

New Members Joining Information

Dear Member,

Welcome to the Chatteris u3a.

This information sheet has been compiled to help you become familiar with the u3a structure and understand how we are organised. We hope that you will enjoy your membership and quickly become involved in those activities which may be of interest to you.

The u3a Movement

The u3a is a self help volunteer organisation for people no longer in full time employment. It provides educational, creative and leisure opportunities in a friendly environment. It maintains Charitable status, and is registered as an Educational Charity at National level. Each local u3a, such as Chatteris, is affiliated to the National u3a organisation and is run in a similar way, but being affiliated to a central body allows the wealth of the whole to be available to the few. So for instance there is a copious library of learning aids (mainly DVD) available from the “head office” which financially would be beyond individual groups. In addition it enables third party liability insurance which covers all **Members** whilst engaged on a u3a activity, and to the Trustees and Committee Members whilst they work for the u3a. This is funded by each affiliated u3a branch paying a capitation charge. Currently the rate is £4.00 per person per year and is included as part of your membership fee.

The u3a National Office also publishes a magazine five times a year which is titled `*Third Age Matters*`. It is very informative and full of topics concerning the u3a movement. The total price is £3.60 for all five copies and includes postage.

Chatteris u3a was formed in August 2012, initially with 60 members, and is a charity funded by Member’s subscription. As with all u3a our Constitution is designed to maintain charitable status and clearly shows the “management” structure. The officers and Committee are elected each year at the AGM to manage day to day affairs.

At the heart there is an open meeting each month. Currently this is held at the King Edward Community Centre on the third Friday from 10.30 until 12.30. We start promptly so **please arrive early enough to sign in and be seated**. The meeting opens with any relevant news announcements followed by a refreshment break. This is a good time to meet other Members and make new friends. After the break there is a talk on one of a large variety of subjects by an invited Speaker for approximately an hour. These meetings are of no cost to Members, although many make a donation towards the cost of refreshments.

Throughout the year Chatteris u3a organises several day trips and outings*. These vary in length and can be to places of interest or entertainment, sometimes an early start is essential to arrive at the venue in time. A programme for the year is usually announced well in advance and payment can be made during the refreshment break of the monthly meetings. Many trips “sell out” quickly, so Members are encouraged to book early.

** Please be aware that **only u3a Members** are covered by the third party liability insurance during each trip/outing.*

Chatteris u3a currently supports over twenty five special interest groups where volunteers lead a range of activities. The range is wide, from activities like walking or table tennis, through computing to creative writing. Many Members support more than one special interest group whilst some join the u3a just to participate in one group. As a new Member please participate in as many as you wish and if you feel able, start your own.

We have a monthly newsletter titled, ‘*Chatterbox*’, to keep our Members up to date. This is published and sent to your email address midway between the open meetings, so it always carries important diary reminders alongside member generated news. There are hard copies available at each open meeting for the few members who do not have email. The Chatterbox editor is always pleased to receive suitable articles and group photos from members for inclusion in each edition.

Finally, on our web site you can find just about all that is going on and documents such as the Constitution, Membership joining forms and facility to make enquiries direct to Committee Members.

Please take a look.

Chatteris u3a web address <http://u3asites.org.uk/chatteris>

u3a Trust web address <http://u3a.org.uk>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/u3auk>

Enjoy