

Wrexham u3a – Chair’s Annual Report 2026

A year ago, I was given the honour to be your Chair and doesn't that year seem to have flown by.

The ethos behind the u3a movement is that it is run by members for members and every single one of us is responsible for its continued success. So we must have been doing something right as our numbers have increased and our groups have continued to flourish over the past 12 months.

This year is an important year for our u3a as we are celebrating our 20th Anniversary with some important occasions. Our first being our Monthly Meeting in February which recognised our 20 years with our special speakers and drinks and cake to toast the occasion. Later in the year we will be celebrating further, in a more casual way, with an afternoon tea dance. We must thank Linda Wilson, ably assisted by Anne Hughes, who have done most of the work in getting these celebrations off the ground.

In the past year our monthly meetings have been well attended. We have been entertained by a variety of guest speakers, from music to 'Digital Gangsters' to stories of Margaret Thatcher to name but a few. Hopefully there has been something for everyone. We have Jane Dutton and Stan Moore to thank for carrying out the arduous task of organising our speakers. If you have any ideas for future speakers, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Once again our Group Leaders have worked wonders dedicating their time for our members to enjoy a variety of topics from 'Art Appreciation' to 'Wine Appreciation' with much, much more in between. They all give their time freely for the benefit of others. The time they spend researching, organising and leading their groups often goes unnoticed. On behalf of the committee and our membership I thank you all. However, we are always on the lookout for more of you to come forward to help set up new groups. Our Group Leaders, along with our committee, are the lifeblood of our u3a, without them nothing would happen.

Many of us this year have enjoyed a number of whole group activities. A big thank you to all those who helped organise these for us to enjoy. Once again the time spent researching, organising and leading these activities often goes unnoticed.

- Scotland stays and day trips to near and far.
- Lunch at the Ramada
- Treasure Hunt around Wrexham, and
- Canal Boat trip across the Pontcysyllte Aquaduct with afternoon tea in the Chapel Tea Rooms.
- And who can forget the delightful Christmas meal at Wrexham Golf Club (again) complete with our traditional Christmas quiz (with thanks to my lovely family for making it fun and not too hard).

Last March you elected a new committee, which included 5 new members with 7 returning. This year we do say goodbye and thank you to Sue Holland who will not be seeking re-election. We all know that people who lead, need people who help and support and I couldn't be Chair without my team, the committee. They have all done an excellent job this year.

Zarina Kagan and Anne Hughes ably took over as Groups' Coordinator and Membership Secretary respectively. We thank both Sandra and Carolyn for continuing to mentor their successors this year. Anne Hughes also took on the role of Newsletter Editor with big thanks to both her and to Ann La Course who has looked after our Newsletter for many years. Please remember the Newsletter does not write itself so we are always looking for contributions from members and Group Leaders. We need to thank Gwyneth Hughes who has looked after our accounts and ensured that we still have money in the bank and John Cubitt who has taken on the arduous task of updating all our Wrexham u3a policies. Finally my thanks to Val Hughes for agreeing to be our vice-chair.

Sadly, it is now time to say farewell to Stan Moore who for many years (too many to count) has been our Secretary. Without his hard work and dedication our u3a would not have continued to function. I'm sure he will continue to be there in the background to help our next Secretary settle into their role.

To ensure continuity, members in key roles need to have support and potential successors ready to step in should the need arise. Thankfully, this hasn't been needed this year but we do need to look to the future for new volunteers who would be willing to take over these positions if and when the need arises. Remember if you can help in any way please let us know.

The committee meets regularly to ensure that everything is running smoothly and to ensure continuity for our members and our groups so, to this end, we agreed to move to new websites. We chose Siteworks and Beacon as these are the ones recommended by the u3a Trust and who will offer us a great deal of help and support should we need it. Our new web team have spent the last couple of months setting this up so that it was ready to go live in March. We appreciate that initially this has meant that our members and Group Leaders have had to get to grips with the new system. However, there is still a lot of help and support around if needed. Once joined, we hope you will find/have found it easy to navigate. It would be very remiss of us if we didn't sincerely thank Alan Sutton for ably looking after our previous system and helping members to use it for the past 7 years. Sometimes we have to move with the times and many u3as have moved over to these new systems so we are in good company. We have Kate Bunning to thank for spearheading this new venture.

I am still trying to work out how I got here but I am glad that I have had the opportunity to serve as your Chair and I have enjoyed working with such a positive and capable team.

Finally, thank you – the members. I sincerely thank you for your positive support, engagement and comments. It is YOU who have ensured that our u3a fully upholds our ideals of Learning, Laughing and Living Life to the Full – and long may it continue.

Lynn Jones

Chair Wrexham u3a

March 2026