



## Sully and District u3a Newsletter January 2026



### **Membership 2026**

**If you haven't renewed your membership for 2026 please do so as soon as possible and definitely before the end of February 2026.**

If you attend any of our groups you must be a member in order to be covered by our insurance - if any unforeseen accident or event should take place.

The cost of membership for 2026 remains at just £10,  
Our preferred method of payment is by bank transfer to:  
Sully u3a bank account sort code – 309652  
Sully u3a bank account number – 18245668  
Reference is your name and membership number

Or bring cash to the next monthly meeting on 12 February at 2pm in the Old School, Sully. Please put your cash in an envelope with your name, membership number and email address on the front and give it to a member of the committee. If you cannot come to the meeting then please post your renewal in the u3a post box in the foyer of the Old School.

Please note we would prefer not to accept cheques as these now incur bank charges and at present we are unable to accept payment by card.  
Membership cards will be sent by email at the end of January/early February.

Don't forget to let me know if you move house or change your email address. Please use the form on the membership section of our website to send me a message.  
Membership 2026.

## **Book Club 2**

Book Club 2 has released its autumn reading programme:

19 February: *Flesh* – David Salza

We buy our own books and aim to follow a mix of long/short and light/serious titles. We meet at 10.30 on the third Thursday of each month in the Woods Room at the Old School Sully. The charge is £1.00 and coffee and biscuits can be obtained from the Jubilee Hall for another pound.

We'd love to welcome new members. Just drop us a line at [bookclub2@sullyu3a.co.uk](mailto:bookclub2@sullyu3a.co.uk).

Notes on the books

### **Flesh – David Salza**

Through chance, luck and choice, one man's life takes him from a modest apartment in Hungary to the elite society of London – in this captivating new novel about the forces that make and break our lives

Fifteen-year-old István lives with his mother in a quiet apartment complex in Hungary. New to the town and shy, he is unfamiliar with the social rituals at school and soon becomes isolated, with his neighbour – a married woman close to his mother's age – as his only companion. As these encounters shift into a clandestine relationship, István's life spirals out of control.

Years later, rising through the ranks from the army to the elite circles of London's super-rich, he navigates the twenty-first century's tides of money and power. Torn between love, intimacy, status, and wealth, his newfound riches threaten to undo him completely.

## **SULLY HISTORY GROUP**

The History group would like to announce that the first of their talks for 2026 is at 10.30am on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February.

It will be given by Mr Philip Thomas and is entitled "Grandad was a Rum Runner" it deals with the tale of his grandfather who was one of the Home Children sent to Canada in the 1920's, aged 13, as a farm labourer and ended up becoming involved with boot-legging. All members of Sully u3a are welcome although as space is limited you are advised to contact Nigel Adams via the groups contact page on the website.

After the talk tea/coffee and biscuits will be available.

## **We are still looking for volunteers to join our committee**

### **Becoming a U3a Committee Member/Trustee**

Without volunteers running each branch of the u3a it couldn't exist and without members and convenors there would be no u3a – it is a co-dependent organisation.

The roles within the committee consists of: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Coordinator, Speaker Co-ordinator, Events Planner, Group Administrator, Room Rent Collector, Website and IT Manager and a Gift Aid Administrator. There are other less defined but still very important roles within the committee that provide help and support when needed. The meetings are friendly, and matters are discussed that relate to the success of the u3a and getting the best for its members.

**Please help.** If you think you can help, you can always come along and sit in on a couple of meetings to see if there is something you can help with. **please e-mail Paul Lister, who is the current Chairman of the Committee Via [sully.u3asite.uk](mailto:sully.u3asite.uk) contacts, chair**

**[Sully](#)** (Place cursor over link and press Ctrl + Click to follow the link)

### **January Speaker's Report**

You've Got to Have Guts – Highlights from Dr Graham Cope's Talk  
Members of Sully u3a gathered in January for the second in a series of talks by medical researcher Dr Graham Cope. His presentation, "You've Got to Have Guts", took us on a fascinating journey through our digestive system, from mouth to colon, exploring how lifestyle choices impact gut health.

Starting at the top, we learned halitosis (bad breath) is caused by pathogenic bacteria, with gingivitis as an early warning sign of gum disease. Good dental hygiene – and even garlic paste – can help disrupt harmful biofilms. Moving down, Dr Cope explained acid reflux and its link to oesophageal cancer, noting **some** UK pharmacists **can** offer a simple "sponge on a string" test for early detection, whereby the patient swallows a pill, which expands into a sponge and then can be withdrawn for lab testing for cancerous cells.

In the stomach and small intestine, he highlighted the protective role of mucus and risks smokers face from ulcers. The pancreas and gall bladder were shown as vital for digestion and blood sugar regulation. Alcohol intake, he reminded us, is often under-reported: GPs typically double the unit figure the patient gives!

The colon took centre stage as Dr Cope stressed the importance of fibre for healthy bowel movements and a robust immune system. About 80% of our immune cells reside **around** the gut, alongside trillions of bacteria **and other micro-organisms**. A course of antibiotics can wipe out these microbes and recovery is slow.

Sobering statistics followed: only two-thirds of those eligible in Wales take up free NHS

bowel cancer screening, which can be life-saving in early detection. Bowel cancer is rising among younger people, linked to alcohol and ultra-processed foods (UPFs). These foods, packed with preservatives, disrupt gut health and encourage overeating. Processed meats containing sulphates and nitrates also increase cancer risk.

Dietary advice was clear: eat high-fibre foods, wholemeal bread, berries and avoid burnt toast. Choose natural fermentations like yoghurt over strong ones such as kimchi. Avoid UPFs and stick to visually recognisable ingredients.

The talk concluded with insights into the gut-brain axis, serotonin's role in mental health, the value (or not) of fecal implants and even nicotine's surprising effect on Parkinson's.

Takeaway message: a healthy gut means a healthier you – so fibre up, cut the processed foods, and make the most of screening opportunities!

More details about Sully u3a please see our website – [sully.u3a.site.uk](http://sully.u3a.site.uk)

**SJW**

#### Dr. Cope's Bread Recipe

##### Equipment

Digital scales  
Bread maker  
Included measuring spoon  
Included columnar water measurer

##### Recommended

Oxo (1gm divisions)  
Panasonic SD-2500

##### Ingredients

Bread making dried yeast	1 teaspoon	Hovis
Strong white flour	150gm	
Strong wholemeal flour	350gm	
(Sunflower seeds – optional)	40gm	
Granulated sugar	26gm	
Sunflower oil	26gm	
Fine table salt	1½ teaspoons	
Cold water	330gm or ml	

##### Method

Place bread making pan on scales and add or weigh out in this order:

Yeast  
Flour  
Seeds  
Sugar

Oil  
Salt  
Water

Fix pan into bread maker and adjust settings: wholemeal and large 500gm loaf, medium bake. Press START.

After 5 hours remove baked bread when finished or set to run overnight  
Allow to cool

### **Next month's speaker**

Thursday 12th February 2026 at 2.00pm.

## **SONG STORIES with DANIEL CURTIS**



Song stories is a talk built around the songs that shape our lives. Every one of us has a song that takes us back - to a first dance, a family moment, someone we've loved or a time we'll never forget. In his talk Dan shares anecdotes about famous composers and how some of the worlds best loved songs were created.

He shares personal reflections from his own career of having collaborated with many famous artists and having been instrumental in the first-of-a-kind underground concert in a Welsh coal mine covered by BBC Breakfast and the national news.

### **Don't forget to visit the Sully u3a website**

There is a wealth of useful information on our website, it can be reached at [Sully](#) (place cursor over the link and press ctrl + click) or use the QR code



## Volunteer Request from St John Ambulance

From Katie Wintle

I work for and volunteer with St John Ambulance Cymru and I was wondering if any Sully u3a members would be interested in getting involved with our organisation.

Obviously, we learn a lot about first aid! However, we also have a huge range of other roles available that people are less aware of. For example, we have youth leader roles and even youth manager roles, which are mostly remote but key to making sure our youth leaders are trained and looked after. We also have training for logistics, safeguarding and welfare, and more roles beyond.

if anyone is interested or would perhaps like to learn a little more, I would love to speak with you and provide some answers! Our website is in the process of being updated at present so I might be able to be of more use if it piques your curiosity!

Katerina Wintle, Swyddog Cenedlaethol PPI, National CYP Officer

Tel: 07947839520

Web site: [www.sjacymru.org.uk](http://www.sjacymru.org.uk)



**Tune into the u3a Radio Podcast**

**u3a** learn, laugh, live

 **I'm Maggie West, your National Podcast presenter.**

Each month, in just 30 minutes, we share fascinating stories and learning experiences from across the country.

From life as an executive airline pilot, to being a maid at Buckingham Palace, to quantum physics made simple, and even the mysteries of the ancient archaeological site Göbekli Tepe in Turkey - **we cover it all.**

If you have a story or passion to share, we'd love to feature you. Get in touch at [communications@u3a.org.uk](mailto:communications@u3a.org.uk).

 **Listen now!**

The u3a Radio Podcast is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and Podtail.

Or scan the QR code to listen on our YouTube channel.

Regards,  
Paul Lister (Sully u3a Newsletter editor)