



### New member information

#### **What is the U3A?**

1. The U3A movement is non-religious and non-political movement. It is open to all in their 'third age' – being a period in life in which full-time employment has ceased; there is no age limit.
2. Each U3A is an independently managed mutual aid organisation which is a member of the Third Age Trust and as such must adhere to the guiding principles of the U3A movement. Each U3A is a registered charity and is subject to regulation by the Charity Commission and HMRC (as regards Gift Aid). All activities must be in furtherance of our charitable objective which is:
  - the advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development.
3. Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; there is no limit. There is no distinction between learners and teachers, no payments are made to members for services rendered to any U3A. Learning is for enjoyment, no qualifications are required or provided.
4. Members promote the values of lifelong learning and should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to do so can join and take part in U3A activities.
5. Each U3A is self-funded with membership subscriptions and managed by an elected committee of members. Costs are kept as low as possible. Interest group leaders and many other volunteers take on roles to provide as wide a range of activities as possible and help U3A activities run smoothly and safely.

#### **Member Responsibilities and Code of Conduct**

6. U3A members are expected to conduct themselves within the movement's guiding principles. In particular:
  - Members should know, follow and promote the principles of the U3A Movement,
  - Members must always act in the best interests of Southwell U3A and the U3A Movement, strive to uphold its reputation and never do anything which could bring Southwell U3A or the U3A Movement into disrepute or expose it to undue risk,
  - Members should use Southwell U3A's resources responsibly and only to further its stated charitable objects/purposes,
  - Members should reflect the current organisational policy of Southwell U3A, regardless of whether or not it conflicts with their personal views,
  - Members should abide by Southwell U3A's procedures and practices,
  - Members should treat each other with dignity and respect at all times.

7. Members are responsible for themselves and must be capable of taking part in U3A activities independently. Although Southwell U3A is a caring organisation, it is not a care provider – it does not provide a personal care service, nor does U3A insurance provide any personal accident insurance. If a member recognises that they can no longer take part in their chosen activity independently then subject to committee approval, they may bring a carer or companion with them on activities who does not have to be a member of the U3A.

### **The Committee's role**

8. Each U3A is managed by a committee of up to 12 members who are also the trustees of the charity. The committee of Southwell U3A strives to ensure that:
- Our U3A conforms to the principles of the U3A Movements and adheres to the guidance issued by the Third Age Trust and regulatory bodies,
  - Our U3A is a vibrant and welcoming organisation,
  - Our U3A encourages members to get involved and take on roles helping to manage and run the U3A,
  - Our U3A's finances and resources are managed effectively so that as wide a range of activities as possible is available to members,
  - As far as is reasonably possible, U3A activities are accessible to all members and are safe,
  - Our U3A complies with its statutory obligations in reporting to regulatory bodies.

### **How you can help your U3A**

9. Maintaining the effective operation and vibrancy of Southwell is entirely dependent on support from members who help to run the organisation. All the roles are voluntary and include:
- Management committee, including the roles of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer,
  - Trips committee,
  - Social committee,
  - Membership team,
  - Monthly meeting organiser and speaker seeker,
  - Monthly meeting welcome, sound & IT and refreshment teams,
  - Newline production team,
  - Interest group leaders,
  - Assistant treasurers,
  - Webmaster and Beacon administrator (Beacon is our membership administration system),
  - Electrical equipment safety team
10. If you would like to help to run our U3A (previous experience is not necessary), please contact the Chair, who will be able to point in the direction of the member leading the team concerned. If you would like to start a new interest group, please contact our New Groups Enabler who will be able to guide you through the process to set up a new group.
11. And finally, to find out much more about our U3A, how to contact members of the committee, the interest groups that are available and how to go about joining a group, please visit our website at <https://www.southwellu3a.com/>



**Learn, laugh, live**

## **Principles of the U3A Movement**

**The U3A Movement is non-religious and non-political and has three main principles:**

### **The Third Age Principle**

- Membership of a U3A is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full-time employment has ceased.
- Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a U3A.
- Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a U3A can do so.

### **The Self-help Learning Principle**

- Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; by the members, for the members.
- No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.
- There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all U3A members.

### **The Mutual Aid Principle**

- Each U3A is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the U3A movement.
- No payments are made to members for services rendered to any U3A.
- Each U3A is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.
- Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the U3A movement.