

Welcome Pack

Cupar u3a

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Introduction



“U3A shows the value of communities of interest and learning which are not defined by age, or by past experience, but instead are defined by the experiences still to be explored”.



Thank you for joining us. Our u3a gives you opportunities to develop your interests, make new friends and have fun. During these uncertain times, demand to be part of the u3a movement is as high as ever, with people looking for new ways to keep connected with each other and keep up their cultural, educational and social activities.

Our amazing members have stepped up and found new and creative ways to keep connected with each other and continue their learning. You will see in this pack – there are many examples of new projects, ideas and shared skills and learning that our members are taking part in.

In this pack you will find what’s available in our u3a including access to interest groups and communication platforms. You will also have access to the national Third Age Matters magazine, to the national online newsletter and various social media sites.

For more information about what we offer, go to our website at u3asites.org.uk/trustu3a/groups

Local u3a information

All about us

Cupar u3a was launched on 22 April 2009 and draws on members from across North East Fife. We have a membership of over 240 people who share interests across 40-plus different activity groups. Our members have a wide range of differing skills which are generously shared with others to provide a platform for members to learn new interests and take part in exciting pastimes.

Each local u3a operates as an independent organisation with its own constitution and committee. Our committee provides a framework for individual Group Contacts to work with their interest groups as stand-alone activities. Cupar u3a is affiliated to the national body, the "Third Age Trust", which provides guidance and resources to local groups in a secure and friendly way.

Interest groups

Cupar u3a boasts over 40 interest groups where members can choose from a wide range of activities, including, languages, sport, walking, cycling, music, art, wine tasting, creative writing, poetry and many more. See our website for full details.

Groups meet in local public venues or members' private houses and where a group is considered over-subscribed, new groups are encouraged to start up with the aid of existing experienced members. We have monthly open meetings which are held in Cupar Corn Exchange where we have a programme of interesting talks and a chance to chat with other members. Other events are held throughout the year to support local initiatives and to introduce ourselves to new

Contacts

We are very keen to maintain members' personal details secure and use the National u3a Beacon System to correspond with our members.

Individual members may speak with their groups directly but if you have something you are particularly keen to undertake and wish to start a completely new group then you can do this by contacting our membership secretary via the website. Members will then be contacted to gauge interest for the new group and the information passed on to you.

Please look at the website for further information:

<https://cupar.u3asite.uk/>



**From Walking to
Talking, Gardening to
Cookery, Yachting to
Yoga, Current Affairs
to Supper Clubs – the
choice is endless and
determined by each
local u3a**



History

1981

beginning of movement

2010

membership reach
quarter million mark

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.



Ethos and Principles

The Principles of the u3a Movement

The u3a movement is non-religious and non-political and has three main types of principle:

Lifelong Learning

- Membership of a u3a is open to all people who have retired from full time work
- Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a u3a.

Self Help

- 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.

Benefits of u3a membership

Benefits of joining a u3a

"Learn, Laugh Live" is the u3a motto and our members certainly do that. Many are in the later phase of their life but are ready to accept new challenges and to seek new interests.

It is encouraging that whilst a lot of our members have been with Cupar u3a for many years, we are regularly enrolling new members who see the following benefits to joining us.

Stay active, keep learning and have fun.

Get out to meet face to face – learning together and making the most of life.

Access to online learning, training and resources to inspire you. Attend learning events and talks for free.

Meet other people with similar interests: learn new things and share your skills.

Joining a u3a is a great way to find and develop new interests and make great friends in a relaxed environment. It doesn't cost much to join – our annual subscription is only £15