cestria u3a at Chester le Street guideline on carers, accessibility for members within a volunteer-led organisation.

Core Policy on Carers and Companions

- **Inclusivity & Access:** Cestria u3a strives to take all reasonable steps to make sure members with physical, cognitive, or medical needs can participate safely in interest groups.
- **Carers Are Welcome:** If a member cannot confidently or safely participate in activities independently, they are explicitly encouraged to bring a carer.
- Members should assess their own abilities before choosing a walking group to join. Having a carer accompany members on the walks needs to be arranged/discussed with the walk leader before the day of the walk and will depend on the circumstances ie: The member needs the ability to complete the walk with the group.
- **No Extra Fees:** Accompanying carers or companions are usually **not required to pay fees** or entry costs for the activity or group they are attending within the u3a. They also do not have to be official u3a members.
- **Insurance Coverage:** For informal carers (such as family members or friends), the public liability insurance provided by the national charity, The Third Age Trust, covers them while they are attending a u3a activity.
- **Professional Carers:** If a member brings a professionally employed, paid care worker, that professional is **not covered** by u3a insurance and must carry their own individual liability policy.

Limitations (What Members Cannot Expect)

- **Members Are Not Carers:** The u3a operates on a peer-led, self-help model. **Group leaders and fellow members are not trained or insured to act as carers** or provide personal care, medical management, or physical assistance.
- **Individual Responsibility:** The responsibility for arranging personal care or mobility support during normal group sessions, trips, or holidays rests entirely with the individual member and their family.

What to Do Next

If you or a loved one needs to bring a carer to a session:

1. **Notify in Advance:** Contact your specific interest group leader or local group's coordinator beforehand so they can hopefully accommodate an extra space or complete a quick personal risk assessment.
2. **Contact** details can be accessed using our website. Find the group you would like to access, tap the blue highlighted group then the blue highlighted group leader's name and fill in the form to send to the group leader. https://cestria.u3asite.uk/groups/