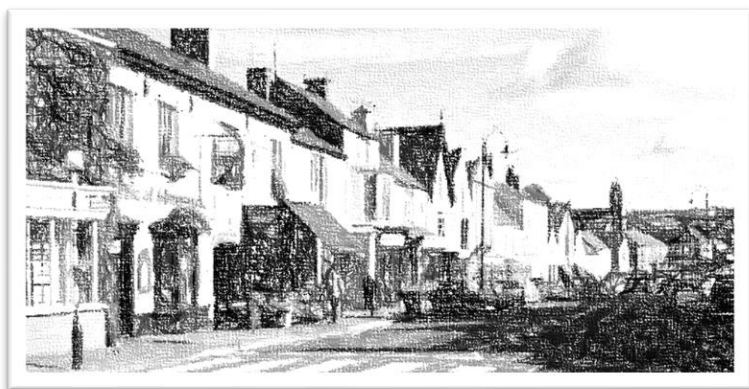




COWBRIDGE
u3a
learn, laugh, live

AUGUST 2026

Dear members and friends

We still seem to be experiencing warm, (some might say hot) summer weather. I hope that you are enjoying it although, I suppose, the main cause for concern now is a lack of rainfall. Our garden is certainly suffering from drought and, although we in Cowbridge have no hosepipe ban yet, we are not likely to be surprised if one is imposed soon. This is also the season of school holidays which may bring, for many of us, a chance to see grandchildren and other family members. If you will be seeing family or going on holiday, or some combination of them both, may I wish you a very pleasant time.

General Meetings

Considering the heatwave, and the time of year, our General Meeting in July was very well attended. Over 50 of us were present to hear Lindsay Bryant tell us about the '**Bristol Channel Paddle Steamers**' and to show us some very nostalgic photographs of these old steamers plying their trade up and down, as well as across the Bristol Channel. I don't think I had appreciated just how popular a form of transport it was.

Our next General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, 12th August when Victoria Russell and Daniel O'Keefe will be speaking to us about '**The Work of the NSPCC and Childline**'. Both Victoria and Daniel are closely involved in the management of these organisations in Wales and I have no doubt that their presentation will be informed by their own personal experiences of this work. Their talk will focus on NSPCC Cymru and its work supporting babies, children and young people across Wales. It will be a more serious subject than some recent General Meeting topics, but no less worthwhile for that. I do hope that you are able to come.

May I also draw your attention to our meeting on September 9th when we will be holding our **Annual General Meeting**, (our 31st!). I know that this could sound like a tedious business meeting but we have tried to make it as enjoyable and positive experience as possible with the essential business of Cowbridge u3a conducted quickly and efficiently leaving us time to enjoy the company, entertainment and refreshments. I will include a little more information about this further on in this bulletin but, please, put the date in your diary and/or calendar and do make every effort to come.

Sad News

I know that many of you – all those who knew her - will be saddened to hear that Pam Robins passed away recently, I believe on July 18th, although I am not certain of the precise date. Pam was one of the founder members of Cowbridge u3a, (her membership number was seven!) and she was membership secretary for many years. As one of six founder members, Pam was awarded honorary membership at the AGM last year, marking our 30th Anniversary. At present, I do not have any

information about the funeral arrangements but, as soon as I have them, I will make sure that the details are passed on to you.

Also in our thoughts are old friends David Pierce (another founder member) and Gavin Davies. We have heard from Kath, Gavin's daughter that Gavin was admitted to hospital (the Heath) over ten days ago. He is seriously ill. He has said that he does not want any visitors and I am sure you will respect his wishes. However, if you would like to send him a card, you can address it to his home: Pen y Bryn, Penmark, CF62 3BP. David Pierce has also been in the wars, having suffered a nasty fall and broken a few bones. I know that you would want me to wish both David and Gavin a full and speedy recovery.

Wanted – Secretary (Principal Officer)

You may recall that I mentioned this in the last bulletin. To the best of my knowledge, we have not received any expressions of interest yet. This actually leaves us in a very serious position. The Secretary is an important member of the committee and one of three Principal Officers. According to our constitution, we must have a secretary in order to continue to function. It is an essential requirement and not in any way optional. To put it bluntly, without a secretary, Cowbridge u3a can not continue to exist and would have to close. Can you help, or do you know someone who could? It would be possible to have some flexibility. For example, the position could be shared by two people. We could have a secretary and a deputy secretary, for example or maybe a minutes secretary and a correspondence secretary. Other permutations are possible and members of the committee would be very happy to discuss any suggestions that might be made. Our present secretary, Anne Thomas has let it be known that she would be very willing to chat with any of you, about the role. What is certain is that this is a problem that Cowbridge must solve. Please think carefully about this.

Coffee in the 96 Degrees Coffee Shop

The next informal gathering for coffee (or whatever alternative beverage you might prefer) should be in September, not August. This is because the last Monday of the month of August falls on a Bank Holiday. There will, therefore, be no meeting in August. We should be able to return to normal in September by meeting on Monday, 28th September in the 96 Degrees Coffee Shop. Do come along for some good company and friendly conversation with other members and some of the committee.

Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 9th September 2026

Our Vice Chair, Elizabeth Eustace has asked me to include the following paragraph in this bulletin.

As well as a new Secretary and Vice Chair being sought, the committee has created two new positions to be filled. These are an Events Coordinator to organise and coordinate 'all membership events' (not group events) and a Membership Liaison role responsible for Meet and Greet, feedback on membership retention and ensure members feel valued and supported. The full detail of these roles will be discussed and agreed with the input of the new committee member.

Here is some more information about the AGM

- It is essential that the meeting is quorate in order to validate proceedings. This requires attendance by at least 20% of the membership. As things stand this means we need at least 62 members to be present.
- Reports by the Chair and Treasurer will be published in advance of the AGM, in the September bulletin.
- The main business of the AGM will be election of Principal Officers and committee members. Details of nominees, proposers and seconders will be published in the September bulletin.

- The AGM agenda will be published in the September bulletin with hard copies available on the day. Draft minutes of the 2025 AGM will also be available on the day. They have already been published on our website in advance of the AGM.
- After the main business of the AGM has been conducted, entertainment will be provided by the 'Porthcawl Ukelele Bandits and refreshments will be served at tables.

Possible new groups

Our Groups Coordinator, Roger Eustace has asked for the following paragraph to be included in this bulletin.

Interest has been shown in starting the following new groups but more members are needed to make them viable:

1. Art Appreciation – talks by outside speakers or members, visits to art galleries, museums etc.
2. Astronomy – learn about the night sky, extraterrestrial objects and phenomena
3. Crafts – share skills, learn new techniques and connect with others who share a passion for crafting
4. French Conversation – Try to converse in French, play games, chat and have fun with others of a similar level
5. Italian Conversation – Learn together with members of similar ability and have fun in a friendly and supportive atmosphere
6. Poetry Aloud – Learn about poets and read out their poetry to other members. Humour and various topics included
7. Singing for Pleasure – Get together and enjoy light-hearted singing with other members for the pure joy of doing so. No auditions, just fun
8. Spanish Conversation – Learn basic Spanish in a friendly and supportive atmosphere
9. Theatre/Cinema – Join with others for trips to the theatre and latest films
10. Walking with Dogs – Join other members and dogs for easy walking and chat, stopping off for refreshments (Dogs not essential!)

Diary Date Reminders

Here is a summary of events taking place in the next few months:

- Wednesday, 12th August, 2.00 pm General Meeting '**The Work of the NSPCC and Childline**' Victoria Russell and Daniel O'Keefe
- Monday, 31st August, **NO** Coffee at the 96 Degrees Coffee House (clash with Bank Holiday)
- Wednesday, 9th September, 2.00 pm **Annual General Meeting** (plus entertainment by the **Porthcawl Ukelele Bandits** and refreshments, including red and white wine, soft drinks and nibbles)

Yet again, I have gone well into a third side of paper so please accept my apologies if you need to print this out. I just couldn't manage to get it all onto two sides. If you have plans to make the most of our warm and sunny weather by going out on excursions or holidays, or simply to meet up with family and friends in the garden, may I wish you a most enjoyable month of August. I will be leaving to go on holiday at the end of July which is why this bulletin is being issued a little earlier than usual.

Best wishes,

Peter

(Peter Carter: Chair, Cowbridge u3a)