



Llandrindod Wells and District

Dear Llandrindod U3A Member

Welcome to our March 2021 Newsletter (number 12)

We try to get the Newsletter to as many of the members as possible via email and the website but we know we reach only about half of our members this way.

If you receive the Newsletter and are in contact with any other members please check if they have received it and if not please pass on the content.

It is also important to keep your own contact details up to date on our records. So if you do change your email, address or telephone number please let our Membership Secretary know. I was surprised to learn this week that there are a number of members for whom we do not hold any contact details.

Llandrindod Wells and District u3a Annual General Meeting

You will receive details of the AGM to be held in June closer to the time when the position in terms of lockdown easing, risks to our members and the “dos and don’ts” of meetings inside or outside are known. We are still hopeful that conventional meeting may be possible but if not we will look at a combination of postal and email communication.

Join our Committee!

We are always looking for new committee members and would welcome individuals coming forward. If you wish to join or propose another member to join the committee the relevant nomination form can be found in the [Documents section of the website](#). Election of members of the committee takes place at the AGM.

Please send nomination forms to the Secretary Kathie Richards-Jones by Friday 21st May.

Updating our constitution

The AGM is also an opportunity for amendments to our Constitution, a copy of which can be found on the website. The committee has been following the interesting debate at National level on whether the organisation should encourage new members from younger age groups (aged 50 plus) and those who may have been made unemployed, possibly through the impacts of Covid-19.

It would seem from a National Survey of u3as, ours included, that the average age of u3a members has risen from 72 to 74. Personally I do not think that is surprising with the rise in retirement age, life spans and health over the last 40 years. The aim to recruit a young age

group is also driven by the survey in which it is anticipated that following the Covid crisis there will be around a 20% reduction in u3a membership nationally. I sincerely hope that our own members will return and Llandrindod Wells u3a once again "bucks" the national trend.

Targeted recruitment of the unemployed has never before been actively pursued. I am not sure the impacts operationally on individual u3as have been fully considered or debated within the Third Age Trust. It is true that a few members do go back to work full or part time and remain in or come back. There are good and legitimate arguments on both sides of the debate.

When the u3a as an organisation was established, no age limit was ever mentioned but the focus was clear from our constitution:

"The advancement of education and, in particular, the education of older people and those who are retired from full time work by all means, including associated activities conducive to learning and personal development".

So for us to open up to unemployed we would have to amend the Objective of our own constitution. This is our decision, as an independent organisation within the umbrella of the Third Age Trust. Any proposals to change the constitution would have to be voted on at the AGM.

You are invited to send any suggestions for amendments or additions to the Constitution to the Secretary Kathie Richards-Jones by Friday 21st May.

u3a Subscriptions

Your annual subscription becomes due in March. The membership fee will remain at £25.00 for the year. If you pay by standing order, then you do not need to take any action as your payment should be made for you by your bank. If you usually pay by cheque or cash at the main meeting please post a cheque made payable to "Llandrindod Wells and District u3a" to

Mrs Jan Wiltshire, Treasurer
Tir-Nant,
Llanyre
LD1 6EA

Past members who have left or did not pay their subscriptions in 2020 have been removed from our membership database to comply with data protection requirements. Any individual who has left and may want to rejoin will need to fill in a new membership application form. These can be found on the website or can be obtained in hard copy from the Membership Secretary Janice Horne.

LLandrindod Wells and District u3a website

The work is progressing well on developing the new Llandrindod Wells and District u3a website. There will be a new look to the site, but more importantly the website software which

was over 10 years old is being replaced which will mean the site is easier to maintain and update and will make the site work better on tablets and mobile phones. Nick Talbott has done all the work to get a "Test Site" up and running and a few of us have tested using Desktops, Laptops, Tablets and Telephones, so far the new site works well on any and all devices including speech readers for those with impaired vision.

Can you help with the new website?

Margaret our Borderlines Editor and Kathie our Secretary have offered to help with general content and Interest Groups Leaders will be asked for input down the line

We now need someone "technical" to work alongside Nick in the website management. This is an important job and we are much too dependent on Nick. Don't worry, Nick is not leaving us or going anywhere for the foreseeable future but some sensible succession planning is in order! This is a great opportunity to learn more about web development as Nick not only maintains and develops our website, he is also in charge of the all Wales u3a site and provides support other u3a's in Wales to establish and develop sites. Please [contact Nick](#) if you would like to know more.

Interest Group News

Creative Writing Group and Readers

Both groups are still active on Zoom and I am sure we all appreciate their continued contribution to the Newsletter. Accompanying this newsletter is this month's book review from Clive Barrett Thanks also to the anonymous author of this month's powerful and moving story, Hidden Away.

Art Group – Bracken Trust Project

Thank you to all those who submitted picture's of Bracken. What a variety, from traditional water colours to the use of digital manipulation of images. The works are now with the Bracken Trust to make the final selection. We will put some of the images on the website and in the newsletter next month when the pictures are returned.

Computer Group

Good News! Nick is now back on line. If you want to join in the Computer Group Zoom meetings, which are fortnightly on Monday afternoons, please [contact Nick](#).

Walking Group

You many want to look at the "Slow Ways Project" with u3a groups across the UK completing and registering walks which link towns and villages. The project aims to create a network of safe, easy, and enjoyable walking routes that connect towns, cities, and villages across Great Britain once lockdown is lifted. The Builth Wells to Newbridge river walk along the Wye would be one of my own favourites, although I am not sure I ever want to recommend my own favourite walks to the rest of the country. I am much too selfish to share the peace and

tranquillity of such a delightful walk. For those of you who may be interested in getting involved in the Slow Ways Project, Dan Raven-Ellison and Rob Bushby have offered to host two webinars for u3a members, on Tuesday 20 April and Monday 17 May. You will need to register at the [Slow Ways website](#).

Landscape History Group

Group member Julian Ravest has created a fascinating short film on the topic of the Cefnlllys Castle. As you will see, Julian is a most talented drone operator and digital master. You can watch [Julian's film on Youtube](#).

Music Groups

Zoom is not good for music groups muting Zoom and just listening to an accompanist and singing/ playing on your own is not a lot of fun. But I have heard of an app named Twitch, which one music group in Heswall u3a has used successfully. It may be worth a try.

New Interest Groups

In a discussion on recruiting more men to u3a the following suggestions were made:

- Ale and/or wine appreciation (I know quite a few women who would go for that one!)
- A robot challenge, repair shop, engineering, model group.

Are there any new potential Group leaders /conveners out there? If you have an idea for a new interest group get in touch with the Interest Group Co-ordinator Stephen Ashley.

Wales u3a Region Short Story Competition

Chris Winner, the Wales Trustee, has announced this year's Short Story Competition. The Theme for this year is "Freedom" and the word freedom must appear in the story! Entries must be received between 1st July and the 31st August 2021. The full rules and an entry form are available to download from the [Wales u3a website](#).

Poetry Competition Winners

The u3a poetry competition, which saw nearly 200 submissions from members across the movement, has announced its ten winners. One of the judges commented, "It was a pleasure and a privilege to be a judge in the u3a National Poetry competition. I found myself laughing out loud on several occasions. The clever and witty poems I read are a credit to the poets and testament to the creative talent with in our u3a movement."

The first, second and third placed poem will appear in April's edition of Third Age Matters and the top 10 on the website after publication. One of our members Patrick Derwent has published a book of his own poetry "Of Love and War"

Third Age Trust National Activities

There is a National launch of u3a planned by the Third Age Trust for the 2nd June 2021 with press and media coverage. Virtual and physical activities are proposed to celebrate u3a creativity. This will also be a precursor for 2022 which will be the 40th anniversary of the establishment of u3a and hopefully support the national recruitment drive.

National Online Events

A number of workshops, webinars and interactive sessions for members, mostly accessed using Zoom, are listed on the [National u3a website](#).

Aberystwyth u3a online talks

A full list of past and future talks can be found on the [Aberystwyth u3a website](#). Some of the talks are also now available to watch at any time on YouTube, including the recent talk on [The Paintings of Caspar David Friedrich](#). Forthcoming talks include:

- March 23rd: Stuart Evans on "Lino printing on the kitchen table"
- March 30th: Poetry Pool II, curated by Brenda Curtis.
- April 6th: Easter – a fallow week!
- April 13th: Amanda Trubshaw on "Aberystwyth Arts Centre – life during Covid-19"

Please contact [Roger Boyle](#) of Aberystwyth u3a for information and Zoom links.

Swansea u3a online talks

Swansea has also started offering online talks which we understand will be open to members of other u3as. No details yet but check the [Swansea u3a website](#).

Keep Smiling!

Finally, you will also find a recent copy of Keep Smiling accompanying this newsletter.

The committee send their best wishes to you all.

Keep safe!

Karen Latham

Chair, Llandrindod Wells and District u3a

U3A Contacts

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The contact information for all Interest group leaders is available on the [Llandrindod U3A website](#).