

Volunteers' Week – u3a can use your skills

There are some exceptional individuals giving their time to make u3a a joy for its 400,000 members.

u3a is a movement where those who are no longer in full time employment can share skills, make friends and have fun.

From rock music to archaeology, there's something for all curious minds to enjoy.



Ann Keating, of Edinburgh u3a, recently brought together hundreds of members for Off the Wall, a festival of learning and creativity at Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland.

She explained why volunteering is such an important part of the u3a experience. She said: "Volunteers are instrumental in bringing people together and getting people to enjoy things they might not have thought they would have enjoyed doing.

"It's a co-operative movement, it's something which we can all take an active part in.

"u3a is a means of continuing to learn, continuing to live, continuing to enjoy life. Every day you learn something new and meet new people. It's a wonderful way of stretching out your social network and meeting people who enjoy doing the same things as you."

Ann features in a short video filmed at Hadrian's Wall, about the impact of volunteering at u3a:

Retired teachers Alastair and Zoe Fleming lead the Geology Group, at Oban u3a. They travel by ferry and car to make the journey from their home on the tiny Scottish island of Luing, to Oban on the mainland, loaded up with projectors, screens and equipment for fascinating field trips.

Zoe said: "We do different things all the time. We show slides, people can catch up, it's quite a social group. People just join in and get what they want out of it."

The couple love volunteering for the u3a and Alastair admits, "We do this as much for our own benefit as anyone else's!"



There is no lower age limit to join u3a and it costs, on average, less than £20 per year to join. There are more than 1,000 u3as across the UK with many hundreds of different interest groups – everything from Egyptology to crafting. You

can also join the Interest Groups Online.

To find out more, visit www.u3a.org.uk