

u3a

Barnsley & District

Members Handbook May 2021



Learn, laugh, live

WELCOME

Our U3A is a community of people that enjoys learning and socialising together and who, by keeping their bodies and minds active, live life in their third age to the full. Learning is at the heart of our organisation – it is about doing things that you are interested in, not for qualifications or material rewards but for the sheer joy of discovery and personal achievement. In our groups there is a lot of laughter and a welcome for everyone with an understanding that everyone has something to share and something to learn.

WHAT IS THE U3A?

U3A is a self-help organisation for people no longer in full time employment. It provides educational, creative, leisure and personal development opportunities in a friendly environment. It consists of local U3As all over the UK which are independent charities and are run entirely by volunteers. Local U3As are learning co-operatives which draw upon the knowledge, experience and skills of their own members to organise and provide interest groups in accordance with the wishes of the membership.

The Third Age Trust (National Office)

The Third Age Trust is a representative body for U3As in the UK. It is both a limited company and a registered charity. It underpins the work of local U3As by providing educational and administrative support to their committees and to individual **members** and assists in the development of new U3As across the UK. It is managed by a National Executive Committee (NEC) which consists of a Chairman, **two** other officers and 12 representatives from the Government regions in the UK. The Third Age Trust is funded mainly by annual subscriptions paid by member U3As on a per capita basis, with the occasional grant for specific projects. U3As are independently managed charitable associations with their own constitutions. Membership of the Third Age Trust is a requirement in order to use the U3A name and logo. As a member of the Third Age Trust, U3As agree to abide by the objectives and principles of the U3A movement.

Yorkshire and The Humber Region

Barnsley U3A is part of the Yorkshire and The Humber region which has over 22,000 members. They organise network events, training days, summer schools and special showcase events. A Regional Trustee represents the region on the NEC and is available to support the region's 52 U3As.

BARNESLEY U3A

Barnsley U3A was created in 1996 and is a charity organisation with over 1100 members. There are currently over 120 groups providing a wide range of social and personal development opportunities throughout the year. All activities are run by member volunteers who are unpaid for the work they do. As a charity organisation we are registered with the Charity Commission and we have our own constitution and an elected committee who are Trustees. Our constitution is available to all members who wish to see it and is on the BU3A website. The Constitution and our various Policies can be found on the website under "Documents":

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee exists to oversee development and ensure that the original principles and constitution of the organisation are adhered to. We have a committee of up to 12 people, voted for by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. This includes the obligatory offices of Chair, Vice-Chair, Business Secretary and Treasurer. All members of the committee have specific roles within it, e.g. Membership Secretary, New Members Secretary, Development Officer, Website Manager. The committee meets monthly to cover administration, discuss matters that have arisen and to consider opportunities to enhance and extend the range of learning and social activities which make up our U3A. Committee members are also Trustees of Barnsley U3A and accountable to the Charity Commission. Being on the committee has many rewards but there is also some commitment required. Information on the role of each committee member is available on the BU3A website.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Treasurer maintains ongoing accounts which are examined annually and presented to the membership for approval at the Annual General Meeting held in June. A copy of the current accounts is made available at the monthly meetings. A summary of accounts is sent to the Charity Commission with an annual report of our U3A. These are available on the Charity Commission website.

MEMBERSHIP & GROUP ADMINISTRATION

The **BEACON** system is a U3A software package which we use to maintain membership and group records. The database is maintained and operated within the strict governance of our privacy policy and GDPR guidelines. We ask all members and especially coordinators to cooperate with us to ensure that both personal and group records are updated as necessary.

MEMBERSHIP COSTS

Our current membership fee is £12 per annum which runs from April to March. This covers membership of different groups, insurance, membership fees to the Third Age Trust and the publication of **The Buzz** magazine. Each time members attend a group they are asked to donate £1 towards ongoing costs of the organisation; there may be a small extra charge for refreshments and materials or equipment

NEW MEMBERS LINK MEETING

Every third Monday of the month, we hold a meeting specifically to welcome our new (and potential) members. This informal and friendly meeting provides an ideal opportunity to introduce new members to each other and to explain the basics of how our U3A works and how they can join their preferred groups. All new members are encouraged to come along.

GROUPS

We have a wide range of groups, all being equal in the pursuit of knowledge and skills. Current groups can be found on the Website and are listed in the quarterly Buzz. An example of a typical weekly programme of meetings can be found on the inside back cover.

There are two ways in which a group can be formed. Sometimes a few members will express a wish to pursue a subject – we would then ask for volunteers to act as Coordinator. Alternatively, a member may volunteer to coordinate a group in which they have a particular interest or skills. Proposals for new groups are put to the Development Officer for approval. New groups require approval for both financial and insurance considerations. Coordinators Guidelines published on the Website outline the role and responsibilities of being a coordinator. The Development Officer assists the launch of new groups and provides ongoing support and advice to all groups.

GROUP WAITING LISTS

Unfortunately, there are occasions when Groups are unable to accept new members and are flagged as “full”. This can be for a variety of reasons but typically will involve venue capacity and Health & Safety considerations. When this situation arises, we operate a **Waiting List Policy** which can be viewed on the website. This aims to ensure that we deal with group applications in a fair and chronological manner.

HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR U3A

Barnsley U3A is a co-operative learning organisation. All members are valued and will have something to offer. As new members begin to see the benefits of joining the U3A and enjoy the social aspects of being part of a group, they may choose to get more involved.

By helping your U3A you will enjoy the reward of feeling valued as a team member working together with others enjoying a social, shared activity. In addition, you will make new friendships, gain knowledge and skills and generally broaden your horizons.

So, how can you help?

- Join an interest group – groups are at the heart of U3A and by participating in the activities and experiences on offer you are helping to keep our U3A vibrant and interesting. Every group will have a variety of roles for individual members according to their personal skills.
- Be a Group Coordinator – do you have a special skill or interest that you would like to share? A Coordinator is not necessarily a teacher or tutor – he or she may be learning at the same pace as the group but has the enthusiasm to coordinate the programme.
- Offer support in a wider sense – if you have **administrative**, technical or IT skills, for instance, you can offer these to the Committee in a support role for specific events, website development or in the production of The Buzz.
- Get involved with the Social or Travel Committee – if you enjoy social activities and outings, and like organising, this could be for you.

THE BUZZ MAGAZINE

Barnsley U3A is rightly proud of its quarterly magazine, The Buzz. It is a full colour publication which keeps members up to date with everything they need to know about the organisation, from group news and developments to social activities; from members' news to messages of support and encouragement – many with photographic evidence! Every member* is entitled to receive a copy, either by collecting it from the monthly meeting, Penistone Drop-In or Barnsley Age UK shop, opting to read it online or by having it posted (at a cost to the member). Members are asked to opt for one of these on joining. **One per household*

FACEBOOK MEMBERSHIP

Barnsley U3A has its own Facebook group, which is only available to, and seen by, its members. Current members may apply to the Facebook Coordinator to be admitted to the group.

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 of 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

MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

U3A members are expected to conduct themselves within the **movement's** "guiding principles".

- Members are expected to know, follow and promote the Principles of the U3A Movement at every opportunity.
- Members must always act in the best interests of Barnsley U3A and the U3A Movement, strive to uphold its reputation and never do anything which could bring Barnsley U3A or the U3A Movement into disrepute or expose it to undue risk.
- Members **are** expected to use Barnsley U3A's resources responsibly and only to further its stated charitable objects/purposes.
- Members are expected to reflect the current organisational policy of Barnsley U3A, regardless of whether it conflicts with their personal views.
- Members are expected to abide by Barnsley U3A's procedures and practices
- Members are always expected to treat each other with dignity and respect at all times.

A typical weekly programme of activities
see BU3A website for current timetable

Day	Morning	Afternoon/Evening
Monday	Bird Watching Crown Green Bowling (March – October) Family History (Priory) History Local History Recorders Spanish Introduction Ten Pin Bowling Calligraphy	Board Games (Penistone) Book Forum (Group 1) Card Making Cosmology Country Dancing (Group 1) Italian for Beginners New Members Link Monthly Meeting Photography Snooker Tai Chi
Tuesday	Book Forum (Group 2) Crown Green Bowling, Ardsley Crown Green Bowling, Penistone Cycling Drawing Francophile (French) French Language and Culture Motorbike Club Painting for Pleasure Patchwork Projects, Penistone Racketball Tuesday Walking Group	Bridge Choir Classical Studies (Group 2) Stories for Pleasure Table Tennis One Club Tuesday Gardeners
Wednesday	Art for Beginners Crown Green Bowling, Ardsley Family History Quilting Bee Sew Much to Do Walking Cricket Wednesday Ramblers	Board Games/Chess Country Dancing (Group 2) Creative Writing Family History Conversational French Literature Music for Pleasure Ukulele (Stringalongs)
Thursday	Brushstrokes Bus Pass Walkers Crown Green Bowling, Ardsley Flutes Galore Golf Guitar Motorbike Club Nature Quest Old Blowers (Brass Instruments) Spanish Conversation Ten Pin Bowling Thursday Gardeners Thursday Walk Thursday Long Walk Walking Cricket	Canasta Curry Night Dodworth WW1 Memorial Project Conversational German Italian Night Jewellery Singalong For Fun Poetry Workshop Theatre Quizmasters
Friday	Badminton Classical Studies (Group 1) Crown Green Bowling, Ardsley Stitches Needlecraft Walking Group, Penistone Walking Football Dodworth	Art Appreciation Art Group, Penistone Classical Music/Opera Crafty Chat, Penistone Every Craft, Alder Close Flix at Six Movement to Music Photoshop Sequence Dancing Video and Media Creation
Saturday	Crown Green Bowling, Millhouse Green	
Sunday	Sunday Strollers	

I believe we should
celebrate as loudly
as we can the talents,
experience and expertise
of our members. Tell
your world about what
we do, how successful
we are and what a
difference this movement
has made to our lives

Pam Jones, Former National U3A Chairman

USEFUL WEB LINKS

Barnsley U3A: www.u3asites.org.uk/barnsley

Yorkshire and The Humber region: www.yahru3a.co.uk

The Third Age Trust: www.u3a.org.uk

Charity commission: www.gov.uk/governmentorganisations/charity-commission

(under 'find a charity' you can search for our U3A

using our registered charity number – 1077654)