

WELCOME to BLACKBOURNE U3A – University of the Third Age

WHY UNIVERSITY? The original meaning of the word is a “coming together”, and that is precisely what we do. We come together in groups to learn, to follow our hobbies and interests for general companionship. Qualifications play no part in U3A life.

WHY THIRD AGE? The Third Age is the age of retirement (or semi-retirement). The First Age is the time of education and training for the Second Age – working life and bringing up children. In the Third Age, by keeping our minds and bodies alert, we can enrich our lives and slow the ageing process. There are now 959 U3As in the UK with over 342,000 members.

ETHOS OF BLACKBOURNE U3A, like all other Groups is that of a self-help organisation with no upper or lower age limits, where members are encouraged to help make their U3A a continued success, through participation and involvement. Members can enroll in interest groups as well as participate in educational and other visits, for which charges to meet the cost will be made.

INTEREST GROUPS meet weekly, fortnightly or monthly, often in members’ homes. The formation of additional interested groups to meet demand is very much encouraged. Leading a group can be very rewarding – U3A group leaders will testify to the enjoyment and satisfaction that comes from sharing their skills and knowledge with others. A new Interest Group may be formed simply by like-minded members coming together to discuss the way forward, and planning a draft programme where responsibilities are shared between members. All our Interest Groups are listed in our programme, but subsequent new ones will be publicised at our monthly lecture meetings, in our quarterly newsletter, by our bulk e-mail system and on our website.

GUEST SPEAKERS provide eleven monthly talks per year (none in August) on a very wide range of subjects – detailed in your printed programme and our website – generally on the first Monday each month (moved to the second Monday if the first is a Bank Holiday). All members can attend these meeting, but we have a maximum of 250 attendees due to Fire Regulations. Our average attendance is about 220, with a membership of 625 we may occasionally have to turn people away when the hall is full, so please understand why we have to do this. Normally, providing you arrive by 9.30am – you will have time for free refreshments (served until 9.45 am) and a chat too.

WHAT TO DO NEXT? Buy a ticket for the October Interest Groups Exhibition – see our current programme and our website for specific date. Here you will have the chance to find out about many Interest Groups, meet more members, and understand more of what Blackbourne U3A is all about. **Always try to wear your Membership Badge to our meetings** so you can be scanned in and it enables members to learn each other’s names. At monthly meetings, **look in the coffee bar area for activities being planned** – Garden Visits, Educational Visits, Theatre Trips, Travel Group activities and General Noticeboards. Please do get into the habit of **checking your e-mails and our website regularly for updates** on all aspects of Blackbourne U3A activities.

OUR WEBSITE – www.blackbourne-u3a.org.uk - for lots of useful up to date local information.

National U3A website – www.u3a.org.uk - for more about the National U3A Organisation.

COMMITTEE: March 2016-2017

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