



INFORMATION SHEET FOR NEW MEMBERS

North Walsham U3A members wish to offer you a very warm welcome to our branch of the University of the Third Age. We hope you will find this information useful. If you have any queries or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Committee or Group Leaders via the website (www.northwalshamU3A.org) or using the telephone numbers printed in the programme card which has been given to you.

University of the Third Age (U3A) is a self-help organisation for people no longer in full-time employment and provides educational, creative and leisure opportunities in a friendly environment. Although each local branch operates in its own way, all branches use the knowledge, skills and experience of their own members to set up and run special interest groups according to the wishes of the members.

How does North Walsham U3A work?

We hold a general meeting for all members, with a guest speaker or other entertainment or activity, on the first Friday of every month in the Roman Catholic Church Hall, 4 Norwich Road, North Walsham, NR28 9JX. Members arrive at 2.00 p.m., the meeting starts at 2.15 p.m. and ends at 4.00 p.m. This monthly meeting provides an opportunity for Committee members and Group Leaders to bring everyone up to date with the latest news and is also a very pleasant social occasion. More information about groups and activities will be displayed on the notice board, often giving members the opportunity to sign up for activities that interest them. Tea or coffee and biscuits are provided at each meeting. At your first meeting our “meet and greet” members are available to introduce you to other people, so that you are not left on your own, and to answer any questions you may have.

The Activity Groups

A list of groups currently operating is set out in the annual programme and on the website. If you are interested in joining any of them, please contact the Groups Coordinator for more information. Where there is room in a group you will be welcome to join, but please be aware that for some of the groups there may be a waiting list. If there are any problems, please contact the Groups Coordinator, Peter Phillips, on 01692 218517 or email peterbphillips@aol.com.

No-one needs a qualification to lead a group, although some knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject is obviously required to get things going. Some groups meet in the homes of the members. However, some groups need to hire larger premises or special facilities and in these cases group members are required to make a contribution towards the costs. Tea, coffee and biscuits are usually provided by the organiser and group members make a contribution to the cost.

How much participation is required?

Every member decides on their own level of involvement with the U3A and the activities on offer. The following will give you some idea of the options available:

- You may choose to attend all or some of the monthly general meetings as mentioned above. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided at the monthly meetings, for which there is currently no charge. However, members take it in turn to help with putting out cups etc and with washing up. You may be asked approximately once a year to take a turn at this.
- You may join one or several of the groups, which cover a wide range of interests.
- If an interest is not featured within our current groups, then any member is welcome to set up and lead a new group. If you do not wish to lead a group, then maybe once you have found other interested members one of them may be willing to lead. If you wish to find out more about starting or leading a group, please contact the Groups Coordinator, who will be willing to give you help and advice. Please be aware that in some groups, members take turns to research and present a topic to the group or to organise an activity.

- A raffle is usually held at the monthly general meetings. Members often donate prizes and tickets are sold at the start of the meeting. Any profits made from the raffle go towards the cost of speakers, hire of the hall, etc.
- If you wish to suggest topics or speakers for monthly meetings, please speak to the Programme Secretary or other member of the Committee.
- You may, perhaps when you have been a member for a while, wish to stand for election to the Committee. Current Committee members will be happy to give you advice and information about the roles and responsibilities of becoming a Committee member. If you are willing to stand for election, please let a member of the Committee know by the end of September, as the Annual General Meeting takes place each October.

Facilities

North Walsham U3A has equipment and facilities which can be made available for use by groups. Please contact a member of the Committee if there is anything you require.

Website: www.northwalshamU3A.org

Members are encouraged to make use of the website to keep up to date with what is going on. If you have any problems, queries or even suggestions about improving the website, please contact the Website Manager at nwu3awebmgr@gmail.com.

Membership Entitlements

- A copy of the quarterly national magazine “Third Age Matters” is sent to members by post and this also provides the opportunity to participate in advertised national events.
- The national organisation offers many other opportunities that may interest you, such as conferences and workshops. Please see the website www.u3a.org.uk
- A branch newsletter is distributed at the beginning of each month. To keep costs to a minimum, your copy will be emailed to you. Only members without access to email will receive a printed copy, which will be available to collect at the monthly general meeting. If you are unable to attend or another member is unable to collect it for you, then the newsletter will be posted to you.

Subscriptions

The present subscription is £15 per year, which runs from September to August. The full subscription will be charged to members joining in the first six months of the membership year. Those joining in the second six months will be asked to pay £7.50. You will receive a personal request (preferably via email) to renew your subscription in July/August each year. If you are already a fully paid-up member of another branch of the University of the Third Age and can produce a current membership card for that Branch, you may become an Associate member of North Walsham U3A. The annual subscription will then be £12 as you will not be required to pay the capitation fee twice to the national office.

Membership Policy for North Walsham U3A

All U3A branches make their own rules and policies to suit their members. The following rules have been adopted by North Walsham U3A:

- You may enrol as a member of more than one U3A but you cannot serve on the Committee of more than one U3A.
- Members of other U3A's are welcome to attend the monthly general meetings of North Walsham U3A as guests on production of a valid membership card.
- To participate in North Walsham U3A special interest groups, you must be a fully paid up or Associate member of North Walsham U3A.

Finally – a warning!

There is only one problem with joining the U3A – it can become addictive! There is so much to become involved in, the group topics are so interesting and meetings so enjoyable that you may have to exercise self-discipline to avoid running out of time each month! **Welcome to North Walsham U3A and please enjoy yourself!**

Discussed and agreed by the NWU3A Committee on **15th July 2019**.