

Why Join U3A?

The experiences of some of our members

“My husband and I moved to Fordingbridge a few days after we retired 6 years ago. Once the work was done on updating and re-decorating our house, we looked around for local groups to join and having heard about the U3A, found that there were U3As in neighbouring towns but not in Fordingbridge.

However, a year after our move, the Fordingbridge & District U3A was formed and we have been members since its inception. Being members has allowed us to take part in a variety of activities such as bird watching, history, languages, book groups and many others, some of which we might not have had the opportunity to enjoy without the U3A.

Despite the word ‘University’ in its name, joining the U3A need not necessarily involve studying, homework or exams and it therefore suits our different personalities. Whilst I enjoy researching and putting some effort into projects, my husband is happy just to read up on a subject if needed and go with the flow. Because most of his working life involved non-stop pressure, my husband is happy to take a more relaxed view of life in retirement, whereas I feel the need to keep my brain turning over.

Although belonging to some of the groups requires members to make some effort, most of the Fordingbridge groups are very relaxed about how much each person contributes. Obviously, the more you put in, the more benefit you get from the activity.

We have also found that many people we meet on our holidays are also members of the U3A and have had many interesting discussions about how their groups are organised.

Most of all, being members of the U3A has enabled us to settle easily into a new area, to feel part of the community and has subsequently led to new friendships and social activities outside of the U3A.”

Joyce and Terry

“I joined the U3A in February last year as I had been recently widowed. I am a local person but my time was taken up being a carer. I felt I should join something and went to my first meeting. There was no room in the reading groups so found myself offering to take on Group 3. I had no experience of reading groups but I jumped in with both feet. We started off with four women but now have six and we get on well and have an enjoyable time. We have made new friends and do outside things together. Our age range goes from 58 to 85 –

[that's me] but this has made no difference at all; we are all pals together. We read one book a month by mutual consent, discuss it and give marks out of ten, we have had only two failures. In future we have decided that each member will choose a book by author, we have a list made out for the future, we tend to read modern fiction.

I would advise any person on their own to join U3A, I have joined other groups and seem to have very little time to spare. It is necessary to keep our minds active as long as we can.”

Ann