



Our Vision

The shift away from full time employment can be psychologically difficult - a major sense of belonging, purpose and community may have been lost. This is why we focus on retired and semi-retired people although anyone with time to take part is welcome no matter what their employment status.

Stroud u3a exists to provide an additional or alternative physical, intellectual and emotional outlet by:

- being equally welcoming to all
- enabling participation in a wide variety of (potentially new) activities
- enabling members to meet new people with common interests who can engage in those activities with them
- offering central monthly meetings with speakers on a wide range of interesting topics.

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1. Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish what Stroud u3a is.

2. What is Stroud u3a?

We are a voluntary organisation and totally depend on the enthusiasm of our members to support and promote our activities and initiatives.

Stroud u3a is for people who are no longer in full time employment. There are no other membership criteria. The critical factors are that members have the time, enthusiasm and commitment to participate as fully as possible in our activities.

Stroud u3a is registered as an independent charity with the UK Charity Commission. It is part of the u3a movement of over 1000 u3as in the UK. Stroud u3a is guided by the Third Age Trust which is a national UK umbrella organisation specifically set up to promote and assist all local u3as. The existence of the Third Age Trust does not prejudice the independence of any individual u3a in any way. Stroud u3a is completely responsible for u3a activities in its catchment area.

In addition to Stroud itself, the catchment area of our u3a includes many of the surrounding towns and villages such as Chalford, Stonehouse, Nailsworth, Painswick, Bisley and Minchinhampton. You do not have to live in Stroud District to be a member of our u3a. You may wish to join our u3a because it offers a group activity that a neighbouring u3a does not and vice versa.

The formal name of Stroud u3a is ***Stroud & District u3a*** but that name can cause confusion with the boundaries of Stroud District Council which is why we tend to refer to our organisation simply as ***Stroud u3a***.

There are other u3as in Gloucestershire including Cheltenham, Churchdown, Cirencester, Dursley & Cam, Gloucester and Tetbury. The fact that there are so many u3as but only one Third Age Trust has caused a number of regional arrangements to be set up in the UK, to support both u3as and the Third Age Trust. There are currently two types of these, there are Regions (South West in our case) and Network Link. In Network Link, the organisation relevant to Stroud u3a is called **Cotswold Link u3a** which covers almost 30 u3as in

Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Our participation in the these arrangements does not prejudice the independence of Stroud u3a at all.

3. **What do we do?**

Stroud u3a has over 50 activity groups including 6 walking groups. The number and variety of groups change from time to time. At the date of writing, the mix of groups includes the following:

Art mixed media	French book club	Patchwork and quilting
Arts appreciation	French intermediate	Photography
Badminton	Gentle Yoga	Play reading
Book club (4 groups)	Happy feet walkers	Poetry for pleasure
Bridge	History book club	Readers
Bridge for fun (startup)	Hook Needle and Thread	Recorders
Bridge online	Italian chat	Singing for fun
Country walkers	Italian intermediate	Social history
Creative writing (4 groups)	K walkers	Solo group
Croquet	Keep fit	Spanish conversation (intermediate plus)
Current affairs	Literature (2 groups)	Tai chi
Cycling for softies	Local flora	Walkers (no stiles)
Discussion	Mediaeval art and architecture	Wayward walkers
Drama	Music appreciation (3 groups)	Wednesday walkers
Expressive writing (for wellbeing)	Natural history	Welsh conversation
Food appreciation	Paddlers	Wisdom Traditions

The above activity group list is based on recently active groups but it's worth emphasising that any member, including new members, can suggest new Stroud u3a activity groups, create and run them. We keep an up-to-date list of groups on our web-site at: <https://stroud.u3asite.uk/groups/>. Depending on the group/activity there may occasionally be a small extra charge to take part (e.g. to cover external venue hire).

In addition to activity groups, there are monthly meetings of Stroud u3a to which all members are invited. The monthly meetings which are free of charge to members have speakers on a very wide range of topics. Joining Stroud u3a also facilitates participation in national and regional activities including online workshops, summer schools and the u3a Festival.

4. Why do we exist? - Our Vision

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5. How do we communicate?

Stroud u3a Newsletter & Leaflets

Our primary form of communication with members is via a regular newsletter. We aim to send this out every month to members with access to email and at least quarterly by post to members who don't have email. We produce occasional publicity material including a z-fold A4 leaflet which we use in various ways and locations to help promote our charity to encourage people to join us.

Facebook

We have a Stroud u3a members only Facebook Group and members are encouraged to join, follow and to initiate and join in with lively discussions! We also have an outward facing Facebook "business" page which is accessible to the public and provides a platform for us to promote Stroud u3a.

Website

Our website (<https://stroud.u3asite.uk>) is the best reference for up-to-date advice and information about Stroud u3a.

Monthly Meetings

At each of our monthly meetings, there will be people in attendance who can offer information and advice about Stroud u3a – look out for anyone sporting a Stroud u3a badge and approach them directly with your query.

6. How are we Managed?

Stroud u3a is managed by an Executive Committee that meets monthly. Guests are welcomed to Executive Committee (normally referred to simply as “the committee”) meetings but it is best to check the dates/times of those meetings with the Secretary beforehand.

The committee consists of up to 4 Executive Officers plus committee members who are all elected at the most recent AGM. There must be a minimum of 5 Trustees in total. There are also others who perform specific roles within Stroud u3a who may or may not be committee members.

Stroud u3a is a charity, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity Commission requires that the trustees are (as a body) responsible for the good management of Stroud u3a for its members and to ensure it meets its charitable objectives. The Third Age Trust provides umbrella insurance to cover all u3a Trustees acting in good faith.

Another group that meets at least annually is the Group Coordinator meeting which brings together the representatives of the activity groups to give direction and advice to the Executive Committee.

7. Membership

At the time of reviewing this document, the membership fees for Stroud u3a are as below.

Types of Membership and Fees (2024-25 Membership Year)			
Type	Description	Cost	Select
Honorary	A member over 90 when membership starts or renews	Free	
Individual	Our standard membership	£12.00	
Associate	Full member of another u3a paying full fees to that u3a	£8.50	
Associate (Free)	An Associate, who is a member of ONE Stroud u3a Group <u>only</u> OR who <u>only</u> attends our monthly meetings	Free	

For more information or to join, please contact our Membership Secretary at membership@stroudu3a.org.uk. You can also find out about joining and join online via our website Join Us page: <https://stroud.u3asite.uk/join-us/>

You will be very welcome.

8. Document Library and Document Control

This document is part of a Document Library within Stroud u3a.

Reference copies of all our approved controlled documents/policies will be made available on the Stroud u3a website Docs page:

<https://stroud.u3asite.uk/documents/>

Paper copies of all Stroud u3a approved documents are also available on request from the Secretary at secretary@stroudu3a.org.uk.