

# THE FOUNDING PRINCIPLES OF THE U3A MOVEMENT

## Our Vision

Our vision is to make lifelong learning, through the experience of the u3a, a reality for all in their third age.

## Our Mission

Our mission declares our purpose as an organisation and serves as the standard against which we weigh our actions and decisions. It is to:

- Facilitate the growth of the u3a movement
- Provide support for the management and learning in u3as
- Raise the profile of the u3a movement
- Promote the benefits of learning in later life through self-help learning

## The Principles of the u3a Movement

The u3a movement is non-religious and non-political and has three main principles:

### The Third Age Principle

- Membership of a u3a is open to all in their third age which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full-time employment has ceased.
- Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a u3a.
- Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join the u3a can do so.

### The Self-Help Learning Principle

- 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 Aid 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 subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.
- Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the u3a movement.