

u3a survey showcases the experiences yet to come

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u3a members have shared their crowning moments since leaving full time work - from learning to fly at fifty to sailing across the Atlantic

A recent survey asked u3a members what their crowning moments had been since giving up full time work - and the answers demonstrated that there's a wealth of opportunities and experiences to explore in later life.

37% of respondents have become involved with a charity, 21% have started learning a new language and 19% have travelled off the beaten track.

Members shared stories of sailing a tall ship across the Atlantic to cycling 1,000 miles for a cancer charity. Others have gained PhDs, written novels, learned Italian and campaigned for causes close to their hearts – and all since leaving full-time work.

One of the respondents to the survey, Halstead u3a member Jane, discovered a love for flying after being gifted a lesson for her 50th birthday. She says: "From that very first lesson I was absolutely hooked and I've been flying for almost quarter of a century.

'It was a mountain flying course in Germany that led me to joining u3a. I decided that before repeating such a course in Germany I would learn to speak the language properly.

"So, I looked round for classes that would fit in with my busy schedule. I found a u3a near to me and ended up starting a German group and running it."

The survey - carried out to mark the charity's 40th anniversary - also revealed what motivates members. Over 80% of respondents want to help others, 78% are driven by connecting with people, and 70% are motivated by learning new things.

Sam Mauger, chief executive of u3a, says: "Through interest groups as diverse as kayaking and climate change, the u3a increases people's quality of life by boosting confidence, enabling a sense of purpose and feeling valued. Our 430,000 members are vibrant, active, full of energy and have so much to offer. They are the lived experience of the major benefits of being active and creative.

"As this survey shows, our movement is made up of energetic people who love to forge new interests, make new friends and develop talents."

Join u3a to have new experiences, learn something new and have fun - find out more on [our Join Us page](#).

