Carmarthen u3a Caerfyrddin

Newsletter – September 2026

Letter from the Chair – Richard Swann

Dear Members,

In last month's Breaking News in the Newsletter, Ann suggested that August tends to be a "silly season" for our u3a with many groups not meeting and thus this newsletter is shorter than usual and my letter brief.

At its meeting in July the committee continued its scrutiny and updates of Carmarthen u3a's policies and approved the Members Code of Conduct, Health and Safety, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Safeguarding and Data Protection policies. These can be found on our website. The committee will be receiving training in safeguarding in the near future.

We continue to look at how to take Carmarthen u3a into the future. Harold, Judith and Peter are forming a working group to come up with recommendations with help from the wider membership. Recently there was a zoom meeting of the u3a All Wales network for which I have just received a report that sets out some interesting ideas from other Welsh u3as and which I have passed on to the working group for due consideration.

The West Wales Network had a stand at the Eisteddfod which I am told was very successful and my thanks go to those members from Carmarthen who helped man that stand.

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Newsletter Editor – Ann Kitchen 

Breaking News

- My young helpers at the last Monthly Meeting thoroughly enjoyed taking 'the register' and thank you to Rosemond who captured the event and to everyone who made them feel so special, one proud Nain. This brings me to gently reminding members of the importance of registering at the Monthly and the History meetings. We need to know you are in the building for obvious Health and Safety reasons.
- There is a theme beginning to emerge over the summer that some groups are looking for new leaders. Have you thought of being a Group Leader for an existing group or starting a new group? There is plenty of support available.
- It was mentioned in the last Newsletter that our publicity leaflets need a revamp. How are you with art and design. Would you be interested in designing our new publicity leaflet? I've recently picked up several leaflets from other u3as to help give you some inspiration.

- Peter has arranged a First Aid Course for us to attend on Thursday 1st October. Up to 20 participants could be accommodated so places will be limited and attendees would receive a certificate. It will be led by Sean Llewellyn-Betts, deputy division manager for Carmarthen St John's Ambulance at their premises on Barn Road/John Street car park. There is disabled access from the Barn Road entrance.

  The course will be free as Carmarthen u3a committee has agreed to make a donation to St John's Ambulance of £100. Members can further contribute on the day if interested in doing so!

  If you are interested please contact Peter peter@carmarthenu3a.org.uk

- The recent updated policies are now on the website.
  Documents – Carmarthen u3a.

  Also information and reports about the recent Network meeting can be found here.
  West Wales Network - Home - Wales Region

- The photographers this month are Ann, Rosemond, Eleanor and many other friends of our u3a.

- Christmas Lunch



It's time again for this year's Christmas Lunch to be arranged.

Would you be interested in helping to organise it.

If so please let Richard know
chair@carmarthenu3a.org.uk

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Treasurer/Membership Report – Eric Kitchen 

The u3a's finances remain in good condition with a balance of £2,000.

Our current membership stands at 155 as this month we welcome Georgia & Patrick, Phillip & Susan, Angela & Colin, Myfanwy and recently, Karen as our newest members.

I remind all of us that it was at the request of new members that the named lanyards were introduce a few years ago, so do wear yours at the various group meetings as it makes life easier to connect faces with names.

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Yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol 2026 - Eisteddfod y Garreg Las.

Dyna Joio!!

For many a Welsh person the Eisteddfod is the major event of the year – it's part of our DNA!!

The excitement starts as you travel towards the Eisteddfod, being greeted by the flags and the bunting welcoming everyone to the event.

This is not only an opportunity to seep oneself into Welsh culture and tradition for a whole week but also a chance to absorb the atmosphere as one ambles around the Maes not knowing who you might bump into; old and new friends are often met and made.

We were so pleased this year to receive an invitation to represent the u3a at the Eisteddfod. I joined Rosemond, Olivia, Margaret and David at the u3a stand to promote the work of the u3a.





Thank you to Hazel, the Chair of the West Wales Network, for her organising and all her hard work in making this such a success. The West Wales Network of the u3a was definitely put on the map.







Mabon ap Gwynfor MS, Cabinet Minister for Health and Care, showed a great deal of interest in the u3a and what it offers.

Unfortunately I missed the visit from Ann Davies MP to our stand. She was also impressed with the social and leaning opportunities the u3a provides to its members.

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Monthly Meeting Presentations – Eleanor Baird

There was a good turnout at the July monthly meeting. The speaker, Mandy Painting, entertained us with her rich voice and expert piano skills while delivering an interesting talk on her role as celebrant. Many in the room will not have heard of this alternative approach to the way in which funerals are conducted.

Mandy told us about her previous work spanning 4 decades as a singer and pianist on board cruise ships and in hotels.

She is also a trained counsellor. It was on meeting a celebrant while playing piano at a friend's wedding which prompted her to follow that path also.

The musical entertainment made a pleasant change to the usual format.



The September speaker will be Nick Thomas, Education & Events Co-ordinator at Environmental Transfer Operation (ETO). He will tell us about the importance of recycling and the new scheme to be rolled out across the county this autumn.

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Back gammon – Kate Waldron

We always expect lower numbers in the holidays but four of us still enjoyed several games changing opponents. We're all still learning which makes the game even more fascinating.

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Bridge Group – Rosemond Halls

We meet regularly in each other's homes to enjoy an evening of playing Bridge.

If you are interested in this new group, please contact rosemond@carmarthenu3a.org.uk

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Just as we all thought the members of this group were studiously dealing the cards around the table, Rosemond sent this picture for the Newsletter. The pull of the moon at the eclipse obviously brought everyone outside.

I must admit this is one of my favourite photos published in the newsletter. What fun!!

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Knitting and Nattering – Ann Kitchen 

Only a small group met in August, but this was just as enjoyable.

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Book Club – Ann Kitchen

The August book will be 'Absolutely and Forever' by Rose Tremain as chosen by Pat.

In September we shall be reading 'The Keeper of Lost Things' by Ruth Hogan as chosen by Lyn. "A charming, clever and quietly moving debut novel of endless possibilities and joyful discoveries that explores the promises that we make and break".

Read the book and come and join us. We always welcome new members.

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Philosophy Group – Chas Griffin

We're still checking through a few apparently bizarre ideas that have been current for centuries or even millennia in other cultures, and which modern science (especially quantum physics) is very slowly beginning to see some sense in. I wonder where the investigations will end?

We're doing our best to untangle it all in Carmarthen!

Lots of fun.

Feel free to join us to add your two penneth at CAVS on Tuesday 8th and 22nd at 2:00 pm. You'll be very welcome....

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Sunday Lunch Group – Chris Woodward.

This month's newsletter includes Sunday Lunch Club details for both September and October. This is due to the October lunch being on the first Sunday of the month and not the second Sunday as usual.

September Sunday Lunch - Our September Sunday Lunch has been booked for Sunday 13th September at The Mansel Arms, Porthyrhyd, Carmarthen, SA32 8BS, meeting for lunch at 1:00pm. There is an option for a large or small Sunday lunch here.

If you would like to attend email Chris at chrisw@carmarthenu3a.org.uk by Tuesday 08th September.

October Sunday Lunch - Our October Sunday Lunch has been booked for Sunday 4th October at Llety Cynin, Llangynin Road, St Clears, SA33 4JR meeting for lunch at 1:00pm. This is a family run business established in 2008 - it's a hotel with a leisure club, a spa, bar and restaurant and function rooms on a working farm.

If you would like to attend please email Chris at chrisw@carmarthenu3a.org.uk by Monday 28th September. Thank you.

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Tea rota for the next 3 monthly meetings



September	World Faiths
October	Park Walkers
November	History

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 **Coffi a Chlonc –** Peter Loughran

The next meeting will be at the Ivy Bush on Tuesday 15th September at 2:00 pm. Hopefully we will all come back well refreshed. Plenty to discuss about our adventures or events during the summer. Perhaps some reflections on the Eisteddfod in August in Pembrokeshire. u3a was represented as part of the West Wales Network-possibly for the first time. A summer of heat, drought and climate change. Let's look forward to an interesting discussion.

PS - let's see if there's an appetite to continue the group! Croeso cynnes i bawb.

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 **Short Mat Bowls** – Eric Kitchen

As reported last month of the 14 members listed as participants of this group only 3 of us attended in July (we took a break in August). Such numbers are unsustainable and may lead to the closure of the group given the cost of hiring the venue.

Although I'll not be attending the scheduled September meeting on 10th, (13:45, Bancyfelin village hall) Richard has agreed to step in to lead the group on this occasion. The onus will be on members to confirm to Richard prior to the 10th that they will or will not be there as he will cancel the session if he judges the number of potential attendees to be too low. richard@carmarthenu3a.org.uk.

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Exploring World Faiths – Andrew Padfield

The World Faiths group in the September meeting will begin to consider Islam by looking at the life of Mohammed and then what happened after his death i.e. how Shia and Sunni versions of Islam came into being. There will be quite a lot of names to master.

The October meeting will be when Brother Andy from Skanda Vale will be telling us all about its founder and its guiding principles. Please contact andrew@carmarthenu3a.org.uk if you are interested in this talk.

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Discussion Group – Peter Loughran

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 9th September at 2:00 pm at The Mount in Queen Street.

In the absence of a chance to consider a suitable topic with members, I will suggest "Jaw, Jaw or War, War" — the famous words of a successful war leader. Is it still a good maxim, or has life and the world order moved on?
Are we, as a species, hardwired to reach for the gun and the bullet as a first resort? What do the lessons of history teach us, if we are willing to learn?
Do current conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, Sudan and many other places offer any insights into the evolution of conflict and the inevitable search for peace? Is religion a helpful element in the mix?
What about the experience of South Africa and India, with leaders who offered a different path? And what about the Welsh experience and the Eisteddfod challenge – A oes heddwch?

See you all in September — time to reflect in the meantime!

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Start Speaking Welsh – Frances Thesiger

We've been enjoying our summer break and are looking to continue in September but our numbers are low and we could do with a few more members. Please let me know if you are interested frances@carmarthenu3a.org.uk

The group is small and friendly with opportunity for everyone to join in with practice conversations, songs, games etc under the expert guidance of Rosemond.

There are two sessions each month which have been held in the Wesley Methodist Church on Friday afternoons, though it is possible the day and time might change.

Do consider becoming a member, we'd love to see you!

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Music Appreciation Group – Richard Swann

The next meeting will be on 30th September at 2:30 pm. Everyone is welcome to come to CAVS, The Mount, Queen St. Bring a CD or electronic version or just tell us your choice and we will try to find it on Spotify or YouTube. Your choice can be of any genre, the idea is to discuss your likes and dislikes with each other and you may come to appreciate something which you previously thought you didn't like. It does happen!
If you would just like to come along to see if it is of interest to you please do so and you could join in the discussion. No commitment to join the group.

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History Group – Judith Holland

Nothing to report for August but I do have a change in the programme for September:

There will be a change in the programme on the 16th September. Sian Swann who was to give a talk on Bishop Murray's daughter, very sadly lost her husband recently. She has decided to postpone her talk until next year. Bruce Wallace has agreed to step in and give a talk instead, details to be confirmed nearer the time.

We will be working on the programme for 2027 very soon, so if you have any suggestions for subjects or speakers, please let me know. If you have a talk you would like to give that would be very welcome too.

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Walking Group – Eric Kitchen (Coordinator)

Mike with Chris will be leading the 18th September walk starting in Kidwelly, meeting at 10:30 in Parc Stephens, the postcode is SA17 4UH (what3words- dried.remit.copy).

Drive into Kidwelly from the A484 and cross over the bridge, then turn first right into Station Road. The entrance to Parc Stephens is on the left (just past the small car park) and is signposted. There are toilets, not far away, in Bridge Street.

From Parc Stephens the walk will be through Kidwelly to the Quay and back with some road walking but the rest is on dedicated footpaths. There is only one short climb over the railway line and then a few steps down onto the footpath.

Lunch will be in the Kidwelly Deli, the owner has asked if lunches could be preordered so they can serve us all quite quickly as it is only the owner and his wife serving. Please let Mike know by Friday 11th September if you are coming and intending having lunch. If you are then he will email you the menu but he will need to know what you want by Monday 14th September (mike@carmarthenu3a.org.uk)

Eric has asked the following to be repeated as no one has come forward since the last newsletter:
Over the years there have been many members who have lead the walks but there comes a time when they understandably step down. Earlier in the year a seemingly well attended meeting for prospective leaders was held. Unfortunately general interest did not translate into any new leaders so as stated by me in the last newsletter we now have very few members prepared to lead a walk and as a result there was no u3a August walk. It may also be true for next October.

This has always been a mainstay group for the u3a and not to put undue strain on the few who will lead we need an additional leader to come forward. Have a chat with former and present leaders to see what's involved and do contact me if you're interested (eric@carmarthenu3a.org.uk).

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Garden Group – Kathie Wareham (Coordinator) 

August Garden Visit Leader – Suzanne Price Tate

Note it's a week earlier than normal to avoid Bank Holiday traffic at Treffgarne Hall, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA62 5PJ on Friday 21st August at 2:00 pm. £6 entry fee (cash or card).

Please confirm if you would like to come along by 12th August to suzanne@carmarthenu3a.org.uk.

We look forward to receiving the report and photos for the next newsletter.

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September Garden Visit Leader – Juliet Allison

Dinefwr Orchardeers, Home Farm, Dinefwr, Llandeilo, SA19 6RT. Friday 25th September at 2:00 pm. £5 Entry (to include tea/coffee and apple cake)
NB: The post code is for the whole of Dinefwr park and will not take you to Home Farm itself.

We will be visiting the Orchards at Dinefwr which are looked after and maintained by the Dinefwr Orchardeers, a group of volunteers who are guided by a very enthusiastic Philip James in conjunction with the National Trust.

The 2 orchards consist of 11/2 hectares which are planted with over 102 varieties of apple trees along with some pear trees. The orchard was initially planted in 2012 but subsequently taken over by The Orchardeers in 2015, 11 years ago.
We will have a tour of the orchards and the pond and Philip James will give an interesting talk and I'm sure will be able to answer any questions about apple juicing and the progress they have made over the years. There will then be an opportunity to taste some ciders and apple juice and, of course, purchasing a bottle or two if you so wish.

The ground is on a slight incline with grass paths. If it is wet then Philip will arrange for us to be indoors. There are ladies/gents toilets in the granary. There is a very large car park.

Directions: Take the A40 Carmarthen road to Llandeilo. Just before the Llandeilo roundabout turn right on to Carmarthen Road. Then turn immediately right down an unsignposted lane. Drive about 50 yards, turn left and immediately right into Home Farm car park. What 3 words: funds.irrigate.inner

I'm sure it will be a fun day! juliet@carmarthenu3a.org.uk

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Who's who on the committee.

Richard Swann	Chair	chair@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Harold Liberty	Vice-chair	vicechair@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Susan Edwards	Secretary	secretary@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Eric Kitchen	Treasurer	treasurer@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Eric Kitchen	Membership	membership@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Ann Kitchen	Group Coordinator	ann@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Ann Kitchen	Newsletter Editor	editor@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Ann Kitchen	Network Representative	ann@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Peter Loughran	Web Editor	peter@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Peter Loughran	Facebook Editor	peter@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
Judith Holland	Committee Member	judith@carmarthenu3a.org.uk

Committee Assistants

Anne Priest	Minute Secretary	
Eleanor Baird	Speaker Secretary	speaker@carmarthenu3a.org.uk

Useful Websites

Carmarthen u3a website is: www.carmarthenu3a.org.uk

The West Wales Network website is: West Wales Network - Home - Wales Region

The national u3a website is: u3a - Welcome to the u3a

September 2026 Group Activities

1st	10:00	Tuesday	The Park Walkers	Velodrome	pat@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
3rd	14:00	Thursday	Literature	Ivy Bush	pthacker@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
4th	14:00	Friday	Scrabble	Library	angela@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
4th	14:30	Friday	Start Speaking Welsh	Wesleyan Church	frances@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
7th	10:30	Monday	Coffee Morning	Ivy Bush	chris@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
7th	14:00	Monday	World Faiths	The Mount (CAVS)	andrew@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
8th	10:00	Tuesday	The Park Walkers	Velodrome	pat@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
8th	14:00	Tuesday	Poetry	The Mount (CAVS)	pat@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
8th	14:00	Tuesday	Philosophy	The Mount (CAVS)	chas@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
9th	09:30	Wednesday	Art	Cartref Cynnes	chris@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
9th	10:30	Wednesday	Backgammon	Library	kate@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
9th	14:00	Wednesday	Discussion	The Mount (CAVS)	peter@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
10th	13:45	Thursday	Short Mat Bowls	Bancyfelin Hall	richard@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
13th	12:30	Sunday	Sunday Lunch	The Mansel Arms	chrisw@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
14th	14:00	Monday	Knitting & Nattering	Ivy Bush	ann@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
15th	10:00	Tuesday	The Park Walkers	Velodrome	pat@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
15th	14:30	Tuesday	Coffi a Chlonc	Ivy Bush	peter@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
16th	14:00	Wednesday	History	Bowling Club	judith@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
18th	10:30	Friday	Walking	Kidwelly	mikew@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
18th	14:30	Friday	Start Speaking Welsh	Wesleyan Church	frances@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
21st	11:00	Monday	10 pin bowling	Excel Bowling Club	ann@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
21st	14:00	Monday	Digital	Learning Centre	margaret@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
21st	14:00	Monday	Book Club	Ivy Bush	ann@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
21st	10:00	Monday	Committee	The Mount (CAVS)	secretary@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
22nd	10:00	Tuesday	The Park Walkers	Velodrome	pat@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
22nd	14:00	Tuesday	Philosophy	The Mount (CAVS)	chas@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
23rd	09:30	Wednesday	Art	Cartref Cynnes	chris@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
24th	14:00	Thursday	Monthly Meeting	Bowling Club	richard@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
25th	14:00	Friday	Garden	Dinefwr Orchard	juliet@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
29th	10:00	Tuesday	The Park Walkers	Velodrome	pat@carmarthenu3a.org.uk
30th	14:30	Wednesday	Listening to Music	The Mount (CAVS)	richard@carmarthenu3a.org.uk

Times and venues as provided by Group Leaders, if in doubt please check with them.