

REPORTS FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – MARCH 2023

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - REV DAVID POULTON -

Over the last twelve months since the last AGM in 2022, later in March, the government of the day, realised us all from our confinement after the pandemic. We emerged as a society, with or without masks to mix once more with family and friends. Our u3a was no different. We began to meet once more indoor, to enjoy each other's company. Just to be able to see people smile and look more relaxed around each other helped us all to appreciate our newfound freedom!

Learning, laughing, and living together in what must have seemed for many as a new environment altogether after so long being unable to mix, because of fears of catching COVID. Some conversations throughout the year revolved around whether or not we had had our booster jabs and what reactions to it we had noticed. Now the government of the day would like to treat COVID-19 rather like a common cold or like catching flu. COVID is on the back burner and is no longer as news worthy or reported as a hot topic. However, through it all we did learn and laugh about it and we certainly were lucky to live through it and come out the other side, jabs and all!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Paul Follows for volunteering to become our Secretary in June last year. Including all his work as Secretary of u3a for the last 8 months. I would also like to thank Keith Vincent, Paul Cullen, John Williams, Claire Firth, and Maria/Charo Chidzoy for all their hard work in the various roles that they have been doing in the background making sure that Llanelli u3a has continued to function. Your support and hard work has been much appreciated, thank you. A full account of all the groups can be found in the AGM Report and you will hear from our Group Conveners in a moment.

I am also grateful for Ty Gwyn who continue to be our host venue for our Coffee Mornings and I would like to record a vote of thanks to them in allowing us to meet here. To be able to have a venue, without having to worry about where we might hold our Coffee Mornings, has been a blessing.

As some of you may remember I have served as Vice-chair of the West Wales u3a Network since July 2022 with a view of taking on the Chairmanship from yesterday's AGM. Earlier this year I found myself with an impossible workload for Llanelli Art Society, as their Chairman, since Christmas. I have struggled to cope with this and a number of other projects that I am involved with and so on February 14th I reluctantly resigned with immediate effect from the role of Vice-chair of our regional u3a network. I have also stood down from an Anglo-American Palestinian project and a National Eco-group too. Once I have completed my policy documents work for the Art Society. I will have more time to be more involved in the various groups within our own u3a. So, in the meantime, I might not be able to join the various groups as often as once did, until the work is completed.

In closing it would be remiss of me not to offer my best wishes to all members who have been unwell this year. Friends who have been missed at Coffee Mornings like Marian Morris, Ezster Pritchard, Fred Nuckley. Whenever a member is missing from either the Coffee Morning or any of the groups, we need to remember to contact them and their partners/spouses helping them to know that they are not forgotten. That is why is it so important to let Sarah Dew know, our Welfare Officer, so we can send a card of support and let them know we are thinking about them.

SECRETARY'S REPORT - PAUL FOLLOWS –

I took over the Secretary position in June 2022 when nobody came forward to replace the vacancy caused by Sarah Dew. Sarah was required to step down after three years as per the National rules. She was a fountain of knowledge when I needed her help.

Over the year we held ten committee meetings which were fully recorded and passed at the following committee meetings.

Since taking over I have also been making brief notes of the Coffee Morning discussions and decisions to assist at the following committee meeting. These included suggestions through the suggestion box that was reintroduced in September 2022.

A raffle was also reintroduced in October with monies helping funds after the membership fee was reduced from £17 to £15 last year. We could have a project for the monies collected if we wanted too.

WEBSITE REPORT – PAUL CULLEN VICE CHAIRMAN –

The U3a web site along with other U3a groups was unavailable for much of November. This was caused by the web site host company. The U3a has instigated a recovery purchased a new U3a server and thanks must go for the many hours that were put in by U3a volunteers to minimise the loss and to get things back to normal. There was a lot of lost information and photographs that have had to be restored.

The website remains an important shop window for potential new members and a reference point for existing members. For the website to be a useful resource for all, it needs regular input from group leaders and members and of course your wonderful photos will always be welcome.

PUBLICITY REPORT – PAUL FOLLOWS –

This year apart from keeping the Llanelli Star up to date with a weekly events calendar. We had a feature published in the paper when we commemorated our 30th Anniversary last September. We had hoped our local MP Dame Nia Griffith could come as guest speaker but due to parliamentary time she could not make it.

We have booked our Annual Lunch again in September after Dame Nia confirmed she would be available this year and has been already noted in her diary Friday Sept 8th

We presently have 103 members which is slowly building. As happened in recent years, but not last year, the forthcoming August Coffee morning will be a recruitment event for more members. We will build an advertising plan to support this activity shortly.

MONTHLY LECTURE REPORT – CLAIRE FIRTH –

As can be seen from the schedule below, the U3A monthly lectures have included varied and sometimes challenging topics. The lectures have been well-attended, with approximately 20 members coming to each session. The speakers have been exceptional and fully engaged with the audience. There have always been plenty of questions and discussion followed by coffee.

U3A Monthly Lectures 2021-2023

Date	Title of Lecture	Speaker
2021		
13 th October	The Severn Tunnel	Roger Williams
10 th November	The Basque Country part 1	Claire Firth
8 th December	The Basque Country part 2	Claire Firth
2022		
9 th February	Oxwich Bay Church	Roger Williams
9 th Mar	Churchill	Paul Follows
13 th April	The Orkney Islands part 1	David Poulton
11 th May	Dogs' Trust in Bridgend	Linda Feagan
8 th June	The life and death of John F Kennedy.	Geoff Henderson
13 th July	The Romantics	Sandra Ivinson
12 th October	The Lost Generation	Claire Firth
9 th November	What Pathologists Do	Lesley Murray
14 th December	The Orkney Islands part 2: Hoy	David Poulton
2023		
11 th January	Tax, Care and Toyboys	Ben Ashenden
8 th February	"I'm forever blowing bubbles"	John Ivinson
8 th March	Darkness in the City of Light	Tony Curtis
12 th April	Hans Holbein. Henry VIII's spin doctor	Geoff Henderson
10 th May	"The Fairmile Marine Motor Launches of WW2 "	Roger Williams and Lis Glanville

14 th June	“Gilbert and Sullivan at Grims Dyke 1890 to the Present”	Paul Follows
12 th July	???	David Poulton

‘A Terrible Kindness’, by Jo Browning Wroe
 ‘Frankenstein’ by Mary Shelley
 ‘The Bookshop’, by Penelope Fitzgerald
 ‘Hotel du Lac’, by Anita Brookner
 ‘Where the Crawdads sing’, by Delia Owens

We meet on the third Monday of each month, at 10.30 am, and have a friendly discussion about the monthly text over a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits. The books discussed are chosen by the members, and information regarding the chosen book is given on the WhatsApp group. We welcome new members to join.

SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP – RHUDDWEN THOMAS

February 2022 at the Stradey Park Hotel, Llanelli. 16 Attended. Everyone enjoyed.
March 2022 Cancelled
April 2022 at the Caulfields inn, Burry Port. We were 14 for lunch and had a good time.
May 2022 at the Ruby’s pub. Llanelli. We were only 7 for Lunch. But still nice company.
June 2022 at the New Cornish Inn. Seaside Llanelli. 9 attended this lunch. The food was good.
July 2022 at the Coasting Pilot inn, Burry Port. We were only 9 for lunch. The food was good.
September 2022 at the Morlais Pub, Llangennech. Again only 9 attended for lunch. All enjoyed each other’s company.
October 2022 at the Rev.James inn, Loughor. We were up to 13 for lunch. Good company good food.
November 2022 at the Halfway Hotel, Llanelli. 15 Attended this time. Everyone enjoyed.
January 2023 at the Ruby’s Pub, Llanelli. We had 12 attending for lunch. This time had we to go upstairs for the meal. Good company again.
February 2023 at the New Cornish Inn, Seaside, Llanelli. We were 13 for lunch. The meal and company was good.

TABLE TENNIS REPORT – LIS GLANVILLE –

We now have around 15 members all told attending the Table Tennis Group. However, July and September were bad months with no attendees owing to holidays and other commitments. The rest of the year we had good turnouts with the highest number of 8 players attending in the first week of November. I hope this continues.

STROLLERS AND STRIDERS - KEITH VINCENT -

The walking group is back to normal after covid. We have had some very enjoyable walks much helped by the good spring and summer weather. We could again end our walk with well-earned refreshments at a Café or Pub. The walks since my last report were:

March 2022	Pennlgeraer Fores
April	Lliw Valley Reservoir
May	Dinefwr Park
June	Pavilion Café to Buryport
July	Cwm Clydach
September	Kidwelly/ Kymer Canal
October	Colby Woodland Gardens
November	Southgate
December	Pembrey Burrows
February 2023	Gnoll Park Neath

Each walk is circular and takes about one and a half to two hours. There are no steep climbs. New members to the walking group are always welcome and anyone interested in joining please give me your email address and I will add you to my mailing list.

I would welcome suggestions for future walk.

BREAKFAST GROUP REPORT – DAVID POULTON –

The Breakfast Group continues to meet at The Pavilion at the King George V Playing Fields, in Pwll at 9am until 10.30am when the boules player meet. This year the average number turning up has been three. This group is no about large numbers, but about who feels able to join me. On one of the warmer months shortly after the last year's AGM we did have 7 people come, which meant we had to occupy two tables!

It is always enjoyable to have company while drinking tea and eating a hearty breakfast. John Ivinson, Neville and Ezster Pritchard, Claire Firth, David and Linda Gallagher and occasionally Mike Morris and Lily Rose have joined us. Conversationally we put the world to rights and this is sometimes a favourite subject, however, we also talk about personal concerns, things that matter to those who have gathered around the table and break bread together.

The Pavilion at Pwll, do a very fine Welsh Breakfast, which includes cockles and lava bread. I have said this often, but I am still the only person who seems to order it. Having said that they do a lot of other very tasty food for breakfast too. If I can add one more thought, everyone and anyone are more than welcome to join me on the 2nd Tuesday of the month for a fine breakfast and a cuppa!

SNOOKER AND CYCLING GROUPS - PAUL CULLEN

SNOOKER

The group has had to move to playing ad hoc rather than a fixed regular time and date each month. If anyone wishes to play then contact the group co-ordinator via WhatsApp to arrange.

Anyone wish to play regularly and would be willing to take on the running of the group?

CYCLING

A few gentle cycle trips were organised last summer when the weather allowed. More will be arranged this summer and will be post on the WhatsApp events group.

A LIGHT-HEARTED LOOK AT HISTORY – JULIA EVANS –

We began our new session with glimpses of the past starting with the Great exhibition of 1851. 6 million people went to the Crystal Palace where railway excursions were run for the first time. A resounding success for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

The Victorians now had money and we saw the rise of the entertainment of the Music Hall, full of colour and music. We remembered artists such as Marie Lloyd and Sir Harry Lauder. Their songs still resonate today.

Famous people was our next interest, from Isaac Newton to George Stephenson and the great Isambard Kingdom Brunel. We could only admire their inventiveness. We were also reminded of Ernest Shackleton, a hero of his day. Then the space age in 1960 and going to the moon. Don't forget the ladies – Hildegard of Bingen (a composer of church music), Elizabeth I, Florence Nightingale, Mrs Pankhurst and the suffragette's. and of course we payed tribute and the wonderful Queen Elizabeth II for her dignity, steadfastness and immense courage.

We then looked back to the Middle Ages. In legends we met Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, Little John and of course Maid Marion. Along with a King, a Sheriff and a nobleman.

By the end of the year we could imagine Christmas at the court of Henry VIII with all its banquets, songs and celebrations.

Perhaps in May we should pay another visit to royalty –as we celebrate a Coronation, which is such a very special event for us all to remember!

I would like to thank the loyal members of the u3a for all their support through difficult times, along with the caretaker for his help and support.

