



COWBRIDGE  
u3a  
learn, laugh, live

MARCH 2026

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Dear members and friends

This certainly is a month of transitions. For a start, proverbially, March comes in like a lion (a fairly mild mannered one this year) and goes out like a lamb. We shall see about that. What is more, the first day marked the meteorological change of seasons when, according to forecasters, we move from winter into spring. Astronomical spring starts later in the month on the vernal equinox which, this year, falls on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Then, of course, we have the start of British Summer Time when we put clocks forward and enjoy an additional hour of daylight in the evening. Altogether, quite a lot of change for one month. Here is some news about forthcoming events, this month and beyond.

#### **General Meetings**

Our last General Meeting, in January, was very well attended with 76 members present to hear Debra John as **'The Swansea Debtor'**. Her performance, in the character of a Victorian Lady, was particularly well received and, judging by the applause afterwards, greatly appreciated. I think you will be pleased to know that we are hoping to book Debra again for a different performance, hopefully in the not-too-distant future.

The General Meeting this month will take place on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> March. The speaker will be Roger James and his subject is **'The Golden Triangle of India'**. This triangle, which is almost equilateral, is in northern India and has three important cities at its points; Delhi, Jaipur and Agra. All three are popular with tourists and are known for their remarkable architecture and history. Roger James will talk about India in a broader context as well, to give some idea of the culture of this vast country. It is, quite literally, a very rich subject and promises to be fascinating. Don't miss it!

You may also like to have advance notice of next month's meeting on Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> April. As part of our varied programme, the topic will be **'Whale and Dolphin Conservation'** and the speaker is Bernard Purrier. Look out for more information about him and the topic in the next bulletin.

#### **Coffee in the 96 Degrees Coffee House**

The next gathering for coffee, tea or whatever alternative beverage you fancy, will be, as usual on the last Monday of the month – in this case on Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> March at 11.00 am in our usual venue, the 96 Degrees Coffee House, just behind the Town Hall in Cowbridge. This is an opportunity to meet fellow members plus some of the committee in a relaxed and informal setting. Do come along, buy yourself a hot or cold drink and maybe one of their excellent cakes, and meet some u3a friends. We shall also meet at the end of the next month, on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> April. There will, however, be no meeting for coffee (etc.) in May because the last Monday on this month coincides with the Spring Bank Holiday. We should be back to normal in June and July.

### **Cowbridge May Fair 2026**

This annual event will, once again, be held on the early Spring Bank Holiday, on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> May. However, in a departure from the usual arrangements, this year it will be held on what is coming to be known as the Police Field. I have always known it as the (Grammar) School Rugby Field; the one bounded by houses on Westgate, the old cattle market site, and the Verlands and Bowman's Well estates. We have been invited by the Community Events Group to have a u3a stand or stall on the field. It is a good chance to show the wider community something of what we do, what we can offer and generally, to promote the u3a. It is also an excellent opportunity to recruit new members. We would value your support so do come along to our splendid new u3a gazebo and say hello.

### **Cowbridge u3a Quiz**

Our Quiz Group is making very good progress in planning and preparing for the quiz on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 2.00 pm in the main hall of Cowbridge Town Hall. A good number of teams have already entered. These include teams from neighbouring u3a such as Torfaen, Pontyclun, Porthcawl, Newport and Aberdare as well as some teams from our own groups. Arrangements are in hand for the provision of light refreshments. Work is still in progress but going well. It's a brilliant, and fairly rare opportunity to get together with some neighbours. We would welcome your participation too.

### **Beacon Update**

We are making very good progress in our transition onto the Beacon on-line management system and I would like to say how much we appreciate the efforts of all those – Group Leaders in particular but many other members as well – who have made this achievement possible. We still have a little way to go but, if you still have misgivings, you may be interested to know that:

- Beacon is designed by u3as, for u3as to provide a simple management tool,
- Currently it is used by over 660 u3as across the UK and 17 networks or regions,
- It allows any u3a to manage data and communication with members easily and efficiently,
- It can be a huge time-saver for those who manage membership and group information, and
- With new regulations on Data Privacy, it ensures that we comply fully with all legal requirements including UK GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations).

Once again, may I say a huge 'THANK YOU' to everyone who has helped us to get this far!

### **Diary Dates**

Here is a brief summary of the dates of the forthcoming events for your diary.

Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2.00 pm - General Meeting, The Golden Triangle of India, Roger James

Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2.00 pm – Cowbridge u3a Quiz, Main Hall, Cowbridge Town Hall

Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 11.00 am - Coffee at the 96 Degrees Coffee House

Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2.00 pm - General Meeting 'Whale and Dolphin Conservation' Bernard Purrier

Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 11.00 am – Coffee at the 96 Degrees Coffee House

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May – Cowbridge May Fair, Police/School Field

I think that is all the news I have for you at present. Let us hope that the next few weeks bring us some pleasant spring weather as March goes out like a lamb. Here's hoping . . . As usual, if you know of any member who has not received this bulletin, do print a copy for them. It should only take a single sheet of A4 paper if you print on both sides.

Best wishes,

*Peter*

(Peter Carter: Chairman, Cowbridge u3a)