

Learn Laugh Live with

u3a
Perth

Information for New Members



Welcome to Perth u3a ...

As a new member, finding your way in an organisation isn't always 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 1st August to 31st July each year and the full annual membership fee is £28.

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

Groups generally meet from September to April, though some groups, such as the walking groups, continue to meet during the summer months.

No matter what time of year you first join us, you will be invited to renew your membership in July for the coming session. You **must** be a member **before** regularly participating in any of our Interest Groups and Events.

Programme

We publish our Programme at the beginning of each session. All members receive a copy when they join, either by email or by post.

It contains:

- a welcome from our Chair
- the dates of our Open meetings and details of our guest speakers and their chosen topics
- the names of our committee members, a description of their roles and contact details
- brief details of our 70+ Interest Groups including contact details for group leaders.



Open Meetings

Open meetings are held on the Monday of 'Week 1' (see page 3) with a break for Christmas. All members are welcome and can bring friends or relatives as guests. For safety reasons, we ask everyone to sign in.

We meet in the main body of St Matthew's Church in Tay Street. You can buy refreshments in the foyer area beforehand and take a seat in the warm and welcoming space set out with tables and chairs. Doors open at 10:00, so there's an opportunity to meet and chat to other members before business starts at 10:30. 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 who is speaking and what it's about from our website or your Programme.

Most speakers allow us to broadcast their talk live via YouTube so why not listen in if you are unable to attend? The recording is available online for a week or so afterwards. The final meeting, usually in early May, is our Annual General Meeting.

New Member Liaison

Whilst our committee members and group leaders are always happy to chat and answer your questions, there is a designated New Member Liaison contact (see your Programme under 'Your Committee'). Please get in touch directly if you need additional help or further information.

Interest Groups

We have 70+ Interest Groups that vary in size from a handful of members to more than 50.

Many of our groups meet on 'home turf' in Unit 7, at the NCOC Annexe in Glasgow Road (opposite Lidl). Others meet in venues across Perth, in members' own homes and in the great outdoors.

As a member you can join as many groups as you wish, but please remember that the size of a group may be limited by the venue, the subject matter or simply by logistics.

Where necessary, group leaders usually operate a waiting list and offer places as they become available. If there's sufficient interest in an existing group and a new group leader can be found then a new group can also be created. Our Groups Co-ordinator can help with this.

Sometimes a completely new group starts during the session and is announced at an Open meeting and in our News Roundup.

Your Programme contains a list of groups – remember that although you might have been attracted to Perth u3a by one particular group, you can join any number of groups and in so doing expand your interests, activities and friendships.



Joining a Group

All group leaders (or their representatives) attend our Registration Day, so you can ask about a group that might interest you directly. You can sign up for any group that has spaces for new members at the same time. 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 at St. Matthew's Church, Tay Street, Perth PH1 5LQ. The date is on our website. Registration starts at 10.00 am and refreshments are available beforehand.

You can join any group with spaces at any time during the session, just contact the group leader. Remember that if a group is full, your name can be added to the waiting list.

Four Week Cycle

Group meetings are organised on a 4-week cycle (Week 1, Week 2 etc.) rather than 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 groups page on our website tells you when a group meets, for example Monday in week 2 at 2.30 pm. The separate Meeting Dates Ready Reckoner shows the specific dates. So in our example this would initially be 7th September, 5th October, 2nd and 30th November.

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 AGM is your opportunity to comment on the running of the organisation and to elect members of the committee and this is usually held in late April or early May.

Social Activities

We have a programme of social activities including a Christmas lunch, quizzes and visits to local events and attractions. Open to all members, full details are usually announced at Open meetings, publicised in our News Roundup and by email and on our website. Interest Group meetings often include an opportunity to chat with a coffee or tea.

Sharing Information

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

Our News Roundup is a written version of the information given by the Secretary at our Open meetings. Group leaders will share the contents of News Roundup with any members who can't attend or don't have website access.

You can receive the u3a's free magazine *u3a matters* by post (or see it digitally on line). It's published five times a year by our national organisation, The Third Age Trust (or TAT) and contains information of interest to u3a members. You can opt in or out of receiving it by post at any time by updating your preferences on the members portal or by contacting the Membership Secretary.



Beacon Database

We store members' contact details in an online database called Beacon. This system is made available nationally by TAT and over 500 branches of the u3a now use it. Access to this 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.