

August 2026



Welcome Pack

Basingstoke – Old Basing u3a



1. A Message from the Chair

Welcome to the Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a! Since we first opened our doors in **1999**, our mission has been to bring people together to **Learn, Laugh, and Live**. We aren't "the management"—we are simply members like you who want to ensure everything runs smoothly. Whether you are here to pick up a new hobby or find a new social circle, I am delighted to have you with us. Please do come and say hello at our next meeting!

Richard Field, Chair

2. Our History & The u3a Movement

National Scale: We are proud members of a UK-wide movement consisting of over 1,000 local u3as and nearly 400,000 members.

What is the "Third Age"? It refers to the time in your life after finishing full-time work or raising a family—the age of "doing what you love."

The u3a Ethos: We follow a peer-led model where members share their own skills and knowledge; there is often no distinction between those who learn and those who teach.

3. Finding Your Perfect Fit (Group Styles & How to Join)

The main reason you have joined our u3a is probably to enjoy the fantastic social, learning and physical activities provided by our groups. All groups are self-managed and peer-led.



*Members of our Line Dancing group performing at the
2025 Sherfield Village Fete*

Discover Our Group Styles

- **The "Activity" Groups:** Hands-on and active – think walking, cycling, badminton or exercise groups.
- **The "Table-Top" Groups:** Seated and social —perfect for bridge, board games, or craft groups (with plenty of chairs and tea!).
- **The "Discussion" Groups:** Deep dives and debates – including book clubs, history, or science groups

- **The "Out & About" Groups:** Visits to local galleries, theatres, or historic sites

Don't see what you're looking for? We can help you start a new interest group!

How to find and Choose Your Groups

1. [Printable A5 Schedule](#) which you can easily print off
2. The [4-week Grid](#) to view exactly when different groups meet
3. Explore Group Details: To read more about specific groups, visit the [Groups Page on our Website](#)

How To Join a group via the Members Portal

Joining is simple! Once you have chosen a group, follow these steps:

1. Log into the [Members Portal](#)
2. Select the Groups option
3. Scroll down to the group you are interested in
4. Click on the downward arrow
5. Click on the link to join the group

Note: If a group is full – **please still click the link to join the Waiting List**. This notifies the Group Leader via email, helps us to track demand and allows us to open up a 2nd 3rd branch of that group, if needed,

Prefer not to use the tech? If you need help accessing the Members Portal or wish to join a group without using it, simply email membership2@basingstokeu3a.org

4. The "Monthly Meeting" Calendar

- **When & Where:** 2nd Wednesday of every month, 1:30 pm, Popley Fields Community Hall.
- **What to Expect:** Tea/coffee on arrival, guest speaker starts at 2:00 pm and a great opportunity to meet committee members in person.

Important note for those joining in August or September – there is no monthly meeting in August, and the meeting for September will be held in the Main Hall at Queen Mary's College and will be on Friday 18th September.

5. Practicalities & Governance

The "boring but important" details that keep things running smoothly.

Communication: You will hear from us regularly through **The News Edit**.

Membership Fees: Your annual fee covers our insurance via the Third Age Trust, local venue hire, and administrative costs. **Renewal Months:** September and October (but you can renew in advance from 1st August).

Our Constitution: The formal document that governs how our local branch is managed.
[Read it here.](#)

Policies & Procedures: Guidelines on privacy, health and safety, and member conduct.
View them here: <https://www.basingstokeu3a.org/policies>.

6. How We Roll (Our Simple Guidelines)

We want everyone to have a brilliant time, so we have a few "golden rules":

Be Kind: We're all here to learn and have fun. A little kindness and a smile go a long way!

Pitch In: The u3a is run by members, for members. Helping clear away teacups or sharing a skill makes a huge difference.

Keep in Touch: If you can't make a group meeting, drop the leader a quick note. It helps them manage the biscuits and the seating!

Respect Privacy: Keep fellow members' phone numbers and emails just for u3a business.

7. Meet the Team

The Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a is kept running by a dedicated bunch of volunteers. We aren't "the management" we're just members like you who want to make sure everything runs smoothly!

Our Committee

Chair – Richard Field

Vice-chair – Cynthia Condliffe

Secretary – Sandra Leach

Treasurer – Phil Ryan

Membership Secretary – Anne Dawson

Groups Facilitator – Janet Field

New Group Development – Elaine Budd

Systems & Webmaster – Charles Miller

PR and publicity – Lyn Franklin

Events Manager – Mary Charles-Head

Venue & Assets Manager – Kate Manton

Beacon Manager – Position Vacant

To see our photos and be able to contact us, please click on this link:

<https://www.basingstokeu3a.org/committee-members>

8. Good to Know (FAQs)

How many groups can I join?

There is no limit! You are welcome to join as many groups as you have time for, provided there is space available.

What if a group I want to join is full?

Please join the waiting list anyway! If there is significant demand, our Groups Facilitator will look into helping members start another branch of that interest group.

Do I have to pay extra for groups?

Membership covers the big stuff. For individual groups, you might occasionally chip in a pound or two for a cup of tea, though (a small number of groups charge a fee for specific things (like a Pilates Instructor).

Can I bring a friend to a meeting?

Yes! We welcome visitors to our Monthly Meetings - it's a great "try before you buy" option. To attend regularly or join a specific interest group, they will need to pay to become a member.

I'm not very "tech-savvy"—how do I use the Portal?

Don't worry! Many of our members felt the same way at first. We provide step-by-step guides on our website and you can always email membership2@basingstokeu3a.org for offline help.

9. Speaking "u3a": A Quick Jargon Buster

The Third Age: The time in your life after you've finished full-time work or raising a family. The age of "doing what you love."

The Portal: Our online system where you can view group choices, join groups, update your personal details, and renew your membership.

The News Edit: Our monthly newsletter delivered straight to your inbox to keep you in the loop

Beacon The secure software we use behind the scenes to keep your records safe and send out our emails.

10. Connecting & Enquiries

- **Website** [Groups Page on our Website](#) — Visit here for the "Groups" to see our active sessions.
- **Facebook:** [Facebook Basingstoke Old Basing u3a](#) — Follow us for updates, photos, and event reminders.
- **Email Enquiries:** enquiries@basingstokeu3a.org
- **The News Edit:** Our monthly newsletter delivered straight to your inbox.