

Wirksworth and District u3a Newsletter:

October 2026

Coffee Mornings:

10:15; 1st Wednesday of the month at the Maltings

The **4th November** Coffee Morning has a talk on by Rachel Metcalfe, who is the Centre Manager at the Farming Life Centre, in the Agricultural Business Centre in Bakewell. The Farming Life Centre provides health/well-being and business-related information to the farming and rural community of the Derbyshire and Staffordshire Peak District. She will talk about the work of the Farming Life Centre, with a focus on the development and growth of the Peak Women in Agriculture group.

The **2nd December** Coffee Morning Christmas special includes UkeWirks and Mulled wine. You will get an extra-large biscuit if you wear a Christmas hat.

The **6th January** is Avalanche! A snapshot of Austrian Alpine life. Jonathan Griggs and his wife Natalie share their experiences of living in Austria.

Other

Annual General Meeting

Wirksworth & District u3a AGM was held on 7th October. Annual reports from the Chair and Treasurer were presented, the 2025/6 accounts were approved, and the Executive Committee was elected.

Chair's Report: main points

Membership continued to rise, from 200 to 230, our highest ever. But, given we lose members every year for a variety of reasons, we need substantial recruitment just to stand still. Thanks to Margaret for managing the change in the subscription year.

Publicity is important. Jonathan continues to develop our website. Let's not forget the importance of word of mouth in attracting new members. Special mention for the Wirksworth Tapestry for the publicity it brings us at such events as the Twinning Reception in the Town Hall and from its display in St. Mary's at the Wirksworth Festival.

A wide variety of coffee mornings were held at The Maltings with regular attendance of 50+. Thanks to our Speakers Co-ordinator Jenny (who is stepping down), Mike Lewis, Marvin Harding, Geraldine Bowen and all the volunteers who make the event so successful.

Thanks also to the Group Co-ordinators who are at the heart of the Wirksworth & District u3a. Our knowledge of Group Co-ordinators' views was greatly enhanced by a survey organised by Sheila Harding. Issues highlighted are being pursued and suggestions, like a First Aid Course, have already been taken up. It's noteworthy that many of our Group Coordinators were in at the start of our u3a in 2017.

The number of Activity Groups remains at around 20. This will be our focus of action in the current year.

The Executive Committee

The Chair, at 2 years, is now longest serving Committee Member in same post and, in accordance with u3a rules, he will be standing down at next AGM.

Over the last 18 months no fewer than eight members have volunteered to join the Executive Committee. Thanks for this heroic volunteering effort! Long may it continue.

The New Executive Committee:

Chair - Ray Proctor: Webmaster - Jonathan Griggs: Publicity - Jerry Allen: Treasurer – Kate Murray: Membership – Margaret Keeling: Speaker Coordinator – Glenys McLaren: Secretary – Pat Horner: Other Committee members - Geraldine Bowen, Hilary Hebron, Gill Sutcliffe

We welcome our new members: Pat Horner, Kate Murray, Gill Sutcliffe and Glenys McLaren. We bid farewell, with many thanks, to Kay Mathur, Jenny Deville and Penny Ackland. Hilary Hebron remains on the Committee to manage our application for Registered Charity status. A tribute too to Nigel Livesey, our Webmaster for some 12 months before he sadly passed away.

Ten-Year Birthday Celebration ideas

Wirksworth & District u3a will celebrate its tenth anniversary next year. Please suggest ways to celebrate.

Group News

Our u3a has a variety of interest groups. For further details see the Wirksworth & District u3a website (<https://wirksworth.u3asite.uk>).

The **Photography Group** took some excellent photos at the festival.



Creating and running a new interest group

Setting up a new group is simple. If you have an interest that you would like to share with others why not? We have experienced group leaders who have been running groups for years and will help to set up new groups. You will get support from the committee regarding room hire, the website, publicity, recruitment and keeping in touch with group members.

If you have an idea that you would like to discuss, contact any member of the u3a committee at a coffee morning or email me at jerryallen@btinternet.com.

The new Website

Since becoming the webmaster looking after the Wirksworth u3a website, Jonathan has been reviewing how the site is organised. He felt that it was important to tell visitors early on in their visit firstly, about what the purpose of the u3a is and secondly, to introduce the concept of interest groups. Therefore, the home page text has been amended to reflect this, along with additional pictures representing some of the interest groups. It is hoped that this will improve the engagement with visitors and encourage them to look further into what we can offer. The new home page will also have details of the next coffee morning and a link to the latest newsletter. Membership information, which is on the current home page, will be moved to a new separate page. Below is a view of what the new home page will look like.

u3a

Wirksworth and District

Welcome News Groups Coordinators Events Committee Links

Search ...

Welcome to Wirksworth and District u3a



Next Coffee Morning:
Wednesday November 4th 10.15
at The Maltings

Rachel Metcalfe from The
Farming Life Centre, Bakewell

Latest Newsletter:

We are a member-led organisation for people who are in
later life, creating opportunities to

- Learn, Laugh and Live
- Share our ideas, knowledge, experience and enthusiasms in a friendly atmosphere.
- Develop the fun and passion we have for whatever interests us.
- Meet up with friends and make new ones.
- Be part of a community.
- Stay physically and mentally active.
- No qualifications are required, offered or sought.

Interest Groups

With over 20 interest groups we offer activities that range from sedate card games, reading, local history, genealogy, to more active groups like pickle ball, walking and cycling. There are language groups, science and technology and even holidays. All in all, there is something for everyone.

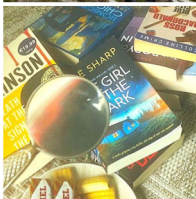
Every interest group is managed by its members and meetings are very relaxed.

You can join as many groups as you wish and we positively encourage new groups which we will help you set up.

There is no upper or lower age barrier and there's something for everyone.

Information about the Wirksworth and District interest groups can be found here on our [Groups](#) page. In here one can send an enquiry email to any of the group leaders to initiate contact and find out more information.

Our aim is to ensure our u3a embraces the ethos of Learn, Laugh, Live and that our members have access to the informal learning and many social activities available regardless of impairment or disability, ethnic origins or diversity.



Information about joining the u3a can be found on our [Membership](#) page. Alternatively contact individual group leaders via the group information page.

By joining us we are sure you will quickly find new interests, re-kindle existing ones, learn something new, even teach us something different and find new friends!

It is hoped to make the new pages live in the next few weeks.