

HISTORY OF u3a

Our founders envisaged a collaborative approach with peers learning from each other. The u3a movement was to be self-funded, with members not working towards qualifications but learning purely for pleasure. There would be no distinction between the learners and the teachers – everyone could take a turn at being both if they wished.

From its beginnings in 1981, the movement grew very quickly and by **the early 1990s**, a u3a was opening every fortnight. u3as grew in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and in 2008 membership was increasing by 11% every year. **2010** saw our membership hitting the quarter million mark. **At the end of 2016** the u3a movement reached the milestone of 1,000 u3as celebrated by a conference with speakers including Eric Midwinter – one of the founders of the u3a movement. Today, our movement includes over 400,000 u3a members in more than 1,000 u3as and is continuing to grow every day.

