

u3a

Perth

Information for New Members



Welcome to Perth u3a ...

As a new member, finding your way in an organisation is sometimes not easy. This leaflet will help you find out how Perth u3a is organised and what it has to offer.

You can find out more on our website...

www.perth.u3asite.uk

Sessions

Our u3a year (or session) runs from August to July each year. No matter the time of year when you join us, you will be invited to renew your membership for the next session every July.

Group meetings are generally held from September to April, though some groups, such as the walking groups and other summer activity-based groups continue to meet over the summer months.

Full annual membership is £28. If you join in April, May, or June, the *Summer Membership* fee is £10. Joining in July is again £28 and gives you membership for the following 13 months.

Programme

We publish our programme for each session in August. All members receive a copy printed or via email when they join or rejoin.

It contains:

- a list of our 70+ Interest Groups, when and where they meet, and contact details for group leaders
- committee members names and contact details
- details of our guest speakers and topics
- the dates of open meetings and interest group meetings



Open Meetings

Open meetings are held on the Monday of “Week 1” (see page 4) with a break for Christmas. All members are welcome and “Open” means that you can bring friends or relatives as guests. For safety reasons, we ask everyone to sign in.

We meet in the main body of St Matthews Church in Tay Street. This is a great opportunity to meet other members. Before the meeting you can buy hot drinks and snacks in the foyer area then take a seat in the warm and welcoming space set out with tables and groups of chairs (no hard pews or cold winter mornings here!) Meetings begin with the secretary’s updates on forthcoming events and other news. We then have a guest speaker presentation on a fascinating topic – you can find out what it is, and who is delivering it from your programme.

The final meeting, usually in early May, is our AGM but we still have a guest speaker. Doors open at 10:00 with tea and coffee available and business starts at 10:30. Most speakers allow us to broadcast their talk live via YouTube if you’re unable to attend in person, and the recording remains available online for a week or so afterwards.

New Member Liaison

All committee members will be happy to answer your questions but please get in touch with our New Member Liaison contact (see your Programme) if you are puzzled by anything or need further information.

Interest Groups

We have 74 Interest Groups which vary in size from just a handful of members to over 50. Any member may belong to any number of groups all covered by our annual Membership Fee. Interest Groups meet in venues across Perth as well as in members' homes or in the great outdoors. Many groups meet in our "home base" Unit 7, in the NCOC Annexe in Glasgow Road (the red sandstone building opposite Lidl.)

For some groups, the size of the venue sets a limit on the number who can attend. Some activities are suitable for only a small number of participants, for example, Book Groups (so we have 5 Book Groups!)

A Group Leader usually keeps a waiting list if more members want to join than there are spaces. Sometimes this leads to a second or even third group starting for the same interest area. The Groups Coordinator maintains a list of groups that are currently "full". Sometimes a new group starts during the session and is announced at open meetings and in our News Roundup.

The programme contains a list of Groups – remember that although you might have been attracted to u3a by just one Group, you can join many groups of different types and expand your interests, activities and friendships.



Joining a Group

All Group Leaders (or their representatives) attend our registration day so you can get information about a group that might interest you from them. You can also sign up for any group that has spaces for new members. Existing members of a group can rejoin a group before registration day providing they tell the group leader in advance. If you can't attend registration day, you can ask another member to sign up on your behalf. Otherwise, it's first come, first served!

Registration Day is held on a Monday in late August or early September at St Matthews Church, Tay Street. The date is in the programme. Registration starts at 10.00 am and tea and coffee is available.

During the session – You can join any group with spaces at any time during the session – just contact the group leader. If the group is full, just make sure your name is added to the waiting list.

Four Week Cycle

Group meetings are organised on a 4-week cycle (Week 1, Week 2 etc.) not monthly. This means that some groups may have two meetings in the same calendar month. A few groups meet more than once in the four-week cycle, for example, Tai Chi and Ceilidh Dancing.

The programme tells you when a group meets, for example, Monday in week 2 at 2.30 pm. The separate sheet sent with the programme shows the specific dates, for example, 12th September, 3rd October, 28th November and so on.

Committee

Perth U3A has a committee of trustees consisting of office bearers and executive members. We hold monthly committee meetings, usually on a Tuesday morning in the week prior to each open meeting. If you wish to bring an item to the attention of the committee, please contact the Secretary perthu3asecretary@gmail.com

Committee members are listed in the programme, together with their role and contact details. Our Annual General Meeting is your opportunity to comment on the running of the organisation and to elect members of the committee and is usually held in late April or early May.

Social Activities

We have a social activities programme including a Christmas Lunch, quizzes and visits to local events and attractions. These are open to all members. Full details are usually announced at open meetings and circulated afterwards in the regular News Roundup. Interest Group meetings often include an opportunity for chat with coffee or tea.

Sharing Information

If you can't come to open meetings, there are other ways to keep up-to-date. Information about our meetings and groups is added regularly to our website www.perth.u3asite.uk You can contact committee members and group leaders via the website.

Our News Roundup is based on the information given by the Secretary at open meetings. Group leaders will share the contents of News Roundup with any members who don't have internet access.

You can receive the u3a's free magazine *Third Age Matters* by post. TAM is published nationally five times a year by our national organisation, the The Third Age Trust (or TAT) and contains information of interest to u3a members. You can opt in or out of receiving it at any time by contacting the Membership Secretary.



Beacon Database

We store members' contact details in an online database called Beacon. This system is made available nationally and over 500 local u3a groups use it. Access to our information is controlled and restricted to members of Perth U3A dependent on their role (e.g. our Secretary can access more information than a Group Leader.) We also store information about groups and group membership on Beacon.