

About Our Groups

Welcome to Melton Mowbray u3a groups page.

Most u3a activities take place in our groups. The number varies but we currently have about 70 groups, covering a wide range of activities and varying in size from 4 up to 40 or more. The venues vary from members' homes to hired rooms and halls. Groups sometimes have speakers but these are usually internally resourced so that the only costs incurred relate to venue hire, materials used, tea and coffee etc. The u3a constitution requires all groups to be financially independent and non-profit making and prohibits members charging for their time or expertise.

A few groups are "taught" by a member with special knowledge or skills but the vast majority depend on mutual learning. The group will usually agree in advance on the content or activity of the next meeting so the members can prepare in advance. At the meeting there is then an opportunity to learn from each other. Within groups all members are expected to contribute so that necessary chores are shared out. For instance one member may be responsible for room hire, one may act as treasurer, one may do the administration, one the refreshments and others concentrate on the content of the meetings; responsibilities may be rotated. Groups are as successful as their members make them. The group's money cannot be held in members' bank accounts. Small amounts may be held as cash but larger amounts must be handed to the treasurer for deposit in the branch's account. The treasurer will then arrange cheques and withdrawals as required.

Many groups, because of their venue or the nature of their activity, will have limited spaces and the group you would like to join may be full. Also beginners may struggle to cope if the rest of the group has been working together for some years- this particularly applies to language groups. Contact the group leader to find out if this applies to groups which attract your interest. If groups are full, the leader will usually keep a waiting list. We are always keen to facilitate new groups and the Groups Co-ordinator is here to advise. If you would like a group on something we do not currently offer it is easy to find like-minded members by submitting a paragraph for inclusion in the next newsletter asking those interested to contact you. You can then call a preliminary meeting and decide the way forward together. If groups have long waiting lists we may invite the waiting list to a meeting to discuss the formation of an additional group.

Our annual "Meet the Groups" event is held on the 3rd Thursday of January at 10am in the Baptist Church, Leicester Road. Almost all the groups take a stand here to demonstrate their groups activities and one or more group members will be on hand to discuss their plans.