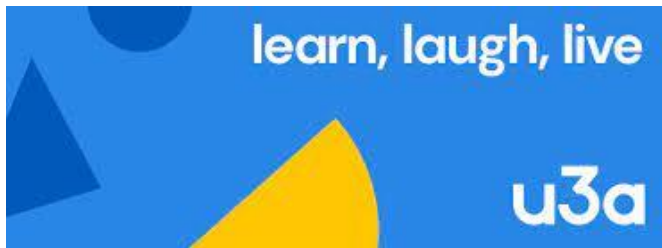


# December 2025 NEWSLETTER



**u3a** Wem & District

## Committee Members

**Chairperson:** Jackie Mirehouse

**Vice Chair:** Enid Smith

**Treasurer:** David Newell

**Business Secretary:** Kate Turner

**Minutes Secretary:** Kate Turner

**Membership Secretary:** Eirwen Williams

**Groups Coordinator:** Vacant

**Publicity:** Kate Turner

**Speaker Coordinator:** Paul Young

**Web Site Coordinator:** Glynis Nicholls

**ExO Members:** Michael Bendall, Patrick Blundred, Audrey Moseley, Rosalind Hamson, Elizabeth (Liz) Dawes, Jan Daniells

As the year draws to a close, it's a pleasure to reflect on everything our Wem and District u3a community has shared and achieved in 2025. Whether in town and village halls, meeting rooms, cafés, or on our many walks around the Shropshire countryside, members have continued to show exactly what makes this group so special; curiosity, friendship, and a willingness to keep learning with enthusiasm.

Our groups have been as lively as ever, from local history to family history, photography to crafts, music, science and arts and literature, and the ever-popular walking and gardening sessions to name but a few. New members have joined us throughout the year, bringing fresh interests and ideas, while long-standing members have continued to support and inspire with their experience and good humour.

December gives us a chance not only to look back but also to pause and appreciate the connections that hold our community together. Whether you've led a group, organised an outing, helped behind the scenes, or simply turned up with a smile and a willingness to join in, your contribution is valued. Wem and District u3a thrives because of you, and you have all contributed to the spirit of lifelong learning that defines u3a.

I would like to take this opportunity on your behalf, to sincerely thank the Committee and Group Leaders for all the hard work that they have put in over the past year to ensure things run smoothly for us all to enjoy.

As we move into the festive season, I hope you find time to rest, enjoy the company of friends and family, and gather energy for a bright new year of learning, exploring and sharing. The 2026 programme already promises new opportunities and fresh adventures, and we look forward to welcoming you back in January.

Warm wishes for a peaceful December and a very happy New Year,

Peta Smith, Editor [editornews@btinternet.com](mailto:editornews@btinternet.com) Next Newsletter is due out in March 2026

## Wem & District U3A Groups and Group Leaders

### Groups and Group Leaders

Art and Literature – Margaret Parson  
Chess and Go – Geoff Glover  
Computer & Mobile Devices - Glynis Nicholls  
Crafts - Hazel Adkins  
Cycling - Bob Millington  
Discussion/Current Affairs – Richard Cheeseman  
Family History - Ralph Tracy / Sue Young  
Fifth Friday Yompers – Clive Smewing/Paul Silson  
Films - Julie Bushell  
Gardening – Hazel Adkins  
Geocaching – Mary Sparkes  
Literature /Humanities – Margaret Parson  
Local History (1) - Kathy Coombs  
Local History (2) - Jackie Mirehouse  
Mahjong – Hazel Adkins  
Paddle Boarding – Clive Smewing  
Photography – Peter Thompson  
Pub Lunch Group – Kathy Coombs  
Rummikub - Hazel Adkins

### Groups and Group Leaders

Singing for Fun – Barbara Longhurst  
Social Group – Chris Fraser  
Stitchers - Sue Young  
Strollers/ Dog Walking – Audrey Moseley  
Table Tennis – Angela Launchbury  
Ukulele – Roger Howarth  
Walking – Derek Sparkes  
Walking Tennis – Angela Launchbury  
Members One Off – Chris Fraser

For details of the groups, meeting times and venues, planned activities and contact details please see the Wem and District U3A webpage.

<https://wem.u3asite.uk/>

If you require any formation about the Groups, could you please contact the group Leaders directly by contacting **Post Vacant** our groups coordinator by email and she will pass on your message to the relevant Group Leader.

**or send an email directly to her from the Wem and District U3A webpage**

Most groups meet monthly unless otherwise specified. Please bear in mind that this list is by no means definitive, as we are always interested in forming new groups that are not covered elsewhere. Please let us know if your interest area is not covered and we can ask others if they would also be interested in forming a group around your topic

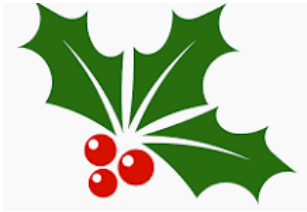
If you wish to start a new group or test an activity also contact

**Position Vacant**



**Upcoming Events**

**December 2 2025:  
10am for 10.30am start.**



**CHRISTMAS QUIZ**  
**Tickets Only**

Our December meeting is a quiz for teams of up to six people with our Quizmasters

Hosted by  
Paul and Sue Young



**Upcoming Events**

**January 2026:**

**GENTLE REMINDER  
WE DO NOT MEET IN  
JANUARY**



### Upcoming Events

**February 3 2026: General Meeting  
Wem Town Hall ALL ARE WELCOME  
10am for 10.30am start.**

**Guest Speaker: Robert Parry**

#### “ The Royal Oak/Boscobel”

The story is about how the future King Charles II hid in the large, bushy oak tree to evade Cromwell's soldiers, which is why it became famously known as "The Royal Oak".

### Upcoming Events

**March 3 2026: General Meeting Wem  
Town Hall ALL ARE WELCOME 10am for  
10.30am start.**

**Guest Speaker: Mike Haynes**

#### “ The Big Stink”



Drawing on years of research into the history of public health in the UK and Europe, this talk looks at the ways in which a healthier environment was created for us all

# Annual Report from the Chair of Wem and District u3a

I have just completed the first year as Chair of the Wem & District u3a.

It has been a pleasure to lead the existing committee during the last 12 months.

As you are aware, we had major changes for the Officers on our committee due to the length of service for various roles as mentioned in our Constitution.

**Chair** – Enid Smith was our Chair Person for the 3 year period and had to step down, I knew she would be a hard act to follow and I thank her for her support when I took over this role.

**Vice Chair** – As I stood down to take over my new role – Margaret Webber (Mags) agreed to take on this position giving me the help when it was needed.

**Treasurer** - Derek Sparkes had completed the 6-year period, and this position was filled by David Newell who has picked up the reins and settled in well keeping our accounts under a strict control.

**Business Secretary** – Kate Turner - This role is quite involved as well as taking the minutes, she is in touch with the main u3a Trust when they require information from our unit. She also Ensures that our u3a, is publicised in various booklets and locally around the area

I must mention the:-

**Membership Secretary** – Eirwen Williams - Is very efficient in keeping our membership records upto date, as well as distributing information received from the u3a Head Office, our own Newsletter, and General Notices.

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The general members on the Committee have given myself and the other officers their full support and helped in various areas making it a joy to work with such a good group of people.

Many thanks to them.

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A thank you to **Paul Young**, who has been brilliant in finding us some very interesting speakers during the year, and next year, again he has come up trumps, with a variety of speakers to keep us entertained at our monthly meetings.

Paul also arranged an outing to Bletchley Park which quite a few of our members went on and found it excellent and well organised by Paul.

He also arranged our Christmas Quiz which was on a different format than previous and very enjoyable, so get your running shoes ready as I understand this year's will be the same format.

**Our Newsletter** – what would we do without our Editor Peta Smith – each Newsletter contains many articles all which have to be collated and ready for print, no easy task, but it is done by Peta with no problems that we are aware of. So thank you Peta for doing this so successfully.

**The Web Coordinator** – Glynis Nicolls – Down to her expertise our Web Site is easy to access and negotiate around, and she does an excellent job in keeping it upto date.

Glynis is also our **Shropshire u3a Network Representative** and is the Chairperson, so keeping us informed of any relevant changes or topics which are discussed at their meetings.

A very busy lady and we do appreciate the time she spends in both of these areas. Thank you.

**Group Coordinator** Margaret Webber has asked me to give a report re our various Groups.

At present we have 27 Active Groups –

New Groups formed this year are the Table Tennis, Chess & Go, Bridge and a 2<sup>nd</sup> Pub Lunch Group. Our existing Groups are thriving, and she would like to take this opportunity of thanking all of the leaders for their support during the last year.

Regrettably Mags has decided to step down from the committee and we will miss her input at future meetings.

During the year we were invited to attend a u3a Regional meeting at Lichfield to meet Ian Cassidy the new CEO of the u3a Trust – Margaret Webber and myself went along, and found it very informative and interesting to meet and hear the views on certain subjects from other u3a's. One of the main subjects was the introduction of a new system called Beacon which will help in various areas within the u3a., for example The Treasurer and the Membership Secretary. I am sure David and Eirwen will mention this in their reports as well.

**Lastly Wem Town Hall staff** – they have been so helpful during the past year, we have used them for our General and Committee Meetings, also allowing our Photography Group to display their work in the Gallery area. They have been great so thank you Pam and your team.

The last BIG THANK YOU goes to you our members for the support you have given to the Committee and the various Groups and Special Outings during the past year.

This concludes my report for the year 2024/2025

Jackie Mirehouse (Chairperson)

## SOCIAL GROUP

### **Social Group Canal Trip Monday 22nd September.**

On a lovely sunny day, twelve members of the group enjoyed a relaxing time aboard the Shropshire Lady on the Llangollen branch of the Shropshire Union Canal.

Starting off at the Lyneal Trust centre, we travelled as far as the junction with the Montgomery canal at Frankton Locks where we stopped to enjoy a picnic in warm sunshine before a short stroll and the journey home. Mags was the only one, this time, to try steering.

On board members catered for themselves with a variety of cakes and drinks.

A very enjoyable day where time just seemed to fly peacefully by.

Chris Fraser

*Thanks to Chris for submitting this article, much appreciated.*



# Walking Group

Walk around Market Drayton including the canal tow path on 3<sup>rd</sup> October on a wet day! Followed by a lovely lunch in the warmth and dry at the newly renovated Red Lion Pub in the Mouse Room, Market Drayton.







*Peta Smith  
Walking Group member.*

# SOCIAL GROUP

Well at last I managed to join fellow Social Group members yesterday to see 'the King' in concert.

Thanks to Chris Fraser, a little group of us got together at Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury to watch 'The Elvis Years'.

Great to listen to the familiar tunes we knew most of the words to.... And we sang along with gusto.

The four women (obviously dedicated Elvis fans) sitting behind us were having their best time - very loudly too - throughout the show, but it all added to the fun with their "Whoop whoops" after each song.

Here are a few pics to illustrate.... Not quite an Elvis look-a-like but his voice was convincing.

One shock for us though came when he came out for his second to last slot, with a white stretchy bejewelled jumpsuit, with a nearly bare chest to the waist.... Looked at first like he had a body stocking on and the man boobs moved freely as he cavorted about the stage... but I'm convinced it was NOT a body stocking, I was so 'traumatised' I forgot to take a picture of him in that outfit!

Made us all laugh - A LOT! .....then Elvis 'left the building'. Brilliant night, thanks again to Chris for her wonderful organisational skills

Enid Smith

*Thanks to Enid for sending this article and the photographs in. Sounds like you all had a great time!*



# Health and Well Being Event in Wem Town Hall

On Friday 8th October I put on a Wem u3a display at Wem Town Hall's 'Health & Well-being' event, which was organised by Wem Town and Wem Rural & District Council and was opened by Cllr. David Parry, Mayor of Wem.

There was a wide variety of stalls ranging from Mindfulness & Holistic therapies to Wem Town Band with an opportunity to have a go at blowing a trumpet! - a little bit ear shattering at times.

The event was very well attended and there was quite a bit of interest in our stall. Lots of people took membership forms and information leaflets away and others signed up as interested in joining.

So we may be seeing some new faces at our general meetings in the not too distant future. Let's make them feel very welcomed to our lovely 'family'

Enid Smith





Sincere thanks Enid for submitting this article

# Please submit articles and News of interest

**This newsletter is totally dependent on its content by you the membership. I can only publish what is submitted to me. Thanks to all those who took the time and effort to submit the content of this current edition. It is very much appreciated**

I am eagerly awaiting reports, articles, and photographs for this section of the Newsletter from individuals and Group Leaders. Such as details of when, how often and where your Groups meet. What have you been up to? Descriptive reports and photographs (with verbal consent) are always welcome and may attract newcomers to join you. Submissions can also include such items as events /meetings for your groups for the next few months ahead or letting us know what you have done recently? This can be written by the Group leader or any member of the group.

Individual members may also submit poetry or prose for inclusion. We must have some budding writers and reporters amongst us!

Committee members could introduce yourselves to the membership and tell us a bit about yourselves and your interests.

Have a think and see what you come up with!

A very sincere thanks to all who has sent me contributions to this edition. It is very much appreciated.

Please submit to [editornews@btinternet.com](mailto:editornews@btinternet.com)

NOT TO MY PERSONAL email Account PLEASE

The newsletter is published every 3 months, March, June, September and December.

**Deadlines for submission** are

15 February, 15 May, 15 August and 15 November.

Kind regards, Peta

Peta Smith Editor

**Disclaimer** The articles in this newsletter are written by our members and are not necessarily the views of the committee or the national U3A.