

WEST CHESHIRE RURAL MEMBERSHIP POLICY AND MEETING ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE 2025

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 when members have the time to spare.
- 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 a 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 members, for 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 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.

In short, West Cheshire Rural u3a adheres to the fundamental principles that all members have knowledge and experience to share; groups are encouraged to share knowledge, skills, expertise and research; there are no upper or lower age barriers but is open to anyone with time to spare.

Membership of West Cheshire Rural u3a entitles individuals to:

- Attend any of the groups – a list of these is available on our website (address below)
- Indemnity insurance cover (but not individual accident cover)
- Receive the quarterly magazine “Third Age Matters” sent out from the national office
- Receive the monthly newsletter/ bulletin
- Attend the monthly general meeting.

Should potential new members wish to try out the monthly meeting and any one of our groups before making a commitment to becoming a fully paid up member, they will be allowed one visit to the monthly meeting and one attendance at a group session to give a “taster.” There will not be a room hire charge for the “taster” session but there might be equipment costs associated with the activity.

Potential new members should be aware that membership charges are £18.00 p.a. May to April.

Many of West Cheshire Rural u3a’s activities take place in venues that need to be paid for such as The Barbour Institute, St. Alban’s Church Community Room and other local establishments.

The following rules apply:

- Members attending a group activity in a paid venue are expected to share the costs. These fees will be payable to the group leader who passes the funds collected to the Treasurer. (There is no charge for non-members on their trial session before joining).
- Members attending a group activity in some free venues such as Alison’s or other coffee shops, cafes etc will be expected to buy a drink by the venue operator.
- Members attending a group activity in a member’s home are expected to make a contribution towards refreshments provided by the host.

Renewing Your Annual Membership

- A reminder to renew your annual membership is sent to all members via email or post in March. A reminder is also printed in the March edition of the Bulletin. It is expected that members will renew their membership by March 31st.
- Any members who have not renewed membership by March 31st will receive a further reminder via email or post during the first week in April. The April edition of the Bulletin will also contain a reminder to renew.
- A Final Reminder email or letter will be sent to members deemed to have lapsed their membership in the third week of April with a notice that their membership will be noted as “fully lapsed” should no renewal have been made by May 1st.
- Should no renewal have been received by June 30th a member will be deemed to have resigned.

All enquiries for membership should be referred to the Membership Secretary via the West Cheshire Rural u3a website: [West Cheshire Rural \(u3asite.uk\)](http://WestCheshireRural.u3asite.uk)