Berwyn U3A Communication Policy

1. Policy Statement

Berwyn U3A is committed to clear, timely, inclusive and appropriate communication with its members, group leaders, volunteers and the wider community.

This policy sets out the principles, channels and responsibilities governing how communication is managed to ensure consistency, accessibility and compliance with data protection requirements.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure members receive accurate and timely information
- Match communication methods to audience and purpose
- Promote Berwyn U3A activities to the wider community
- Support inclusive communication for members with varying digital confidence
- Ensure compliance with data protection and consent requirements

3. Communication Principles

All communications issued on behalf of Berwyn U3A shall be:

- **Clear and concise** – written in plain English and Welsh where appropriate and practical
- **Accurate** – factually correct and approved where necessary
- **Timely** – issued in good time to allow members to respond
- **Inclusive** – mindful of differing access to digital platforms
- **Respectful** – consistent with the values of U3A
- **Compliant** – adhering to GDPR and data protection requirements

4. Communication Channels and Their Use

4.1 Berwyn u3a Website - The Definitive Source for Key Information. Where appropriate Facebook, WhatsApp and email should direct people to the website for fuller up to date details.

The **Berwyn u3a website** is the central and authoritative source of information about Berwyn u3a. It provides a permanent, easily accessible source of information for both existing members and people who may be interested in joining.

The website should:

- Provide up-to-date information about **Berwyn u3a, its aims, activities and interest groups**.
- Publish details of **forthcoming meetings, talks, trips and other activities**.
- Provide information on **how to join**, including membership contacts and arrangements for prospective members.
- Act as a **reference point for members**, providing information that may otherwise be difficult to find through email, WhatsApp or Facebook.
- Provide access to important documents, policies, forms and other useful information where appropriate.
- Support **recruitment and publicity** by presenting a welcoming and attractive picture of Berwyn u3a to prospective members.
- Provide links to relevant u3a and North Wales u3a resources.
- Ensure that important information remains available over time, rather than being lost in social media posts or email messages.

4.2 Email including Beacon – Primary Formal Communication Channel

Purpose:

- Official announcements
- AGM notices and formal documentation
- Policy updates
- Monthly newsletters
- Programme information
- Committee communications

Audience:
All members or relevant sub-groups.

Governance:

- Major communications must be approved by the Committee or relevant officer.
- Email distribution lists must be securely maintained.

Email is the authoritative record of official communication.

4.3 WhatsApp – Operational and Informal Communication

Purpose:

- Group coordination
- Reminders of meetings or venue changes
- Time-sensitive operational updates

Audience:
Members who have voluntarily opted in.

Limitations:

- Not to be used for formal governance matters
- Not for communicating policy changes or official notices
- No sharing of personal data beyond what members have agreed to
- Admins responsible for maintaining respectful use

WhatsApp is supplementary and not a substitute for official email communication.

4.4 Facebook and Public Engagement and Promotion

Purpose:

- Promotion of events and activities
- Community engagement
- Sharing photographs (with consent)
- Raising awareness to attract new members

Audience:
Members and the wider public.

Limitations:

- Not for internal governance issues
- No publication of personal contact details
- All photos must be shared with appropriate consent

Facebook supports visibility but is not an official record of communication.

4.5 Posters – Local Community Outreach

Purpose:

- Advertising public events

- Promoting membership
- Raising awareness locally

Locations:
Community centres, libraries, cafés, noticeboards and other appropriate venues.

Posters provide non-digital access and ensure inclusivity within the local community.

5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to how we communicate and engage with our community. All our communications will be in accordance with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and aim to reflect the wide range of experiences, backgrounds and perspectives within Berwyn u3a, ensuring that everyone feels welcomed, respected and represented.

We will use clear, accessible language and inclusive imagery so that our messages reach and resonate with people of different cultures, abilities, ages and identities.

By actively considering who we are speaking to—and who we may not yet be reaching—we will strive to remove barriers, broaden participation and create opportunities for all members to feel valued and involved in our u3a activities and conversations.

We will adopt the TAT Equality template (see link below) as our EDI Policy.

https://www.u3a.org.uk/index.php?option=com_edocman&view=document&layout=viewdoc&nohtml=1&id=2769&documenturl=ce14e880f1ad83a1b9a9d9202001bfa0.docx&Itemid=0

6. Matching Communication to Purpose

Type of Communication	Primary Channel
AGM Notice	Website, Email
Policy Change	Email
Monthly Programme	Email & Website (+ Facebook for promotion)
Event Reminder	Website, WhatsApp
New Interest Group	Website, Email + Facebook + Posters
Public Talk	Website, Facebook + Posters (+ Email to members)

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Committee

- Approves major communications and policy announcements

Chair

- Provides leadership on tone and messaging where required

Secretary

- Oversees formal member communications
- Maintains official communication records

Group Leaders

- Manage communication within their groups
- Ensure WhatsApp groups are used appropriately

Facebook Administrator

- Manage posts and moderate content
- Ensure compliance with consent and data protection

Webmaster

- The Webmaster working with the appropriate committee members and group leaders, should ensure that website information is accurate, relevant and regularly reviewed. Out-of-date information should be removed or amended promptly.
- The website should therefore be regarded as the **"home base" for Berwyn u3a communications**, with other channels helping to bring information to members and the wider community.

8. Data Protection and Consent

- Email addresses and phone numbers will be used only for U3A purposes
- Members must opt in to WhatsApp groups
- Personal data will not be shared publicly
- Images will only be used with appropriate consent
- Distribution lists will be securely maintained

9. Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Committee to ensure it remains effective, inclusive and proportionate to the needs of Berwyn U3A.

Quick Reference Communication Guide

(For Committee Members, Webmaster and Group Leaders)

The Simple Rule

- **If it's official → Use Email and the website**
- **If it's urgent → Use WhatsApp**
- **If it's promotional → Use Facebook**
- **If it's for the wider community → Use the website, Facebook or use Posters**

What to Use and When

Website

Use for

- The Definitive Source for Key Information. Where appropriate, Facebook, WhatsApp and email should direct people to the website for fuller up to date details.

Email

Use for:

- AGM notices
- Policy changes
- Monthly newsletters
- Committee Agendas and minutes
- Official announcements
- Important programme details

Do not rely on Facebook or WhatsApp for official decisions.

WhatsApp

Use for:

- “Reminder: meeting tomorrow”
- Venue changes
- Quick coordination

Do not use for:

- Policy debates
- Formal announcements
- Sharing personal data

Members must opt in.

Facebook

Use for:

- Promoting events
- Sharing photos (with consent)
- Celebrating activities
- Attracting new members

Do not post:

- Internal disputes
- Personal contact details
- Governance matters

Posters

Use for:

- Public talks
- Membership promotion
- Community visibility

Keep them:

- Clear
- Simple

- Easy to read