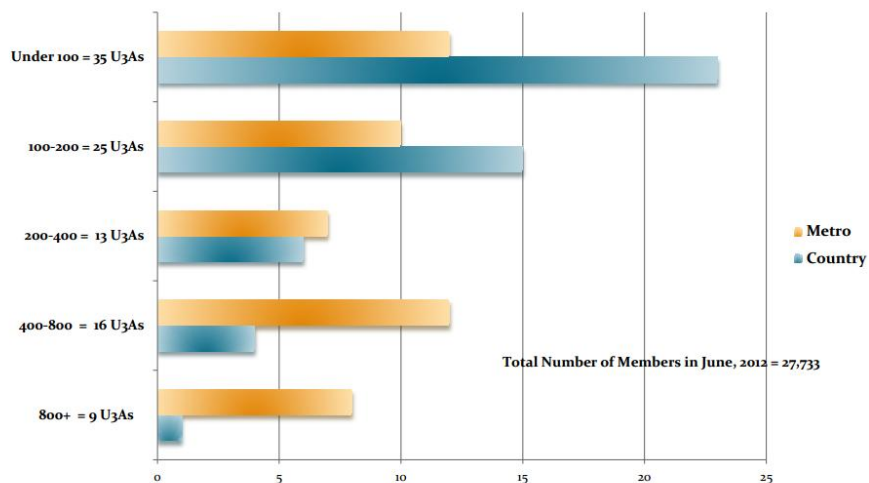


University of the Third Age is a voluntary community organisation. It provides opportunities for learning for older people enabling them to keep mentally and physically active and alert. The term “University” is used in the original sense of an association or community of teachers and scholars united in the pursuit of knowledge. The “Third Age”, which follows the “First Age” of childhood and formal education and the “Second Age” of working life, is one of active retirement, where a wide range of interests are pursued to enhance the self-image and well-being of older persons. U3A in Australia and New Zealand comprises 315 groups. U3A is Australia’s fastest growing organisation, providing services to the aged population. The Victorian network is the largest in Australia with 105 groups and over 30,000 members (2013). It experienced a 24% growth rate in memberships from 2010 to 2012, and a further 10% growth in 2013.

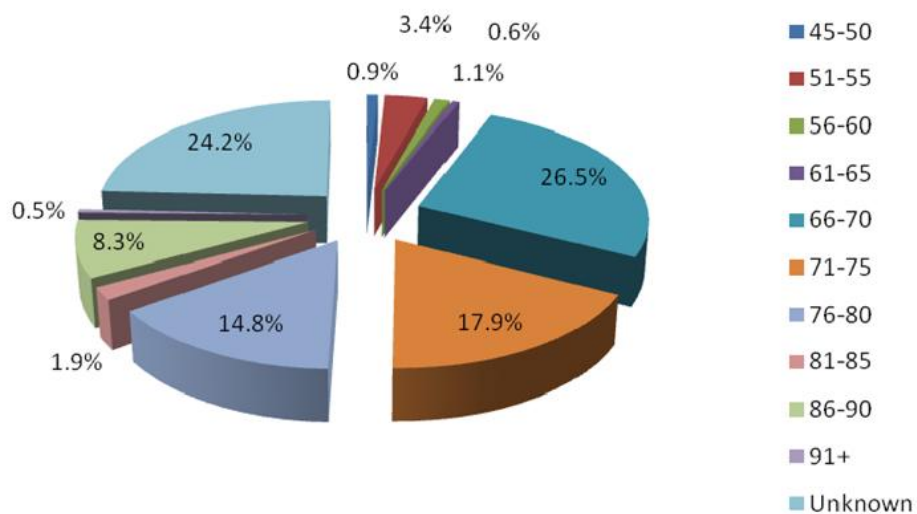
2012 - U3As by Number of Members



37



U3A Age Groups 2013



Benalla U3A has been operating for over 25 years. It is the second largest U3A group in North East Victoria. It provides a number of educational courses, as well as a variety of events to provide social interaction opportunities for the older members of the community. All courses and activities are run by volunteers.

2013 U3A membership numbers:

Shepparton: 390

Benalla: 248

Albury/Wodonga: 220

Wangaratta: 80

Mansfield: 32 – this is a study group as many mature aged students are catered for by local TAFE courses.

The Benalla U3A currently operates from one shared room at The Centre. The Centre charges Benalla U3A based on the number of sessions conducted at the facility. The room used by U3A is contained within a building that is to be demolished. No firm date has been set for this, however it is anticipated that when funding becomes available for the redevelopment of the site, demolition will commence. There is also a question at this time about the ongoing viability of the Benalla campus, which adds further concern about the availability of accommodation for the ongoing programs conducted by Benalla U3A.

Benalla U3A participation rate for the first semester in 2013 was 716 in 27 courses and the second semester was 645 enrolments in 26 courses. Given that the 248 members participated in almost three courses each, this represents a considerable challenge for the course convenors. In addition, it has already become necessary to move our regular 'Meet & Mingle' sessions to the Senior Citizens rooms due to the numbers being too large to fit in the room at The Centre. Please refer to the Benalla U3A Business Plan 2013-2018, for further details of member numbers and projected participation rates based on the age demographic and population data show here.

The population of Benalla Rural City is showing upward trends in the 50+ age group. This will have a flow-on effect as these citizens continue to age. This demographic requires services, including the courses offered by U3A, to be carefully planned to ensure that we are able to cater for the increasing numbers and the needs of older members within our communities.

Benalla Rural City Census Data:

	55-64 Age Group	%Population	65+ Age Group	%Population
2001	794	9.2%	1680	19.6%
2006	1839	13.6%	2624	19.4%
2011	2148	15.7%	2914	21.3%

Note: The State median age is 37. Benalla has increased from 44 in 2006 to 46 in 2011.

If we project the age growth, we will potentially see the 55-64 age group treble in the period from 2001 to 2016.

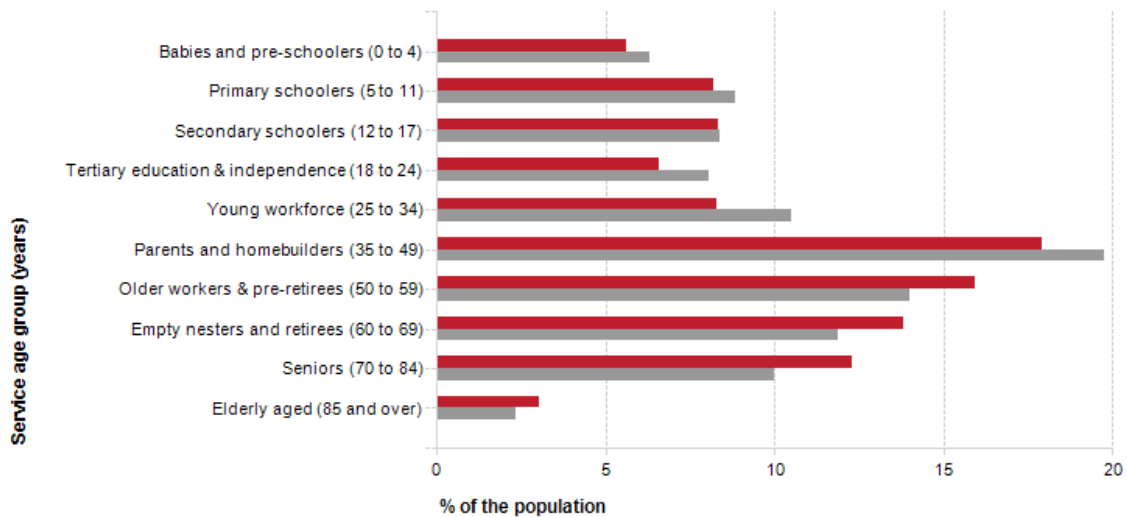
Benalla Rural City population total 55+ Age group:

	%Population	Total Population
2001	28.8%	2474
2006	33%	4463
2011	37.2%	5062
2016 projected	40%	5500

Note: In 2011 membership of U3A at 213, represented 7.3% of the BRC population in the 65+ age group and 4.2% of the 55+ age group. If we project to 2016 at the same growth rates shown above, the estimated U3A membership will be at least 330, without any increase in course uptake figures. The current trend in rural areas is for the 'baby boomers' to retire to the township, which will give an exponential increase in member numbers. As can be seen from the figures below the aged population in Benalla Rural City is well above the regional average.

Age structure, 2011

■ Benalla Rural City ■ Regional VIC

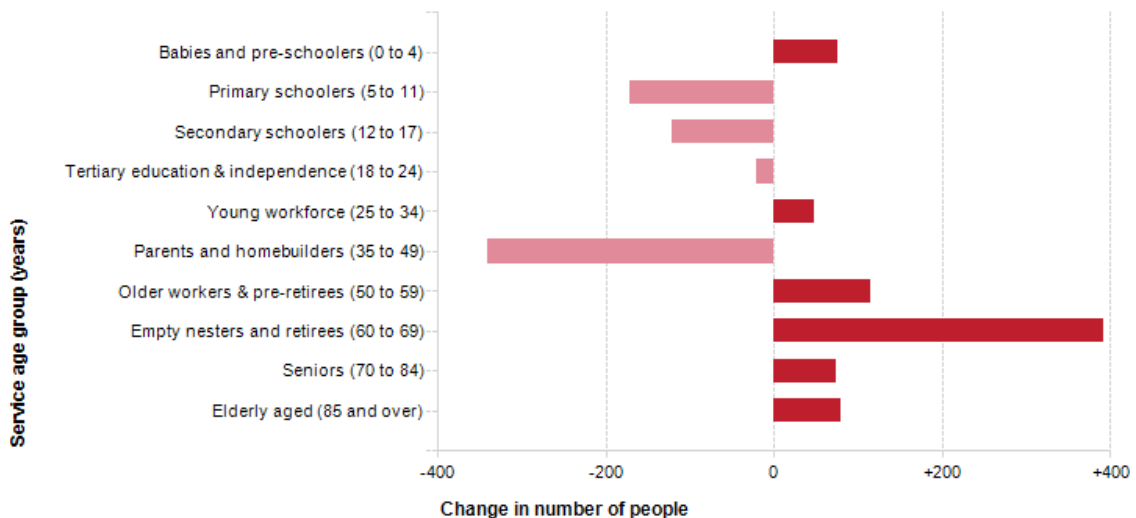


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 (Usual residence data)
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.



Change in age structure, 2006 to 2011

Benalla Rural City



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2011 (Usual residence data)
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.

