

THE CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS A BECKET SHIRENEWTON



Parishes of Shirenewton and Newchurch Magazine

READERS AND SIDES- PERSONS ROTA FOR MARCH

DATE	SERVICE	READER	SIDES-PERSON
March 1st	1st Sunday of Lent 9.30 a.m.	Winnie Jones Ernie Jones	Winnie Jones Ernie Jones
March 8th	2nd Sunday of Lent 9.30 a.m.	Sally Saysell Diane Marlow	Alan Saysell Diane Marlow
March 15th	3rd Sunday of Lent 9.30 a.m.	James Loney Ruth Savagar	Claire Lewis Bernice Bowen
March 22nd	Mothering Sunday 9.30 Family Service	The Children	The Children
March 29th	Group Service at Newchurch 10.00 a.m.		
April 5th	Palm Sunday - Eucharist 9.30 a.m.	Margaret Lock Lisa Morter	Margaret Lock Lisa Morter

PRIEST IN CHARGE.	Revd. Dr. William Ingle– Gillis	424984
CHURCH WARDENS:	Sally Saysell	641369
	Andrew Baker	641925
	Mrs Susan Lenthall – Newchurch	626389
PCC SECRETARIES:	Andrew Baker - Shirenewton	641925
	David Heritage- Newchurch	641549
PCC TREASURERS:	Kevin Bounds - Shirenewton	641818
	Enid Heritage - Newchurch	641549
GIFT AID SECRETARY	Ruth Savagar	641411
CHURCH MAINTENANCE & SAFETY OFFICER	John Nicholas	641368
ORGANISTS:	Karen Millar	650521
	Ruth Savagar	641411
	Kath Whittington	641600
SUNDAY SCHOOL:	Jane Smith-Haddon	641525
TOWER CAPTAIN:	Mike Penny	650653
MOTHERS UNION:	Auriol Horton	641844
CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER:	John Waters	641449
CHURCH FLOWERS:	Maureen Moody	641524
PARISH MAGAZINE:	Bob O'Keefe	641686
200 Club	Pauline Dutton	641677

NAMES TO NOTE

COMMUNITY COUNCIL	ROBIN MITCHELL	
Clerk to Community Council	Carole Jones	641791
WI:	Jenny Bonner	641929
SCOUTS:	Dave Richardson	620356
GUIDES:	Helen Cann	650835
BROWNIES:	Jackie Broughton	641797
Cub Scouts	Geoff Marlow	641407
BEAVERS:	Becky Lewis	650304
POLICE CONTACT:	P.C. Mike Cowburn	01633 838111
REC. BOOKING SECRETARY:	Beryl Saysell	641637
TRAIDCRAFT:	Marion McAdam	641316
Local History Society	Shirley Bonsey	641362

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CONTACTS

COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICER	MICHAEL COWBURN	01633 642068
	E MAIL: michael.cowburn@gwent.pnn.police.uk	
S'NEWTON & MYNYDD BACH -	Beverley Moore	641532

Please send your notes, discs or emails for inclusion in the April magazine to Bob O'Keefe at: 15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, (641686) or email to bobandwenche@aol.com by Sunday 22nd March

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

28th Feb.	Local History Society - The Huntsman - 7.30 George Peterkin on "Natural History of the Wye Valley"
2nd Mar.	Community Council Meeting - the Recreation Hall 7.30
5th Mar.	Whist Drive—The Recreation Hall—7.30 p.m.
7th Mar.	Fields Association Meeting - The Recreation Hall - 11.00 a.m.
20th Mar.	"This Farming Life" Itton Village Hall - See page 27
25th Mar.	Shirenewton Recreation Association AGM at the Recreation Hall 8.15 p.m.
27th Mar.	Shirenewton School PTA- Race night with curry.
29th Mar.	Chepstow Choral Society—St Mary's Church Chepstow
1st April	Local Neighbourhood Watch / Pact meeting - Huntsman 7.30
2nd April	Whist Drive—The Recreation Hall—7.30 p.m.
1st May	Brass Band Concert - St Thomas A Becket Church.

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March 2009

Dear Friends:

I always get slightly self-conscious when I hear myself say, 'back where I come from ...'. After all, God has called me to work for his Kingdom right where I am – as, indeed, he has called us all to do. Nonetheless, I was reminded of one of the great pleasures for American children of the forthcoming Easter; for, you see – and here's that phrase! – back where I come from, the general custom is to decorate our own Easter eggs, and my mother has just recently sent her grandchildren an American Easter egg kit quite early, but in anticipation of Holy Week.

This is one of those simple things that gives immense pleasure to children and parents alike, and it works like this: you take real, white eggs – hard-boiled, not chocolate – and, on Holy Saturday, you dye them all the colours of the rainbow. Then you add stickers or drawings or paint to them till they're as bright as any flower display in Church – and, overnight, the Easter Bunny comes and hides them for the children to collect the next day in baskets. Naturally, a few chocolate or marshmallow treats appear also, as if by magic, to be found amidst the genuine articles. But, actually, there's something very satisfying indeed about doing so many of these eggs yourself. There's a little something of yourself that's been invested in the Easter celebration – and the moment becomes all the more joyful because of that. There is, I believe, a parable in this – because one of the great truths of Easter is that Christ's Resurrection is not something that is merely enacted upon us – but, rather, quite the opposite: we are called to invest ourselves in this great moment.

For now, Lent has just begun. This is one way in which we invest ourselves – in which we begin to take part in the Resurrection. During Lent, we seek to turn away from that which separates us from God. In this way, we ask God's Holy Spirit to prepare us for the great moment, on Easter Sunday, when redemption from all our human weakness and failing is declared once and for all. Rather unlike the Annual Egg-Decoration, Lent is rather more serious and thoughtful and prayerful. This is a fine and important way to spend the weeks before Easter, contemplating, as we do, the magnitude of what Christ accomplished for us when he died on the Cross for our sins and then rose again.



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But, actually, it is quite as important that, through the penitence of Lent, we should be working our way through to something, and – like our American neighbours with their eggs on Holy Saturday – invest ourselves in the joy of the great event. Christ, we shall proclaim on Easter, is risen from the dead – and he has carried us with him, right to God's very throne! This means that we, too, have the deepest joy and the richest treasures to share with our neighbours. We have a part to play in the spread of the Gospel, and the more we actually play it, the more the Gospel itself will mean to us. Each of us, of course, will have our own talents and roles – just as each of my peers, as I was growing up, made a different and unique design on the eggs. The Church is much richer for that, as St. Paul constantly reminds us. Thus my prayer, during Lent, and on through the Easter season, is that we all will use this period to join ourselves more fully to the Gospel truth that Christ came to save sinners, and take seriously our call to join, through the Holy Spirit's power, each in our way, in his act of salvation. For in this way, we become invested in the Gospel, and the world is enriched for it, just as we ourselves are enriched each day by the Risen Christ.

Blessings,
Fr. Will

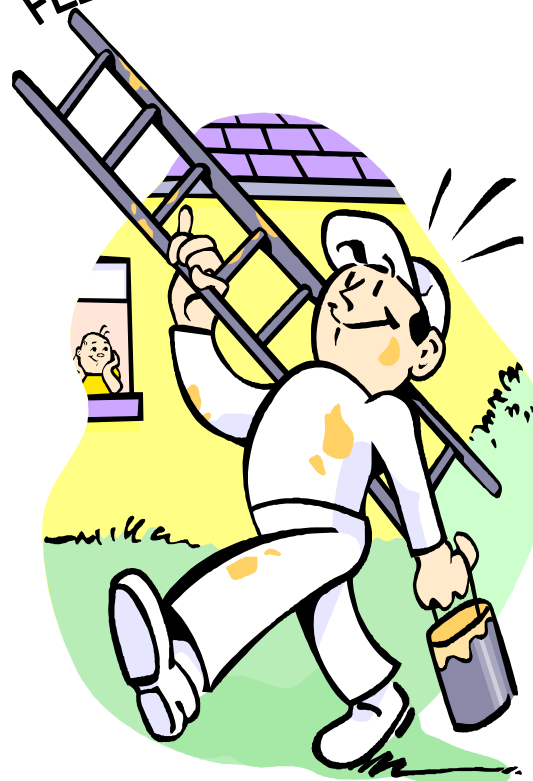
From the Priest-in-Charge

THE WINNERS OF THE FEBRUARY 200 CLUB DRAW WERE:

Ticket No	Winner	Prize
163	Carol Seale	£40
27	Sandra Hayes	£30
139	Julian Cornwell	£20
28	Valerie Remnant	£10

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Parish Magazine

Annual subscriptions of £5.00 for the 10 copies for the next twelve months become due in February. Would you kindly arrange to pay your regular "News boy / girl" during this period.

Additional copies of the magazine are usually available at the rear of the Church

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH 200 CLUB

During February and March we will be collecting subscriptions for the 200 Club for the year April 2007/2008. The prizes for this year will be:- 1st £40, 2nd £20, 3rd £20, and 4th £10 with extra prizes at Christmas. Half the money collected is distributed as prize money. The following will collect the £10 per number subscription;- Barbara Davies, Pauline Dutton, John Nicholas, Peter Jones.

It would be much appreciated and a great help with the collection process if you could give your subscriptions to your normal collector as you see them over the next couple of months, otherwise someone will call on you before the end of March. If you are not a member and would like to join, please call me on 641677 or Barbara on 641553.

I would like to thank our collectors for all their hours spent walking around the village collecting subscriptions and also to Auriol for checking and banking the money. Thank you all as always for your generous support.

Pauline Dutton

SHIRENEWTON RECREATION ASSOCIATION AGM

Wednesday 25th March at 8.15 at the Recreation Hall
All welcome.

Also nibbles and a glass of wine

SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

Date	Time	Venue
1st Mar	09.30	Sunday Club—The Church Room
8th Mar		No Sunday Club
15th Mar	09.30	Sunday Club - The Church Room
22nd Mar	09.30	Mothering Sunday -The Church
29th Mar	09.30	Sunday Club - The Church Room New Term
26th Apr	09,30	Sunday Club - The Church Room

*Shirenewton Sunday Club welcomes
all children from 3 years. Do come and join us.*

Jane Smith-Haddon 641 525

Glynis MacDonald 641818

*Note: Sunday Club now starts 9.30 and finishes at
10.30*

*If we aren't there when you arrive- please give us a
ring to wake us up.*

A THANK YOU NOTE

Pam Cornaby thanks everyone who sent their good wishes on the occasion of her Eightieth Birthday.

It was a joy to see so many friends on this special day.

Also thanks to the management and staff of the Tredegar Arms for an enjoyable meal.

Thanks also to Jane and Peter my niece and nephew for organising this event very secretly.

God Bless you all.

Pam.

Conditions should be just right for these as we are south facing and the garden can get very warm on a sunny day. As these will be regularly pruned they will not interfere with the path management. One other thing that I intend to try is a kiwi fruit. I have one ready and waiting that has been bred for British conditions, and is also self-fertile. The fruits won't be large, but the thought of fresh kiwis straight from the garden is too good to miss. Keeping on the fruit theme I have been nurturing several blueberry plants. We used to grow a lot of perennial plants at one time, but work, and the high cost of raising these has meant that we have reduced the number we grow quite dramatically. In their place I intend to dig over the ground and incorporate a lot of old peat and also copious amounts of manure. I can then plant the blueberries, which demand an acidic soil, in order to give of their best. Hopefully conditions will be ideal for them. I've also got three new blackcurrant plants. These are a new variety, which are claimed to be the sweetest ever and can be eaten raw, like grapes. Time will tell! I had intended to get a couple of red fruited gooseberries but haven't got around to this yet. Maybe next month!

Happy gardening until next month.

Steve Hunt.

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Six Nations Kick Off @The Church Room



On Friday 6th February, nearly sixty people ignored the deep snow and ice to come up to The Church Room to hear Brian Price, ex rugby captain of Wales talk about the up and coming Six Nations tournament. It was a great evening and Brian started with an amusing account of past games which touched, of course, upon the old friendly rivalries and finished with some light hearted match predictions.

Then we had a Six Nations Ploughman's buffet and an open Six Nations bar which was followed by a rugby quiz and a prediction competition. The results of this competition will be posted on the church web site and the winner will receive a bottle of champagne.

And strangely, there were a lot of people wearing red shirts at this excellent evening.

but they will need to go somewhere else shortly. There aren't enough to justify heating the greenhouse completely so next stage will be to move them to the spare bedroom windowsill. This should keep them going for several more weeks, by which time, their will be many more plants requiring some heat, so it will be worth turning the fan heater on then. The forecast for this weekend is looking promising so I will need to spend some time in the greenhouse getting the next lot of seeds in. This will be a wide selection of everything salad, along with more beans and peas.

I noticed that the over-wintered onions and garlic are now poking through the soil. The snow cover will have helped protect these from the hardest frost. Having lost most of the green crops to marauding sheep, there are a number of beds that need tidying up and getting ready for this year's crop. Last year for the first time I managed to keep a record of what was planted in each bed, plus any subsequent crops. The hope is that I will find the time to maintain this record each year, in order that I can ensure a good crop rotation. This will help to prevent a build up of pests and diseases in each bed, allowing us to keep one step ahead. Despite being quite isolated in gardening terms, I'm amazed just how quickly diseases find their way here. Although we grow all of our plants, there are still one or two beds that suffer from club root, which is a disease specific to the brassica (greens) family. This disease, once it is in the ground, can remain there dormant for some fifteen years, ready to infect the next crop. It is therefore important that we don't plant the wrong plants in the wrong bed. Hopefully the records will prevent this!

The first crop that I need to get started as soon as I can outside is the parsnip. These demand a long season and the intention is to clean one bed off and then cover it over with some spare plastic sheeting. This will help keep the rain off, allowing the spoil to dry up a bit and also warm up. This should allow me to do some sowing in the next week or so.

We have a long narrow bed that was planted with blackberries, and this helped to divide the vegetable garden into half, acting as a wind-break as well. Unfortunately the varieties were a little too vigorous and during the summer grew out so much, that it became impossible to cut the grass on the paths. Having had enough of this I have decided to remove these for good. The tops have been cut off and are now ready for digging out altogether. The intention is to actually replace these with grapevines, which will be dessert varieties as opposed for wine production.

ADVANCE NOTICE

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Further details to appear in the April magazine

Community Council

Council Meeting Notes - February 09

Police report for January 09

- Sat 10th Jan Faulty alarm at Earlswood.
Mon 19th Jan There was a failure to stop at a road accident between Shirenewton & Llangwm.
Wed 21st Jan A young child from Shirenewton made a silent 999 call.
Sun 25th Jan Off road bikes in the forest near Earlswood.
Sun 25th Jan A vehicle turned over near Shirenewton - minor injuries.
Tues 27th Jan There are rogue traders in and around Shirenewton doing tree cutting work. Do beware! And contact the police if you are at all suspicious.
Wed 28th Jan Report of the phantom cow in road near Shirenewton - it wasn't found.

Planning Applications

Lower Weylode, Shirenewton. Amended access.

After lengthy discussions it was decided to do a site meeting.

Notification of a change of name.

Existing address 'Trevanna', Earlswood will be changed to 'North Hill House'

Items of Local Concern

Mike Sayce and Stu Dutton gave a report to the council from the '**Shirenewton and Mynyddbach Fields Association**'. The Association has recently acquired 10 acres of land adjacent to Shirenewton School which forms part of the 'green wedge between the two villages'. There is going to be an open meeting at The Recreation Hall on Saturday 7th March at 11.00 where people will be able to find out more about the plans for this ecological site and all will be welcome.

The future of the **village shop** is on hold while the council wait for a report from the receivers.

Discussions continue as to the best way to tackle the long running problem of **parking at Shirenewton School**. It was wondered how to encourage local people to walk to the school. Some of the ideas were odd.

A progress report was given on the '**Community Luncheon Club**'. This community council initiative will start up in April, at the TA, on a once a month basis and will provide a meal at a set cost on a not-for-profit basis. This club is aimed at those of pensionable age. Lifts will be arranged on a voluntary basis. Further details will be available soon and will be found in next month's mag, the local council notice boards and the Shirenewton website. So watch this space.

Gardening Corner

Well winter has well and truly bitten this year. For the first time in many years it was down the garden with a broom to do some snow clearance involving the tunnel. Being on a slope the tunnel is angled directly across it which means that the vegetable beds are relatively level, but it means that any snow that we do get has a tendency to lie on the uphill side, putting immense pressure on the plastic cover. Although snow always seems light, it is amazingly heavy when it packs down! Fortunately the plastic cover is relatively new; although I was still concerned the weight might tear it. So several times it was necessary to venture down the garden to push the snow off from underneath. Despite the cold weather we have been experiencing I was surprised to see that the spring cabbages were on growing well and we should be picking some fresh greens within a week. Also up and growing were the carrot seeds that I sowed several weeks ago. I need to keep an eye on these to make sure that no slugs find their way to the new seedlings. I also noticed that the buds on the apricot and peach trees are starting to swell up. A couple of weeks of milder weather I'm sure will mean that the buds will break, and then I'll need to find a soft brush to pollinate the flowers. This didn't work too well last year. In fact it didn't work at all in that not one flower set! Maybe I'll leave the main doors open on a good day to see if I can encourage a few bees or other insects in there to do my job for me. They can't find their own way in as the drop down doors have a butterfly net across them in order to prevent the butterflies getting at the greens and laying their eggs. Unbelievably we are still getting the odd picking of calabrese shoots. Some of the plants are starting to look ragged now so it won't be much longer before they have to go, so that the ground can be prepared for the next crop. In the greenhouse I turned the hot bench on several weeks ago and the first seedlings have been pricked on into their own pots. These include calabrese, cauliflowers, and cabbages. As well as these we have some broad beans and some sugar snap peas that were destined for the outside beds. As it is continuing to stay cold I think that I might try and plant these in the tunnel as well as an experiment. Whether the flowers will set or not we'll have to wait and see.

The first salad crops are also up and running, including the first tomato plants and these are some two months ahead of what I usually achieve. These will need some heat to keep them going and at the moment this is being achieved by potting them on and then standing them on the bench,

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Bus Surgeries. Not for poorly busses but for proposed changes in the local bus services. During the first week in February there will be meetings for views and questions at the various and appropriately named One Stop Shops. (*Far be it for me to point out that by the time this magazine comes out you will have missed the bus, so to speak*) For further info, ring: 01633 644 777.

(I rang this number (and others because I couldn't read my own writing) and spoke to Richard Cook – a very nice man who said that some of these meetings are having to be rescheduled because people couldn't get to them because of the snow... but that if you have any suggestions, views and comments about the bus service in our area, to give him a ring. Also, the new Bus Guide will be coming out in April, available from TIBs, One Stop Shops and available if you ring the above number. GM).

A report from the **Highways** states that 'bridge protection' work at Bully Hole Road, Earlswood may result in part of the road being coned off. The work will be from 26th January to 31st May.

Financial matters

The many and various groups within the area had been contacted with an invitation to apply to Shirenewton Council for funding for specific projects. Several groups had applied although it was pointed out that the application forms gave no details of how much money could be applied for. The following grants were awarded:

Shirenewton Rec will receive £119 for four additional chairs.

Earlswood Hall will receive £118 for a new tea urn.

Shirenewton Church will receive £80 for a new table.

Earlswood Valley Methodist Chapel will receive £25 to move a fence to increase their burial ground and £5 to cover the increase in their grass cutting costs.

Gaerllwyd Chapel will receive £50 for repairs to a widow.

The next meeting will be: Monday 2nd March 2009 at Shirenewton Recreation Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Missing

One large stainless steel tray and one small oblong decorated melamine tray. Last seen in the New Church Room on October 27th (at the official opening of the Hall by the Bishop).

For further details please contact Jean Jones on 01291 641 627.

SHIRENEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Books for Schools tokens in the Sunday Times.

We have signed up to receive the free online activities and to collect the tokens found in the Times newspaper. We would be grateful for any tokens collected just drop them off at school or pass to a family or member of staff at Shirenewton Primary School

Thank you

FOUNDATION PHASE

We are looking for parent and grandparent helpers (with CRB checks) for afternoons in Foundation Phase working with small groups of 5-7year olds in a variety of curriculum areas.

Safer Routes to Schools Consultation

Thank you to all the parents and members of the community who attended the consultation regarding the safer routes to school scheme. I am happy to say that Highways and Capita have certainly listened to your views and are revising the scheme accordingly. I will keep you updated on the progress of the scheme.

The scheme is to be revised and will see the hedgerow staying as it is, the footpath to Ditch Hill Lane remaining in its current condition, the existing footpath from Tan House Close being upgraded with the second footpath not being built. There are also some amendments to the position of the school warning signs in the Mynyddbach area.

Send a Cow Dressing Up Day a Cow fundraiser

Well done everyone we raised £112.

By members of The Shirenewton ECO Committee

Everyone took part there were some really cool animal costumes. There were cows, pigs, hedgehogs and even caterpillars! The staff dressed up to for example Miss Horsell dressed up as a fantastic frog, Mrs Humphrys was a cool cat. We raised over £200 which will be used in Africa to buy animals and seeds. The charity works with farmers and children in their communities to educate them in animal husbandry and crop management so that the support we have given is sustainable.

Yellow Pages Collection By the members of The ECO Committee.

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We collect the yellow pages as they can be recycled into useful items such as egg boxes, animal bedding, wall insulation cardboard and newspapers. So far we have collected 160 Yellow Pages. Everyone has tried to bring in one from each household but Luke and Tyler Cains have brought in 20 copies!

Greek Myths

At the start of term, year 5 had a visitor called Jerome Monohan. Some of the year 5's went in the morning and the rest in the afternoon. He told us about ancient Greek myths - it was amazing!

Jerome told us lots of Greek myths. Joe Davis knew lots of them already! We played a lot of myth games - I think everyone liked the games and acting the best. He also told us about Greek stories (Icarus) and we did some acting along with the stories. It really inspired us as we are writing Greek myths at the moment.

By Kirsty Lindsay & William Jones yr5

The Music Box Makers

Yr4, yr3 & yr2 were granted the honour of having the privilege to watch a play named **The Music Box Makers!!!**

It was a great success!!! Everyone had a different opinion and most of them were good! Year 4 said "It was absolutely brilliant!" We have seen quite a performance today and we can't wait until they produce another play and hope they come too Shirenewton school first!"

The play was about a little work shop that loved music as they fixed musical boxes. They always read a story before they started work and that days story was about a little girl whose dad was out working on a farm for months on end. Then a little girl in exactly the same situation wanted a box mended. She wanted it fixed because it was her mother's birthday and the box was one of her mother's best possessions. The end of the story was quite sad and one of the workers thought the girl in the story was the same little girl who had been visiting them. He wanted to save her so he raced out of the door without a coat and one of the workers was worried so she raced outside to fetch him, luckily with a shawl! When she went outside she was nervous because she hadn't been outside for three whole years since her husband passed away. Luckily it wasn't actually the girl!

By: Erin McInnes Willard, Catrin Williams, Dylan Ford & Jessica Austin!

Year 6`s school trip to Cardiff Synagogue!

On the 22nd of January 2009 year six went to Cardiff Synagogue for a visit to learn about Judaism. We learnt a lot that we didn't know about Judaism,

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL HAS SET UP
THE FOLLOWING FOR THE WARDS OF SHIRENEWTON,
EARLSWOOD, NEWCHURCH AND MYNYDDBACH

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NUMBERS BELOW AFTER BOOKING YOUR PLACE AT
THE T.A.**

**CAROLE JONES 01291 641791
BEVERLEY MOORE 01291 641532**

THANKS

Tony Davies would like to thank all who have sent cards and good wishes since his stay in hospital.

Tony is making good progress and hopes to be home soon to thank you personally.

Barbara Davies



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the end, some chaff would be blown away but the final separation would be done with a winnowing machine. This method gave way to the threshing machine and this was still a job for the winter, it could be done in the threshing barn or alongside ricks in the rickyard. A contractor would own the threshing machine, and he would move the equipment from farm to farm. The threshing machine would be manoeuvred into place in the threshing barn or rickyard and powered by a steam engine or later a tractor, the sheaves were fed in on the top of the machine, it passed through a threshing drum and then over sieves and the straw, chaff and grain came out in different places.

Another winter job was hedge laying, where tall hedges were cut and laid down to be kept regularly trimmed. I hope to describe this in more detail in another set of notes I have in mind to write on "Country Crafts". Hedge laying was a practice that had a lot of merit, hedges kept regularly trimmed would remain stock proof, but if they became thin they would be allowed to grow up for five or six years, they were then ditched and laid. It was sound husbandry to lay a hedge around a field that was lying fallow as the material cut out could be burnt in the field without damaging a crop.

Our thanks to Ernie Jones for sharing with us his feelings for our local countryside through the seasons. Also to Peter Bartlett for providing the copy. These notes are short extracts from one of Ernie's numerous books, copies of the books are available direct from either Ernie or Peter.

Why did God make mothers?

1. She's the only one who knows where the sticky tape is.
2. Mostly to clean the house.
3. To help us out of there when we were getting born.

How did God make mothers?

1. He used dirt, just like for the rest of us.
2. Magic plus super powers and a lot of stirring.
3. God made my Mum just the same like he made me. He just used bigger parts.

What kind of little girl was your Mum?

1. My Mum has always been my Mum and none of that other stuff.
2. I don't know because I wasn't there, but my guess would be pretty bossy.
3. They say she used to be nice.

SHIRENEWTON & MYNYDDBACH FIELDS ASSOCIATION

The open meeting to acquaint residents with the recent purchase of about 10 acres of ground between the villages, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Biffaward, will be held at 11.00 am on Saturday 7th March at the Recreation Hall. The approximate timetable is:

- 11.00 Introduction by Chairman Stuart Dutton.
- 11.05 Background to the project – Tony Bendall.
- 11.10 The importance of grassland habitats – A specialist from the Gwent Wild Life Trust.
- 11.15 Access to the field and the role of the Community Council – Community Council representative.
- 11.20 The Field as an educational resource – Jayne Edwards (Head Teacher).
- 11.25 Action plans in 2009 and beyond – Mike Sayce.
- 11.30 Questions.
- 12.00 Refreshments and guided visit to the Field (weather permitting!)

Please come along and hear all about this exciting new community asset!

In the meantime, for more information about the project, visit:

www.shirenewtonfields.org.uk

Mike Gambold, Voluntary Warden for the Field has agreed to write a regular piece for the Parish Magazine and website, with topical wildlife hints and news of sightings. If you see any interesting wildlife activity please let him know (Tel 641773 or email mike.gambold@shirenewtonfields.co.uk).



1ST SHIRENEWTON GUIDES.

A quiet month so far due to the weather and half term. We decided to cancel Guides one night due to the freezing conditions and fear that the leaders wouldn't make it back to Arctic Devauden. The girls have taken part in a survey about what they would like at a camp. This is to help those planning the International Centenary camp at Harewood House next year. Unfortunately we won't be attending as we can only put forward four girls and one leader so we are looking to events nearer home in which the whole unit can participate. We spent last week making bird feeders – a very messy job. So if you see any birds having trouble taking off.....!

Yours in Guiding

Kestrel	Helen Cann	Tel. 01291 650835
Kitten	Amanda Turner	Tel. 01291 650763
	Panda & Koala	

FREE SPORTS MASSAGE

Do you suffer from aches and pains or sports related problems such as tight or sore muscles?

Could you do with a massage?

I am currently a student studying sports massage at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff

and have to obtain over 100 hours outside my course hours. Therefore, I am looking to practice on any willing volunteers.

If you think you may benefit or would like any further information please call me.

Tessa Davies – 01291641331 or 07817411615-

COUNTRY LIFE IN OUR COUNTY

Hopefully with winter shortly coming to an end, and with soon appearing we continue with extracts from the notes from Mr Ernest Jones that he has compiled through his long years of farming in this area. With luck by the next issue we will be able to see spring as seen by Ernie through his years.

THE ARABLE FARM IN WINTER:

The arable farms that I have known mainly in the days before the war were not the arable farms, as we know them today. Today many arable farms just grow corn crops continuously, without livestock of any kind; this is far removed from the type of farm that I will describe. The arable enterprise was part of a general farm, usually with beef cattle and a flock of sheep, although during the war the government issued ploughing up orders, and this could mean that up to 40% of the farm had to be ploughed to grow food crops. One farmer refused to plough any of his farm, and barricaded himself in his farmhouse and the police eventually shot and killed him. Now when I see the antics of "set-aside", that poor chap had rough justice, it is a pity we cannot do without politicians they can and do make a real mess of things at times.

On the type of farm I refer to, perhaps about two hundred acres the farmer would usually employ two or three regular men and the farmer did his best to see that they were gainfully employed throughout the year. With the autumn corn planted and the rest of the stubble ploughed by the new year there was little work in the fields. One winter job was threshing the corn that had been harvested in sheaves, (bundles tied together) and stored in barns or in ricks, before my time and I have never seen it done but threshing would be done by beating the sheaves with a flail, in the open doorway of the threshing barn, the wind blowing away the chaff.

Many of these old threshing barns have been sold for conversion into dwellings they can fetch upwards of £100,000, to which has to be added the costs of conversion into a dwelling house. These threshing barns and we had one at Court House Caldicot would have double doors each side in the middle, the wagons would be brought from the fields loaded with sheaves of corn and driven into the barn. The sheaves were unloaded and stored each side until threshing time, when they would be placed on the floor and beaten by men wielding long poles with leather thongs on



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BROWNIES 'HAVE A GO'

We can always rely on Brownies' enthusiasm so whenever we ask 'would you like to take part in?', we can usually guarantee that their answer will be a resounding 'YES'. This half-term, the girls have decided to take part in the Brownie Quiz, a Summer cookery competition and the 'Design a Poster for Shirenewton Church Fete' competition. Isn't it great to have so much energy!

The girls' enthusiasm for the SODS panto showed not only in their faces while watching the performance, but also in their questions afterwards about how they could take part in the panto next year – so you could have plenty of willing recruits next year, Glynis. The girls particularly enjoyed watching their fellow Brownies perform - well done Emily, Issy and Errin.

It's a little difficult for me to write any more about what we've been up to in our other meetings this month, as the Brownies have been involved in making Mother's Day Gifts – and as you know, that is top secret!
Jackie Broughton – Guider in Charge (641797)

ANYONE FOR TABLE TENNIS?

We are enquiring as to whether there is sufficient interest to start a table tennis club in the Church Room.

Dave and Bill regularly play intensive games with no quarter given or expected. Given the fact that there may be others out there with a similar competitive streak and vaguely useful with a paddle, we wondered whether there were enough to justify purchasing a table for the Church room and holding a regular weekly (probably Wednesday) club night.

Currently this is a gauging of interest rather than concrete plans - although we have got as far as working out it may be possible to get a grant for the table)

If you are interested please email me: david@dcornwell



Newsletter (February 09)

We are very pleased to welcome Ben Smith, Explorer Scout, who is doing his Duke of Edinburgh's award and as part of that has offered his help over the next few months.

During February we have been concentrating on the compass and how we can find our way by day or night. We also made a number of compasses using just a pin a magnet and some water.

The cubs have also been learning how to tie a clove hitch and doing some square lashing. With these new skills the cubs had to build stretchers out of bamboo canes and carry a ball safely on it through an obstacle course. We used a ball as opposed to an actual patient as we thought we might end up with a real casualty!! We have also made old fashion type catapults, as they used in the Norman and Saxon day's, with our pioneering skills. The battle between the six's was great fun.

Most of our activities will be in preparation for our night hike through Chepstow Forest during May plus our first camp.

On the 8th Feb five of the cubs took part in the District Cub Quiz in Monmouth and I am very please to report our team came third, in fact there was only two points between second and third, so they did very well.

Future events include

14 th March	District Swimming Gala (Newport)
26 th April	St Georges Day Parade (Usk)
? May	Night Hike
16 th 17 th May	Group Camp
6 th 7 th June	District Cub Camp, The theme for the camp being the Stone Age.
4 th July	Football Competition (Chepstow)

CAROLINE'S COOKERY CORNER

I love croquets, they freeze well and are good for children and adults alike.

Chicken and Ham Croquettes

2 tbsp flour	2 tbsp butter
1/2 pint milk	12oz finely chopped
chicken	2 oz finely chopped ham
2 egg yolks lightly beaten	Dollop of Dijon mustard
Worcester sauce - a dash	Chopped parsley
salt and pepper	

Melt the butter, add flour and mix and add the milk to make a thick white sauce. Add the rest of the ingredients and chill. With wet hands shape into 8 croquets and coat with flour egg and bread crumbs (at this stage they may be frozen) Fry in hot until crisp.

Spatchcock Chicken

1 small poussin per person	salt and pepper
2 tbsp oil and butter	mixed scissors or a sharp knife

Place the chicken breast side down and cut along the side of the backbone with. Remove the backbone by cutting along the other side. Turn the chicken over and press hard with your hand to break the breast bone. Skewer the chicken to keep it flat.

Pre-heat the grill - season - season and brush with the oil and butter. Place under the grill, skin side up and grill until well browned - basting often- turn over and cook the other side until brown. This should take about 12 - 16 minutes depending on the size of your bird. Serve with a good lump of parsley garlic butter and salad.

Many thanks again to Caroline Davies.



Chepstow Folk Dance Club

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7.30– 9.30**

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SHIRENEWTON WI FEBRUARY 2009

Our President welcomed three guests to our February meeting. One was a past member visiting, the other two enjoyed it so much that they joined bring our numbers up to 25. New members are always welcome, we meet at the Recreation Hall on the second Thursday in the month at 7.15 pm.

Every year the WI decides on a resolution to go forward to the national AGM. The WI has been at the forefront of many of the campaigns; Farm gate milk prices, Climate change, Violence against women and last year's resolution about the inappropriate imprisonment of mentally ill people. Sally Saysell reported on the first meeting. Gwent WI has put forward two resolutions to go forward to their second meeting in Caldicot, one is an SOS for bees and the other about residential care fees for the elderly.

Our speaker was Henry Hodges who gave a talk on Chepstow's Prisoner in the Tower. Henry Marten had an interesting private life and was a republican politician before the Civil War. His was one of the signatures on Charles 1 death warrant and he was sentenced to life imprisonment. He spent the last twelve years of his life in Chepstow Castle in what is now known as Marten's Tower. He is buried in Mary's Church.

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 1090167

Our annual quiz took place on a cold wet evening but our laughter warmed us up as we realised how little we could answer and therefore how inventive our answers were! We did have a victorious team and they were rewarded with a bottle each.

Dates for your diary:

Resource Meeting, Monday, 9th March, Recreational Hall, Shirenewton, between 2.00pm and 5.00 pm, everyone welcome.

Monthly Meeting, Tuesday, 31st March, 'Anecdotes and Tangents: A Shirenewton Family Story', a talk given by Margaret Jenkins at the Huntsman Hotel, Shirenewton, 7.30 pm, everyone welcome. Not to be missed!

SHIRENEWTON MOTHERS' UNION, MARCH 2009

There was no meeting in February. The next one is on Wednesday 11 March at 2.30 p.m. in the Shirenewton Church Room. Mrs Jean Hackett will be speaking about "Encircling the World" - the preparation that goes into the annual Women's World Day of Prayer [Service on Friday 6 March at 2.00 p.m. in Shirenewton Church] produced this year by the Women of Papua New Guinea. Everyone interested in most welcome.

The April meeting will be in the same venue on Wednesday 8 April at 2.30 p.m. Sue Ruseell will share up-to-date information about our diocesan linked MU members in South Africa, Uganda, Sudan, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe. This will help us better to understand and pray for the lives and needs of parents and families in these countries where conditions are so hard compared with our own. Again, everyone interested in most welcome.

WANTED by 31 March Real old Family Recipes for an exciting new MU recipe book.

From Rosemary Carey, Branch Leader tel. 01291 425010

ST PETERS - NEWCHURCH

A burial service was held for Isabel Louise Morgan on 24th January at St Peter's Church Newchurch.

Isabel had been a very active participant at the Earlswood Lower Valley Methodist Chapel, close to where she was born and latterly at Caldicot Methodist Church.

She was a very strong Christian in her beliefs. A teacher at Llangwm primary school for many years. Following the second World War, she was an active member of the fund raising team that built Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall. After retirement she was very involved in the running of a social club for recovering stroke patients, at the St Lawrence & later Mount Pleasant Hospital. This provided the patients with stimulation and some social life. The club was closed with the move to the new Community Hospital.

Sadly she was involved in a serious motoring accident that left her confined to a wheel chair. However, she was extremely stoic and never heard to complain about her condition, refusing to leave her home, garden and flowers that she loved so much until a few days before she died in hospital.

A strong Christian lady that made a contribution to many lives.

Itton Village Hall

Friday 20th March 7.30pm.

Show **'This Farming Life'**
by the Umber Music company

This show from the North Devon Rural Touring Scheme portrays Farming Life from the 1920's to the 1970's. It includes archive film and traditional song, interviews with rural communities and readings. In the show, work with heavy horses and traction and rural crafts are displayed.

It is billed as an audio-visual experience of the subject and we hope that you will come along and support the company who are trying to keep memories of farming communities alive. It has had many good reviews in the West Country.

Tickets at the door : Adults: £6.00, Students: £4.00

Parking and disabled facilities

Sponsored by the Arts Council for Wales.

ADVERTISING RATES

To advertise in the Magazine rates are:

Full page—£50 for the 12 months i.e. 10 issues

1/2 page—£25 for 12 months—10 issues

I found a dead otter beside the road what should I do? Currently the Environment Agency is recording the sightings and locations of dead otters to get a picture of the population in Wales. If you find one it is important to note its location (preferably a grid reference) and try to identify whether it is male or female. Females will often have pups in the vicinity and they will need to be rescued if there is any chance of them surviving without her. Please phone the Environment Agency on 08708 506506.

I found a baby bird on the lawn. What should I do? Preferably leave it where it is unless there are cats about, in which case, move it off the ground but still leave it close by (eg on the branch of a bush). Its parents are probably nearby and if you watch, you will see them come to feed it. Baby birds are notoriously difficult to hand-rear although there are some organisations that will do it if necessary.

That was just a taster of some of the queries and reported sightings that we get each month. If you have any other queries then give me a ring and if I don't know the answer I'm sure I can find one from a colleague in the Wildlife Trust.

Kathy Barclay
Community Education Officer (Magor Marsh) Tel: 01633 889048

THANKS TO SODS.

Both Barbara Walters on behalf Leukaemia Research and Sue Philipson on behalf of The Alzheimer's Society would like to thank all involved in this years panto, Puss in Boots for their fantastic support and generosity. A magnificent £700 has been split between the two charities.

They are also pleased to confirm that Panto will return again in 2010 and that Sue will be selling tickets from sometime in December.

Sadly Barbara and Terry are retiring after many memorable years - they will be a very hard act to follow having made a huge contribution to SODS over the last 10 years so a huge thanks to them both from everyone in SODS!

FAIRTRADE NEWS

In 2009 Traidcraft celebrates its 30th birthday. This organization was one of the first to back fairly traded goods. In those days, believe me, supporters of fairly traded goods were really considered as yogurt weaving, sandal wearing hippies! (No comments, please!).

The current catalogue describes how the daughter of one of the original workers at Jute Works in Bangladesh was able to secure a decent education because of the small additional payment her mother received and now this young woman, a trained teacher, has returned to her village to set up a school that has 6 teachers and 175 pupils. In all the general doom and gloom it is important to remember what enormous progress has been achieved. I am very proud to have played a tiny part in such wonderful stories.

I have heard that Somerfield in Chepstow no longer sells Fairtrade bananas. If customers request them I am sure management will change its decision. Tesco now has fairly traded roses, again. Treat someone (or yourself) : they're worth it!

The new catalogues are wonderful. Do contact me for a catalogue or more info or go to Traidcraft direct : www.traidcraftshop.co.uk
Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316@gmail.com

WHIST DRIVES

Unfortunately, due to weather conditions, our February Drive had to be cancelled. Let us hope that we have no similar intervention in March when our Drive will be held on the 5th at The Recreation Hall at 7.30 p.m. In April the Drive will be on the 2nd at the same place and time. The Whist Drives are held to raise money for the running costs of the Hall. It would be encouraging to have some more local support – currently we have five players from Mynyddbach. Players range in age from mid fifties to early nineties. We have a very social evening for as little as £2.50 that includes light refreshments in an extremely pleasant venue particularly in the light evenings.

Enquiries to Auriol Horton 01291 641844.

STARGAZING IN MARCH '09

At around 10 in the evening mid-month, the Constellation of Leo the Lion can be seen to the South. It is one of the few constellations that looks like its namesake. It commemorates the giant lion that Hercules slaughtered as the first of his labours. Leo is dominated by his head, which looks like a sickle or back-to-front question mark. The bright blue-white star Regulus is at the base of the question mark. The name Regulus translates as "prince" in Latin, whilst its Arabic name means "the heart of the lion".

The seven stars of the Great Bear are in the eastern sky and the "W-shaped" constellation of Cassiopeia can be seen in the north-west. Orion the Hunter is still a fine sight in the south-west.

In the evening sky the yellowish planet Saturn is just below and to the left of Leo. The very bright Evening Star in the west is the planet Venus, dropping below the horizon at about 9 o'clock. On the 10th the Full Moon is just to the right of Saturn, whilst on the 30th the waxing crescent Moon can be seen beside the Pleiades star cluster.

The Vernal Equinox occurs on 20th March, when day and night are equal, with exactly 12 hours between sunrise and sunset. This is a useful day for getting your bearings right as the sun rises due east and sets due west wherever you may be.

Dave Thomas

LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

There has been a spate of thefts from unlocked sheds and garages in Shirenewton. Powered garden tools and bicycles have been stolen. Please ensure that your building are secure. The local police have available a limited number of alarmed shed locks. Contact PC Cowburn on 01633 838111 for availability.

Joint Neighbourhood Watch & Partnership and Communities Together Meeting (PACT): At 7.30 pm on Wednesday 1st April 2009 at The Huntsman Hotel

This is an opportunity to express your concerns and to influence Police Priorities in the area. Current priorities include Speeding, Motorcycles and Police presence & communication.



Wildlife Worries



When I first started working for Gwent Wildlife Trust I was sitting alone in the office one day at Magor Marsh and the phone rang. "Please could you tell me if Gwent Wildlife Trust supply hedgehogs?" asked the voice.....I had no idea! They don't but as usual - we knew a hedgehog sanctuary that did!

That was just one of the interesting queries that we receive every year about wildlife. I thought it may be interesting and useful for you to read some of the more common ones and the answers to them. So here goes:

After the ice melted on my pond, there were frogs floating in it. What happened? Some male frogs hibernate at the bottom of ponds. When ice forms the decomposition gases build up in the water and can prove toxic to frogs and other pond life.

*I've got lots of frogspawn in my pond, I will be overwhelmed with frogs this year, please come and remove it? Sorry, we don't have the resources to do this and it may cause problems by transferring invasive plant species or frog diseases to the new pond or river. Frogs tend to lay thousands of eggs each year but these are reduced to only hundreds of tadpoles. These will become tens of baby frogs and only a small number will reach maturity. So don't worry, nature will control the numbers! Based on an article by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust *Would you advise putting fish in my garden pond to control the frogs?* Not if you want a wildlife pond. Fish will predate the larvae of dragonflies and other invertebrates and eat the eggs of amphibians. They also gobble up plants that provide important habitats for other creatures. In a small pond this will very quickly mean a reduction in numbers of wildlife species. Even herbivorous fish cause problems because they rake up the bottom layer of dead material and generally stir up the whole pond releasing toxic decomposition gases!*

Call **Karen** or **Julie** on **01633 413 571**.

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THE BELLS...THE BELLS, THE BELLS, THE BELLS.

Shirenewton bell ringers have had a productive month.

Four ringers participated in the annual Monmouth Branch Ringing Course held on Saturday 14th Feb. It finished in plenty of time to get home to watch the England/Wales match which was extremely important to Tom Mitchell who was on the course learning to ring a method called Plain Bob Minor.

Plain bob Minor is the first method learned with all six bells "working", that is ringing the method. The first methods learned are Doubles methods which have only 5 bells working and the sixth "covering" just striking in sixths place each time. Minor methods are considerably harder to ring well. Jenny Millar and Mike Penney were helpers on the course and Pip Penney was a tutor on the Plain Hunt group. A profitable if tiring day was had by all.

Our achievements are getting noticed.

Pip has now been asked to participate in teaching workshops in London, Bristol, Leeds and possibly Scotland and to help to start up a youth ringing group similar to our local Kids. Ring Out in Birmingham. She has also been asked to become a tutor on the four day residential ringing course held in Hereford each year for the last 43 years. This is a big honour and will be a big challenge for her.

We have had some first quarter peals. Maddie Stanley rang her first "inside" to Grandsire Doubles on the 8th of February and Christopher Eickhoff rang his very first, the treble to Plain Bob Doubles on the 15th February. So big congratulations to them both.

Pip Penny

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

www.shirenewtonchurch.com

Imagine the scene. Its 9:00pm and snowing heavily. I have to be at Heathrow at 8:00am the next morning. What to do? Leave immediately and book a hotel? Take a chance? After checking out the jam cams and all the motorway information, my decision was to set the alarm for 3:45am and check out the websites. Lucky I did - both bridges closed. So was the A48 open? A quick call to Traffic Wales (yes they answered at 3:50am) confirmed it was. So, up and off via Gloucester. The A48 was indeed open and 1 hour & 15mins later I was at the M4/M5 junction and, you will be pleased to learn, I got to Heathrow in time for a leisurely breakfast!

The recent inclement weather has certainly focused the need to have accurate traffic information. Therefore I've added a page to the website with links to pertinent traffic information. Did you know you can get the current average speed between all motorway junctions on the M4 - or for that matter any motorway? So, I've linked some useful sites I have found and the local (SE Wales and Bristol/Bath) 'jam cams'. The page is linked from the home page on the right column adjacent to the 'http://' image under the title 'Traffic Information' - hope its useful! If there are any pages you use and you think deserve a link please direct me to them.

I missed the deadline for the Jan/Feb edition of the magazine so missed the opportunity to say a big thank-you to all who use the site and make purchases through it. In 2008 (calendar year) the site generated just over £950 for the church. A great result and it all goes to show that all the little bits of commission we get adds up! The other good news is that it is £950 of 'free money'. Every pound spent through the site was a pound that was going to be spent anyway. Keep up the good work! Remember, we have most high street shops listed and lots of other ones which you wouldn't normally come across.

I've added a couple of comments that people don't understand how to use the new shopping portal. Its quite simple - just click on the 'http://www.tinyurl.com/.....' link. The portal opens up with the various categories displayed and you can also locate shops alphabetically by clicking on the appropriate letter! A couple of categories (travel being the main one) have sub-categories not all of which show on the main page. There are also links to 'most popular' listings (at the time of writing its

Amazon closely followed by Tesco's) and 'newest listings' which show the recently added shops.

BTW: For those interested, I'm using the 'tinyurl' links for two reasons (i) direct links to the shops via the affiliate programs I use are increasingly blocked by the default (I would argue over zealous settings) on many of the Internet Security suites, and (ii) it makes it a lot easier to manage than having long unwieldy urls. The Times website uses tinyurl and it was them that alerted me to their use.

So to some PC trouble shooting I've been asked to undertake recently. Service available only to good friends who keep me full of red wine! A couple of hints: (i) Its always worth trying to re-boot the router (ie turning it off, waiting for 1 min and then turning it on) even if it is working fine with other PCs in the house. This is what fixed an internet connectivity problem in one case. The basic issue is that you mentally discount the router as 'its working' for other PCs; and (ii) if you are using Outlook, popmail and BT, you can get a situation where email suddenly stops downloading. The outlook test works and proves that the account is correctly configured, etc. The issue is generally that you have a 'bad' email (frequently junk) in your in-box. The solution: log-on via webmail and delete anything you really don't want. If that doesn't solve the issue the bad email may be in something you do want. Then create a temp folder, move all mail in your in-box to that and then move the mail from the temp folder back into the in-box in stages until the download stops working again. Then you can zero in on the bad email.

Finally, now that the shopping portal is so much easier to maintain I am finding time to keep other areas of the site more up-to-date. Over the course of the next few weeks I intend to tidy up the 'Be a whizz' section. Keep your eyes peeled.

Happy browsing

David Cornwell
webmaster.