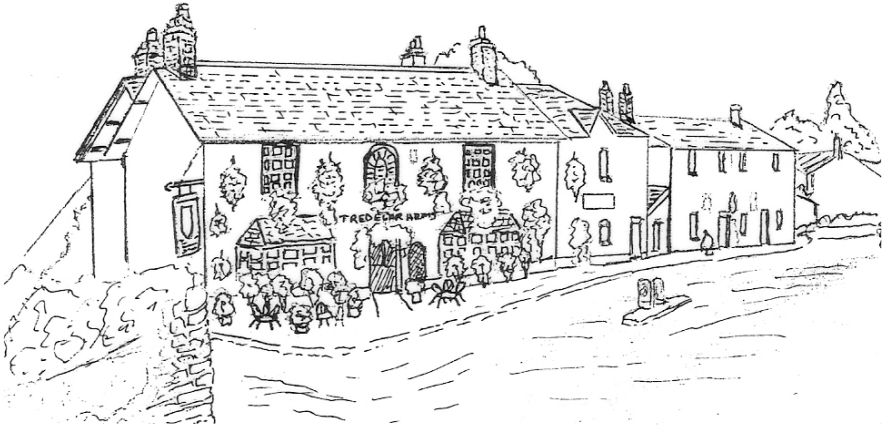


# Shirenewton & Newchurch Parish Magazine May 2012



*Sketch by Barbara Davies*

## ***The Bells, The Bells***

*If you like Bell Ringing you will enjoy a "Striking Competition" at St Thomas à Becket Church Saturday 19th May 4.30pm for around 2 hours, (see page 26): if you don't like bells, make alternative arrangements!*

Price: 50p

**Dear Friends,**

Easter Greetings to all! Yes, Easter continues until Ascension Day which is on 17<sup>th</sup> May, so we will continue to celebrate the Easter message of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. The Easter account of the first Easter is reflected in our hymns and songs which I find so uplifting and joyous. The singing in church on Easter Day was evidence that a good number of you also enjoy these wonderful tunes.

A number of parishioners have said to me that if the Sunday service was a little later they would come to Service. **I have listened and from the 6<sup>th</sup> May the first Sunday of the month, the Service will begin at 10 a.m.** Come and join us for a warm welcome awaits you!

After Ascension Day the next major celebration will be Pentecost on 27<sup>th</sup> May. This will be time when we remember the God's gift of his Holy Spirit to all who are Baptised, a gift to sustain us on our journey of faith. To become an adult member of the Church the Bishop comes to parishes to give Confirmation and I will be holding preparation classes for anyone who wishes to be Confirmed. Please let me know if you are interested and I will arrange to meet with you to explain what is involved.

Following Pentecost, June will prove to be both a busy and enjoyable time beginning with the Church Fete and the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and I am grateful to all those who are busily engaged in planning and preparing for that weekend.

Finally, the Annual General Meeting of the Church has taken place and a new Parochial Church Council (PCC) has been elected the details of which are listed elsewhere in this magazine. I thank all the members of the PCC who have given their time and energy during the previous year in maintaining the business of the Church and its fabric. Not only does such work take time and energy but it costs a great deal of money to keep the Church open. Thank you to all those who have generously agreed to take on the work for this year and others who support the work so generously with their gifts.

**Remember the Service begin at 10a.m. from the 6<sup>th</sup> May! I look forward to seeing many of you.**

Every Blessing,  
Nansi Davies.  
Parish Priest.

## SHIRENEWTON PARISH VISITORS

We have a team of five Parish Visitors who are members of the Church of St Thomas A Becket's congregation.

They are trained and supported to offer a listening ear and time to chat with those in particular need -- the housebound, the sick, the bereaved, or those facing some other kind of crisis. They are also there to welcome new people into the village and help them to integrate into the community more quickly.

They are not professional counsellors, carers or social workers, but ordinary people who are willing to be alongside you when you most need it. Their service is free to those of all faiths and none, with no strings attached.

### **Confidentiality**

Our Parish Visitors work within a strict code of confidentiality so that you may be confident that whatever is shared with them goes no further.

The one exception to this is that Visitors may share the minimum information necessary to obtain support and advice themselves, if necessary, from our clergy or other appropriate person. This would only happen with the persons consent

### **How to Find Out More**

Contact our coordinator, the Revd Nansi Davies Tel 01633 400519 or Diane Marlow Tel 01291 641407 for an informal chat about your need.

If you would like to become a member of the Parish Visitors team please contact Nansi or Diane.

## FROM THE REGISTERS

I received a telephone complaint last month from a lady regarding the lack of information from the registers, i.e. Christening, Marriage and Burials. Unfortunately the message was not clear and I could not get her name, neither did she leave a telephone number.

The person who supplies me with the Church Registers information informs me that I have published everything from the Registers.

I rely on the community to keep me informed and if I have missed something then please contact me with the details.

Nothing has been reported this month.

Terry Walters Editor Shirenewton & Newchurch Parish Magazine



# SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012

There were about 20 members of the public at the April meeting. Three speakers had asked to address the council.

One resident spoke out and said that she was deeply disappointed that Shirenewton Community Council had at last month's meeting voted against the proposed Shop at the Rec. She pointed out that many people desperately want a local shop, that a village shop makes for a better community, that it was understood that the Rec had been the most viable option and that the generous Lottery Grant which had been extremely likely was now lost. The huge attendance at the TA and the resulting questionnaire had shown that an overwhelming number of people had been in favour of a shop at the Rec. So with all these positive factors, she was very disappointed that the council had turned it down.

Another resident informed the council that the MOD were now unlikely to be hosting the Motor Sports events down at Caerwent and he thought this a shame as it brought in local money to the area.

The third resident asked if he could have all the copies of the SCC minutes going back to 2007

## Police Report

This is a colour co-ordinated report . Red, white blue and grey plus a moss green rabbit.

7/3A rogue trader offered to do a drive way with a load of tarmac and quoted £300 for the job but then when it was finished charged £800. So do be wary of traders calling with a 'load of tarmac' unless you know them. There have also been reports of a suspicious land rover looking for 'someone selling cars' It was thought that this was another rogue person on the lookout for 'scrap'

9/3There has been a report of dangerous driving in the area. It's a blue mini bus which regularly drives up fast behind people. Or should that be vehicles? Every Friday, apparently.

15/3 A suspicious blue car was seen in Earlswood during the day. It was thought that it might be marking out locations to revisit at night.

16/3 A red racing car was seen racing through Shirenewton. It was doing 90 mph. The police saw it.

19/03 There was an attempted break to a garage, where the screws were removed. But it was bolted on the inside. Ha ha!

19/03 Fuel was siphoned out of a car on a driveway in Mynnyddbach. This was in the middle of the day when anyone could have spotted what was going on.

19/03Another garage was broken into, this time in Shirenewton and bikes were stolen. So make sure your garage is locked. Really securely. Maybe bolted from the inside too (see 19/3)

19/03 Now this one is really brazen. £750 worth of plants were lifted from a garden sometime during the evening of 17/03 in Shirenewton. The thieves must have had a flat loader or something.

21/03 Then a moss covered wire rabbit was stolen from outside Deacons Florist.

25/3 200-300(!) bikes were seen and heard on the Usk Road – the excessive speeds and noise were reported. The Environmental Health people 'are aware' (I wasn't quite sure what that meant or what action will result)

29/03 A number plate was stolen from a car overnight in Devauden.

31/03 A number plate was stolen from a car overnight in Pwllmeyric.

30/03 The suspicious white transit van is in action again. This time seen on a dead-end drive in the early hours of the morning in Itton

02/04 And then it's brother, the suspicious grey van was seen in Llangwm. The occupants asked for directions and then - did not take them...

## **Planning**

### **1 DC/2011/01149 Plot adjacent Oakley House Shirenewton.**

Modifications to approved planning permission.

It was noted that this application was originally turned down by SCC but MCC had allowed it. There then followed a discussion as to whether this building was 3 or 4 storeys high. Anyway the Application Approved But With Observations

### **2 DC/2012/00098 The Old Rectory, Shirenewton**

Listed building consent, rear single storey garden room.

No objections – the application was approved.

## **Village Green Enquiry**

This took place on Mon 26<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March up at Earlswood Hall. Members of the public were invited to give evidence to the Enquiry in front of an Inspector as the how the land at Blethyn Close had been used in the past in regards of recreation and allotments. MCC had employed a Barrister on their side and Carole Jones had represented SCC. The members of SCC wish to put on record their Thanks to those who had given evidence and to Carole Jones for what turned out to be quite an ordeal. The Inspector's Report will be published sometime time May/June.

Graham Down has also pencilled in a question to MCC enquiring how much it's cost them (and us as taxpayers) to hire a top QC....

## **Queen Elizabeth II Initiative**

This is a scheme to register Open Lands and Green Spaces so that they will remain open land and green spaces for the people. There was some confusion as to how/where/when/what was involved but I'm also muddled as to what I heard at the Community Council and what I picked up on The Archers. (They are also confused but I think they were going to reluctantly ask for land from the rich land-owning Brian Aldred...) An application will be put in but if there are objections this can be withdrawn.

*Continued on Page 6*

*Continued from page 5*

## **THE VILLAGE SHOP PROPOSAL.**

A letter of thanks will be sent to those villagers on the SMILE committee thanking them for their hard work over the last five years to get a shop up and running in the village. However, there then followed some rather acrimonious discussion as to whether there had – or had not been - a lack of communication between the three parties (SMILE, SCC and the Rec Association) A lot of the members of the public joined in the debate at this point and feelings ran high. It was suggested that despite the questionnaires completed at the TA the feelings from the village as to a local shop were not properly represented by SMILE. One member of the public suggested that a shop in the village wouldn't work. Another asked for proper business plans to be put forward based upon, I think, a hypothetical site being available.

I have to say, that it really wasn't very nice at this point in the meeting. I've written 'All very unpleasant' in my notes. Anyway, after a lot of heated discussion it was decided to put a questionnaire together. And to ask people what they would like... So there will soon be yet another opportunity for you to say what you'd like as regards to a local shop.

### **Diamond Jubilee Celebrations**

And so to a more cheery subject, the Queen's Jubilee. There will be a Hog Roast, (order your food up front and it will be cheaper) a Firework Display, some bell ringing, Classic Cars, the Lighting of the Beacon by our young people and in general, having a good time on the Rec

We then heard the good news that Shirenewton had been considered for a Reward for Road Safety. Closely followed by the bad news was that we didn't get it.

Nothing much else to report. Anyway these notes have gone on long enough.

Next month's meeting is the Annual Meeting on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2012 at 7.30. This will be after the local elections so I think there will be some new faces on the block. Or should that be heads?

Glynis MacDonald

## **BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2012**

### **Can you help?**

The Community Council has entered Shirenewton in the competition again this year. The application form was late arriving so it doesn't give us much time to rally the troops.

Judging will take place between 1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> June and marks are given for the appearance and condition of the village, village hall and playing field, war memorial, churchyard, bus shelters and surroundings. The condition of hedges, fences, walls and verges is also taken into account, as well as the tidiness of flower and vegetable gardens, outhouses and sheds. Bonus marks are given for the general appearance of the village, noting the absence of litter and refuse dumps. BUT, marks are deducted for any unsightly areas.

Last year Shirenewton scored well on the approach to the village on the Crick road, the village hall and playing field and Caepercella. It was noted that some attention and TLC was needed to the wall around the churchyard, the war memorial and the Tan House pub site. The judge's comments were 'Overall good effort, attractive village'.

Do you think we can do better than that this year? Of course we can. It will mean everyone in the village helping, not only with their own gardens, plant pots and hanging baskets, but also by being aware of their surroundings and taking care of the public parts of the village - the entrances to the village, weeding and clearing verges and footpaths.

Shirenewton has been entered in this competition for several years and scores well because residents are proud of their attractive village and take care of its environment. Let's make a special effort in this special year of 2012 and aim to walk away with the Best Kept Village prizes.

Hilary Counsell

Clerk to Shirenewton Community Council

Tel: 01291 421307 [Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com](mailto:Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com)

## CHURCH FINANCES

Everyone in the community will be aware that there is a constant need to raise funds to maintain the Church and ensure that it stays open for regular Sunday worship for the congregation, as well as marriages, baptisms and funerals for anyone who wishes to hold these services in Church. In an economic climate where Churches are regularly closing and becoming redundant, or being kept open on a care and maintenance basis, we are very fortunate and privileged to have our own Church and our own regular service schedule.

At the Annual Vestry Meeting the PCC Treasurer presented the annual financial report. The Church finances are divided between restricted and unrestricted funds in accordance with the format introduced by the Church in Wales a couple of years ago. Our restricted funds are largely used to provide for future maintenance of the Church.

Unrestricted funds receive income from planned giving, collections, donations and legacies; and tax refunds and grants, and these are used to support the annual activities of the Church. These funds are spent on the parish share, the priest's expenses, maintenance of services, and mission giving. Restricted funds receive income from fundraising activities and are restricted because they can only be used for the purposes for which they are raised. For us, this is generally to provide for future maintenance of the Church fabric.

The Church started the financial year with a balance of £160 in unrestricted funds and £5,320 in restricted funds, which was not a healthy position. The year ended with a balance of £6,756 in unrestricted funds and £19,027 in restricted funds, which was much healthier, although the Church does need to build up the unrestricted funds a little more.

*Continued on Page 8*

*Continued from Page 7*

There was an income of £33,854 into the restricted funds including about £13,000 from collections, £5,000 from tax refunds and £9,000 from fund raising. The fund raising total includes income from the Church fete, Parish magazine sales and rental of the Church room. Organisations connected with the Church, such as the Mothers' Union and youth organisations, pay a nominal charge for using the Church room.

The expenditure out of the unrestricted funds was about £27,250; this included the parish share of £13,000 and £9,400 on maintenance of the Church. This maintenance figure includes £4,742 for heat and light; £716 for insurance; £1,000 for Churchyard maintenance; and £2,900 for Church maintenance.

There was an income of £22,000 into the unrestricted fund, which included income from the 200 Club as well as the activities of the Shirenewton Charity Committee. The Shirenewton Charity Committee contributed £1,200 to charities during the year as well as £2,450 for exceptional Church maintenance. Another £2,000 was donated to charities from the unrestricted fund largely as a result of Sunday Club activities and the special services they helped to organise. Most of the Shirenewton Charity Committee income has come from outside the village through events such as the annual golf day and other sponsorship.

In general, collections just about cover the Parish share; and fund raising activities just about cover other church costs; and tax refunds help to rebuild the balance on the account.

The proceeds of this year's Church fete will again go into the unrestricted account to help keep the fund at a sensible level and to ensure that we can pay our bills in 2012.

The Church strives to be available for all in the community as and when they need it. It costs around £27,000 a year just to keep it going and whilst most of that is funded by regular worshippers, events like the fete help keep the Church open and available to all. The PCC hopes this will continue and they are building up a fund for future maintenance to prevent financial problems if there is a sudden and urgent need for funds for emergency repairs which could not be met and which would threaten the PCC's ability to keep the Church open.

Please feel free to speak to our treasurer, Kevin Bounds if you would like more information or have advice and suggestions to pass on to him.

## **SHIRENEWTON CHURCH 200 CLUB**

On behalf of the 200 club I would like to welcome all the newcomers to the group. Can I also thank the existing members for their continued support.

Nerys Wilson :- 641935

### **April Winners:**

- 1st Prize Richie Tout
- 2nd Prize Jean Howe
- 3rd Prize Jane Leney
- 4th Prize Ann Nicholas



## SHIRENEWTON VILLAGE SHOP

Sadly, I have recently seen how this issue is being emotively addressed which has reflected badly and unfairly on historical village conventions. These conventions i.e. the Shirenewton Community Council and the Recreation Association are properly constituted bodies that have performed their functions over prolonged periods for the benefit of the village community. The former have kept the precept down and I might add in the present economic climate, admirably so, by comparison with other like councils. The latter have managed and maintained a village facility that is the envy of many other villages. These things just don't happen without the commitment, management and hard work of certain individuals who continue to do their best.

These individuals exercise their functions within properly constituted bodies and listen to local concerns. In recent months I along with many other locals have attended several Community Council Meetings where the village shop has been discussed.

Apart from two councilors involved in promoting the village shop enterprise, there has been an absence of SMILE representation. The issues of the shop have been debated and the request to have the shop sited at the Recreational grounds has been aired. The Community Council has made clear in these meetings they are not against a Village Shop per se, but felt the Recreation site was unsuitable for several reasons. For example, under the Community Councils duty of care, the potential for increased conflict between foot passengers and vehicular traffic was likely to result. And, apparently other alternative sites appear not to have been investigated properly. The proposition for siting the shop at the Recreational grounds was defeated; 2 for, 6 against with 2 abstentions - democracy!

In responding to question 2 in the previous article in the Parish magazine:

Why has this issue come to a head now?

Having attended recent community council meetings this became quite obvious to me; because the SMILE group has failed to engage properly with the Community Council and until very recently have not involved the Recreation Association. And, there have been mixed messages, mis-information and concern about this Village Shop venture:

From the SMILE results of the survey at the Tredegar Arms pub the 'overwhelming majority' they refer to (190 respondents) represents less than a third of the Shirenewton population.

I understand the Community Council did not have sight of the survey questionnaire, prior to its use or otherwise agree to it. This despite the concern over the existing covenant at the Recreation ground, an issue that had not been resolved properly prior to surveying the community. Furthermore, villagers surveyed were not given the Community Council's or Recreation Association's views or reservations about the shop site location at the Recreation.

The scale of the proposed plans to accommodate a shop and coffee bar by relocating present facilities was of much concern and likely to jeopardise existing provision.

*Continued on Page 10*

*Continued from page 9*

It's difficult to see how the Community Council could commit to something without proper enquiry into village need, viability and management functions of this enterprise without being able to see a 'valid business case' which to date has never been produced !

The Community Council cannot exercise its responsible functions for, or against this SMILE enterprise without greater transparency and communication which to date has been sadly missing and that quite frankly is why we are in the position we are.

The article in the parish magazine is unfair and a misguided attempt to blame the properly constituted bodies in the village and make them the scapegoats for the inadequacies and shortcomings of SMILE.

For me whilst a shop maybe '**desirable**'- and I use this term because we've managed without one for many years - there are more pressing and '**essential**' issues for this community. For example, Traffic Calming through the village for a 20MPH zone, before a child or local person is killed. I have recently requested under the Freedom of Information Act for certain information which I will furnish to the Community Council for their constructive deliberations in how to progress this issue. The Community Council has also worked very hard recently in their fight for Village Green status at the Mynyddbach Inquiry. These for me are time consuming issues of significant importance as opposed to the shop enterprise.

Having said this, it is a fact that the Community Council has through the local County Council representative Councillor Down, caused enquiry to be made with two local housing associations to see if it's possible to find a commercially viable way of bringing Shirenewton shop back into use at the old shop premises. (see Councillor Down's election campaign leaflet) This alternative should be pursued and if you want to know more about it ask the SMILE or Community Council members!

There are local ward elections coming up and the electorate may have to tease out the motives of potential candidates as to why they may be standing. In essence, do they have the wider village interests at heart with primary objectives that ensure they will not be sidetracked with secondary issues?

I hold the view that citizenship and the fabric of our society dictates democracy through established conventions and to abuse these principles by endeavouring to circumvent these institutions, is divisive and damaging.

Finally, at the last Community Council meeting it was decided that the Council would engage properly in a questionnaire to all residents in pursuing the viability of a Village Shop, and in accordance with democratic processes.

S Jones, Church House, Shirenewton.

## THE VILLAGE SHOP; THE FACTS

In the article in the April issue of this magazine, few of the answers to the questions posed were factual, the main were pure conjecture. These are the factual answers to the questions posed, taken from records of public meetings.

Firstly, in July 2007, Shirenewton Community Council (SCC) set up a working party, comprising Cllrs Saysell, Eickhoff, Crundwell and Harvey, "to look at examples of Community shops" and this is the only remit given to any persons to investigate in any way the feasibility of re-establishing a shop in Shirenewton Village Council minute July 2007 No 2016.

During the subsequent four years, two members of this working party left the council, and hence the working party, and were not replaced for whatever reason. Consequently, SCC minutes indicate that Cllr Eickhoff carried on the good work of this group on his own SCC minutes record that the following options were investigated as to their potential to facilitate.

### **A village shop**

- Reopen the old shop
- Both the Carpenters Arms and the Tredegar Arms were considered on a like basis SCC Minute 2269
- The setting up of a temporary facility (Portakabin) on a temporary site SCC Minute 2354 - Building a new shop on land owned by Shirenewton and Mynyddbach Fields Association Ltd (SMAL) SCC Minute 2365
- Incorporate a shop in land adjacent to Clear View, opposite old shop, which was under consideration for housing development, and rent it as a Community shop SCC Minute 2479
- Take over the Tan House public house and incorporate a shop in these premises SCC Minute 2635
- Incorporate a shop into the facilities on the Recreation Field SCC Minute 2678

The minute numbers identify the chronological order in which proposed sites for a village shop were presented to SCC meetings. The reason the shop issue, "came to a head" at the SCC meeting in Feb 2012, was that the last option presented to the council only two meetings earlier had been progressed through a public consultation exercise which was the first that the majority of councillors knew that it was being advanced as though it was a proposal that had been adopted by the council. The same situation applied to the Recreation Association, the only knowledge any of its members had of this proposal was a visit by Mr Mathew Smith to the chairman's home in Nov 2011, to give him a computer presentation of a like proposal and seek his personal view on it

It is untrue to claim that the Recreation Field is the most suitable site for a village shop because it is publicly owned, no land purchase required, allows the shop to be a new build project, as established grant support for community projects and a suitable location. Another site put up to the council but not progressed to a conclusion, was the SAMFAL site, which has all the above attributes, and is in fact a better location, being central between the two communities with four footpaths accessing it radiating to the whole village.

*Continued on Page 12*

*Continued from Page 11*

Furthermore, it has an established, much better vehicle access, could incorporate a visitor centre for school parties and the like making use of this nature park facility, has established commercial status as it has registered Ltd status identification and the visitor centre facilitating education visits would expand possible grant support. Regarding grants, SCC Minutes 2678 is the only record in the minutes of it supporting a provisional grant application for a shop project. This was made to the BBC in Dec 2009, was signed by Cllrs Eede and Eickhoff and was turned down by the BBC, March 2010 Minute 2441. The only other minutes which refer to such a grant application are, Oct 2011 No 2678 and Jan 2012 No 2695, agreeing for SMILE to pursue grant funding, no mention of applications.

Minutes record that the SCC has not changed its mind about a village shop and shows that it has always supported efforts to re-establish a viable shop if this is possible it has opposed this being on the recreation Field because public opinion, expressed at its meetings, was against this proposal. To this end, at its last meeting it set up to carry out a referendum of the whole community to establish its views on all the aspects of establishing a community shop in the village in the future.

The existing situation regarding the ownership and operation of the field was set up in circa 1974, in compliance with the covenant put on the field by Mr Percy Liddell and under the guidance of Mr John Gilbert, such that it prevented it being used for any commercial purpose. Subsequent records SCC of meetings minutes and the Recreation Association AGM minutes ensures that anyone interested in this community facility knows of this present situation. There never has been and is not currently, any commercial operation being carried out on the field. The Shirenewton Playgroup is a registered charity and rents the hall facility on the same basis as all the other users, in fact they are a major source of income to the Recreation Association. As SMILE has pursued the legality of the covenant on the field, with a view to getting it lifted or at least changed to accommodate a village shop there, the SCC has in its possession a letter from Twomlow Solicitors and Associates giving their perspective on this issue, March minute 2714

Development on the field by the building of a shop there as a commercial enterprise could indicate to the local Planning Authority that the community accepts the field as available for further commercial development. As such, they could pass it for housing or the like and generate an income for the council, something they have done with other playing fields in the county.

From the April SCC meeting, if the community as a whole wants a shop, providing it is a financially viable proposition, an acceptable site can be found etc, agreed it would continue the village shop study. To get the communities opinion on these points a referendum was set up to establish data on all the points and issues relating to the feasibility of a village shop. If this referendum concludes, with good community participation, the SCC will be obliged to move ahead with village shop project. If this happens, hopefully a lot of the good work done by Cllr Eickhoff and his helpers can be used to bring a village shop to fruition.

Tony Hughes, Wentworth, Shirenewton

# **Nerys's Natty Nosh**

## ***Weetabix Cake Serves: 8***

*Recipe from Eirwen Wilson*



### **Ingredients**

- 2 Weetabix
- 1 cup dried fruit
- 3/4 cup muscavado sugar
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup -mixed chopped nuts and chopped cherries
- 6oz self raising flour
- 1 large egg, or 2 small eggs beaten

### **Method**

- 1 Mix together the Weetabix, sugar, dried fruit and milk in large bowl.
2. Leave overnight.
3. Add flour and beaten egg. If the mixture is a little dry add a little milk. Put into greased and floured (or lined with liner) 2lb loaf tin.
4. Cook at 180c or gas mark 4 for approximately one hour, until skewer comes out clean. Cool on wire rack.

### **Tips**

I have made this cake several times and I'm delighted with the results. It's incredibly easy to make, it's moist and keeps well in an airtight container in the fridge.

Freezes well.

It's adaptable, use it as a pudding, or serve with a cup of tea.

Vary the ingredients:-

Dried fruits:- sultanas, blueberries, cranberries, currents, papaya, pineapple, or strawberries.

Essences:-Add essences to the milk e.g. Vanilla, chocolate, or almond.

Spices:-Add spices to the flour e.g. cinnamon, nutmeg or mixed spice.

Make it into a double chocolate cake:-Follow the above method with the following ingredients

- 2 Weetabix
- 1 cup -cooking chocolate drops and chopped nuts
- 3/4 cup muscavado sugar
- 1 cup milk or Soya milk
- 1 cup dried fruit
- 5oz self raising flour
- 1 oz cocoa
- 1 large egg, beaten add a little milk if required.

**Enjoy!**

**SHIRENEWTON  
COMMUNITY  
LUNCHEON CLUB**

**Tredegar Arms  
Shirenewton  
01291 641274**

Please book early to secure  
your place for lunch

Usually forth Wednesday of  
the month, check actual  
dates with the TA

**SHIRENEWTON  
PARENT  
&  
TODDLER GROUP**



Every Thursday  
1.30 to 3pm term time  
Drinks, Snacks, Crafts,  
& Songs. £2

Shirenewton Recreation Hall

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/181560798590317>

**CHEPSTOW BUMPS N  
BABIES GROUP  
MONMOUTH & DISTRICT NCT**

Every month parents and  
mothers to be get together  
at another parent's house or  
a local child friendly venue.

It is an opportunity to make  
friends and extend a support  
network in the area. Parents  
volunteer to host this event  
in & around Chepstow.

You do not have to be an  
NCT member to attend  
Bumps n Babes, we have  
venues in the Chepstow  
area organised for January,  
February & March so please  
get in touch for the details &  
to be added to our mailing  
list.

To find out more email  
[nctmonmouthnewsletter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nctmonmouthnewsletter@yahoo.co.uk)

## SHIRENEWTON WI

Our April meeting saw us indulging in all things WI, with the help of three WI Advisors (WIA). Our numbers were swelled by the welcome addition of members from WI,s in our group and a brand new Shirenewton member. Amongst our guests we welcomed our federation chairman, her second visit this year.

The WIAs took it in turn to guide us through the history of our organisation, its present goals and attributes. Every branch in the country is unique, moulded by the community in which it runs and the interests and energy of its members. Every WI runs by the rules of our constitution, but that leaves amazing scope for individual ideas and ways of doing things so WI memberships really can suit everyone. As members, beyond what we do with our branch we can join in with an amazing array of activities and events put on by our federation. Beyond our Federation events, each year there are the campaigns and events run nationwide by our National Executive, which allow us to add our voice to a force which over the years has made changes which affects us all. Beyond Britain we are linked to the rest of the world by supporting Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW). So whether you get involved with everything or just come for friends, a chat, tea and a good speaker, it's great to be part of the WI at any age.

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May is our annual meeting with information on the resolution going forward to the national AGM in London at the end of May.

## SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

[www.shirenewtonchurch.com](http://www.shirenewtonchurch.com)

As minds turn to summer and you start thinking about those summer holidays please consider booking your travel through the church website. We have a number of airlines (British Airways, Emirates, KLM, Lufthansa Virgin Atlantic and jet2 and Spanair in the budget category) on the site as well as many of the popular travel portals such as Expedia, Ebookers and Opordo. We also have HolidayAutos for car hire as well as many of the 'brands', discount airport parking and many other such holiday and travel companies.

It's amazing how these little bits of commission add up. Last year the site generated £1,253 for Church funds. A single hotel booking can generate £5 in commission whilst a family's flights may generate £35+. We have recently earned over £25 with bookings for TheTrainLine.com. So, please keep using the site for your travel and other needs. We currently have 247 shops on the site. BTW: Dell recently booted us out of their program as 'your site not fitting with the Dell brand'. I've appealed and will let you know if they recant. However, in the meantime my new PC is a Sony – and it's very nice!

Don't forget we also have a village calendar on the site and we welcome inputs from village organisations.

Safe browsing David Cornwell webmaster



## FAIRTRADE NEWS

Traidcraft's spring bulletin highlights smallholder farmers who produce rubber in south eastern Sri Lanka.

'It was hugely inspiring to see how the 300 members of the Firstlight co-operative are growing in confidence as they begin to feel the benefits of fair trade.

As well as receiving a guaranteed price for their rubber the farmers also receive free training and as a result their yields are improving. Inoka told me that her rubber yields improved by 30%.

It was fantastic to see the difference that fair trade is making to the community too. I visited a pre-school where fair trade premiums have paid for classroom improvements, books and playground equipment.

Fair trade often creates opportunities for natural entrepreneurs like Kumari. Seeing the potential offered by growing rubber - but also the difficulty in getting hold of saplings - Kumari decided to start her own nursery. She now has several thousand rubber tree saplings which she will sell to other farmers and help spread the benefits across the region.'

Traidcraft sells 3 types of rubber gloves: lightweight washing up gloves, tougher gardening gloves and general heavyweight outdoor gloves.

Another new product is coir garden compost. The compost is made from coconut husk fibres which used to be dumped in huge 'slag heaps' around the 'coconut triangle' region north of Colombo. This is an eco-friendly alternative to peat-based composts. It has fantastic water retention and improves the soil. One block (650gms) makes 9 litres of compost. The blocks cost £2 50 from Traidcraft.

And with the barbecue season approaching (!) don't forget the fairly traded charcoal and disposable barbecues available from the trusty Co-op!

Do contact me for more info.

Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316@gmail.com



## WHIST DRIVES

Don't forget to support our Drives held on the first Thursday of each month at the Recreation Hall starting promptly at 7.30 p.m.. We only managed 6 tables (24 players) at our April Drive. This was due mainly to a spate of ill health amongst our regular players including yours truly and I have to thank my back up team for running the Drive in my absence. They had an enjoyable evening in spite of being plunged into darkness as they were about to leave! And I have been besieged with questions about the safety of a meter for lighting. I hope the Committee will come to some new arrangement before the dark nights are upon us again. New players are always made welcome, please join us; our Table fee is £1. per person which includes light refreshments. We also have a Raffle that raises funds for the upkeep of the Hall. The next drive will be on the 3rd of May when we share the Hall with the Polling Station - how about having a game of whist and voting on the way out? The June Drive will be a Jubilee Special on the 7th of that month.

Auriol Horton 641844



## SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Our March meeting had a change of speaker, our scheduled talk was to be on the Severn Tunnel Pump House, unfortunately the speaker was unable to attend, and we hope in the future to be able to arrange another date for this talk.

Stuart Wilson very kindly stepped in at the last minute to give a talk on the archaeological dig he is undertaking in Trellech. This dig has been ongoing for a number of years and he has discovered many new buildings with many yet to be discovered. The Society had visited the site a few years ago and found it very interesting, Stuart gave us an update on all the many new artefacts and his plans for the site in the future, with a small building hopefully to exhibit these.

Our April meeting will take place on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> April at the Huntsman Hotel, Shirenewton the speaker for the evening will be Anne Wareham who will talk on the subject 'Squatters in the Vedw'.

### **More dates for your diary:**

Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> May A visit to Allta Bella (near Usk) a medieval house, now in private hands.

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May A visit to 'Lasketts' the garden owned by Sir Roy Strong (near Hereford)

Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 'Beating the Parish Bounds' (approx 4 miles) meeting at the church at 2.00 pm. All welcome.

Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> May Resource Session at the Recreation Hall, Shirenewton  
2.00pm – 5.00 pm

Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> May Meeting at the Huntsman Hotel at 7.30 pm. A talk given by Elizabeth Whittle entitled 'The Historic Gardens of Monmouthshire'

## STARGAZING

There are three planets on view in the evening sky this month. The very bright planet Venus is in the west. Saturn is to the south-east and is to the left of the star Spica. Saturn is the brighter of the two. On the 4<sup>th</sup> the almost full Moon is just below Saturn and Spica. Higher in the sky to the south, Mars is to the left of the star Regulus. On the 1<sup>st</sup>, the Moon lies just below and to the left of Mars.

The seven stars of the Plough lie overhead in mid-evening. Its classical name is Ursa Major, the Great Bear. In mythology, Callisto, attendant to the goddess Juno was considered more beautiful than her mistress. To protect her from her jealous mistress, Jupiter turned Callisto into a bear. Unfortunately Callisto's son tried to kill the bear whilst he was out hunting, so Jupiter placed the bear in the sky.

The two stars furthest from the handle of the Plough are called the Pointers. Tracing a connecting line from the Pointers leads to Polaris, the North Star. Polaris is called the North Star because it is the closest easily visible star to the point in the sky about which the star patterns rotate. This point changes very gradually with time. In fact, over thousands of years, other stars have been the North Star.

The stars appear fixed with respect to each other, but over long periods of time the star patterns change. The pattern of stars we call the Plough looked very different many years ago, and will look very different in the distant future.

How does the man in the moon cut his hair? Eclipse it!

David Thomas

# *Not Just Feet*



Reflexology  
Vertical Reflexology  
Indian Head Massage  
&  
Maternity Reflexology

**Annabel Hancock MAR**

Contact me for a home visit on  
01291 650309



## **Spanish Tutor and Translation Services (English, Spanish, Italian & French)**



Are you thinking of taking a few lessons for your holidays? Do you need to improve your skills as a Spanish speaker?

I'm a native-Spanish speaker, with an excellent pronunciation and grammar. If you are interested in learning a new language for business or leisure purposes, just call or drop me an e-mail.

Translation services and rates vary depending on the extension and nature of the text. I guarantee professional reliable service, flexible prices and confidentiality.

I am available in the day time and early evenings during the week. The place will be agreed on together to suit both parties. Please feel free to contact me for further details.

**Paty Davies**

Tel: 01291 641553

Mobile: 07807103901

email: [lucy\\_24@hotmail.com](mailto:lucy_24@hotmail.com)

# Private Chartered Physiotherapist

Liz O'Brien MCSP, HPC Registered

32 The Avenue, Caldicot, Gwent NP26 6AD

- Muscle and joint problems
- Neck and back pain
- Chronic and long term pain.
- Arthritic Conditions
- Occupational Problems
- Sport related injuries
- Post surgery rehabilitation

Preferred provider for BUPA and other major  
medical insurance companies.

Appointments can be booked directly with  
Liz O'Brien on 07831 740909, or email [lizobr@googlemail.com](mailto:lizobr@googlemail.com)

## HYPNOSIS CAN HELP.....

WITH STRESS, ANXIETY, WEIGHT, SMOKING, PHOBIAS, FEAR,  
PANIC, LOW SELF ESTEEM, AND MUCH MORE.

ACUPRESSURE HELPS WITH PAIN AND DISCOMFORT. NLP  
COACHING CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE. EMOTIONAL FREEDOM  
TECHNIQUES TAUGHT.

FREE CONFIDENTIAL CONSULTATION. FREE IRIDODOLOGY REPORT  
ON YOUR CONSTITUTION.

**ANDREW GRIFFITH AMIH Registered Hypnotherapist. Consulting  
Rooms in Chepstow and Ross.**

CALL NOW! TELEPHONE: 01291 641964 MOBILE: 07921 130098  
FOR FURTHER DETAILS E-MAIL: [andrew.griffith@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:andrew.griffith@tiscali.co.uk)  
FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE OUR WEBSITE:  
[www.hypnohealth.me.uk](http://www.hypnohealth.me.uk)

*Learn to dance  
at  
Dance Academy 1.*



*Lessons/Classes in Ballroom, Latin & Classical  
at the Severn Bridge Club in Bulwark, Chepstow.  
Contact Laurance Blatchly on 07976 869178  
or go to [www.danceacademy1.co.uk](http://www.danceacademy1.co.uk)*

**Make your UCAS Personal  
statement open doors to  
your future**

**GET ME IN!**  
Education 

Faced with a blank  
page and not sure  
where to start?

Stuck on how  
to make more  
of an impact?

Find it hard to put  
across what you're  
trying to say?

With competition for university places hotting up year after year, the UCAS Personal Statement is your best opportunity to impress admissions tutors. Make your application stand out from the crowd with a Personal Statement that really sells your individual qualities and achievements and demonstrates your suitability for your chosen course. We can't write your Statement for you, but Get Me In! can help you express your ideas clearly, concisely, fluently and with maximum punch!

For more information or to book an appointment

Tel: 01291 641547

[www.getmein.org.uk](http://www.getmein.org.uk)

Email: [enquiries@getmein.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@getmein.org.uk)

# Admin and Errands

## *Making your To-do list a Done list*

Are you trying to juggle the demands of home and work life?

*Business and Household Admin*

*De-cluttering and home staging*

*Research -business and lifestyle*

*Spread sheet and database creation  
& management*

**Tip:** Costs, unfortunately we all have them. Know what yours are. Know what are essential every month and those that are additional. Spending is so much more fun when you know you can afford it!

Call now for a free, no obligation chat:

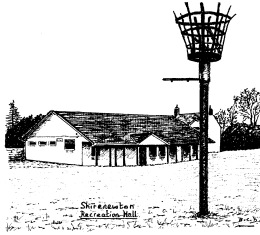
**01291 628662 / 07970 984601**

lucy@adminanderrands.co.uk

**www.adminanderrands.co.uk**

# Shirenewton Church Fete

Saturday June 2nd 2012



Grand Prize Draw

Lots of Stalls and Activities  
including  
The inaugural "Welsh Welly Wanging  
Championships"

Excellent Food and Refreshments  
Pimms and Beer Tent

Plenty of Entertainment  
Kestral Gym Club  
Chepstow Band  
Caerwent Jazz Band

Carnival Queen and Floats  
Will leave the Tan House at 1:45 PM  
Official opening at the Recreation Field at  
2:00pm

See you there !

## SHIRENEWTON CHURCH FETE

The Fete is now well underway in its planning stages and we are sure it will be the best yet.

We are asking for volunteers for Friday 1st June from 6:30 pm to put up tents, arrange stalls etc. If you feel you can help just turn up and we will be grateful.

Other happenings are the collections for the stalls

### **Bottle Stall**

Will be collecting on Thursday 24th May from 6:30 to 9:00pm. Rob Duckham on 641764 will be able to pick up from you if needed

### **Book Stall**

The Scouts will be collecting Wednesday 30th May 7 to 9pm.

Phone David Richardson on 620356 if you need anything picking up.

### **Cake Stall**

The ladies on the Cake Stall will be at the Recreation Hall from 6:30 pm on June 1st. If you cannot deliver they will be happy to collect.

Phone Sally 641369, Ann 641368, Janet 641783

On behalf of the Fete Committee thank you all very much  
Diane Ward Fete Co-ordinator

## WELSH WELLY WANGING OPEN

Croeso i'r "Welly Wanging" agored Cymreig / Welcome to the Welsh Welly Wanging Open

The inaugural Welsh Welly Wanging Open Championship (sponsored by Countrywide) will be held on Saturday 2nd June 2012 at the Shirenewton fete.

There will be 6 classes of entry (adults men/women) under 16 (boys/girls) and under 13 (boys/girls). Winners will get prizes (wellies of course) and a trophy and be able to say they are the first winner of the Welsh Welly Wanging Open Championship. Others may try and muscle in on our success over the next few years but it's all about the brand and we will be the original and the best!

I plan to publicise the event widely within the South Wales area (including local and national press). We already have a Facebook account and we are on twitter.

The website, [www.wwwopen.info](http://www.wwwopen.info), will start to get populated but already has the links to Facebook and Twitter. Please like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

I hope that the event will become a success annual event which not only brings many more visitors to the Shirenewton fete but also helps promote it. I'd like to thank Countrywide Farmers for their sponsorship of this event. Limber up those wanging arms.

Any help welcome – especially on the day.

David Cornwell, Welsh Welly Wanging Open Championship Organiser



**(01291) 641462**

[contact@bluebellcountrykennels.co.uk](mailto:contact@bluebellcountrykennels.co.uk)

[www.BluebellCountryKennels.co.uk](http://www.BluebellCountryKennels.co.uk)

Bluebell Barn, Bully Hole Bottom  
Shirenewton. NP16 6SA

Fully licensed and insured

Modern and spacious kennels with underfloor heating

Individual care and attention

Regular exercise and play

Additional woodland walks available

Access to vet 24 hours a day

Medication can be administered

Fully alarmed security system

Rural retreat, set in 4.5 acre grounds

## Monmouthshire Granite

Local suppliers and designers of granite. Suitable for a wide range of applications, ideal to enhance areas of your home or workspace.

Ideal for many applications around the home or office including: kitchen worktops, bathrooms, wet rooms, windowsills and utility rooms.

[www.monmouthshiregranite.com](http://www.monmouthshiregranite.com)

Kitchen work surfaces  
– new or replacements

Wet room wall coverings

Bathroom vanity surfaces

Table tops cut and shaped to size

Replacement internal window sills

Commercial applications  
– bars and countertops

Call for an appointment to view our range of granite samples as well as our other product ranges including sinks, taps, hobs and appliances. Easy, free on-site parking.

Get in touch to find out more information or to discuss your individual requirements:

Call: 01291 470041

Fax: 01291 421494

Email: [sales@monmouthshiregranite.com](mailto:sales@monmouthshiregranite.com)



# Chepstow Blinds

(Established 1980)

## We specialise in all types of blinds

Huge savings on Vertical, Venetian, Roller, Pleated,  
Black-out, Conservatory and Awnings  
Huge Selection Available

All Made to Measure Quality Assured  
Free Measuring & Fittings Service Available  
Curtains Made to Measure From Your Own Fabric



To arrange a free home visit and quotation

*All Areas Covered*

Call Dennis Moore on

**01291 621946 or 07834 884094**

Yew Tree House, Tutshill, Chepstow

Have a new business idea?  
Want a fresh approach?

ThatMediaGroup.co.uk provides a refreshing cocktail of design, print, marketing and web design expertise. Perfect to accompany any business that is looking for fresh ideas and a quality finish to their marketing materials.

- Business Cards
- Leaflets & Flyers
- Advertising
- Website Design
- Logos & Branding
- Billboard Design
- Menus
- Mailing Fulfilment
- Printed Folders
- Brochures & Booklets
- Banners & Posters
- Promotional Clothing
- Appointment Cards
- Gift Vouchers & Tickets
- Internal & External Signs
- Letterheads & Stationery
- Vehicle Graphics  
and much more...

On the main A48 at Caerwent - Call in or book an appointment



thatmediagroup.co.uk

Call: 01291 425103

Email: [studio@thatmediagroup.co.uk](mailto:studio@thatmediagroup.co.uk)

## THE BELLS, THE BELLS.

APRIL 2012



Our recent recruitment drive has resulted in Richie Tout returning to the band after an absence of 10 years and in addition his daughter Eleanor joining the band. Eleanor plus a young ringer from Mathern are currently undergoing intensive training in bell handling, and Richie is having a refresher course in change ringing.

Some of you reading this may recall an episode of *Midsummer Murders* in which there were multiple deaths of bell ringers leading up to an event called a "Striking Competition". What, I hear you ask, is a Striking Competition. As in most human endeavours if there is a skill attained then there is a desire to test the skill level against others to judge relative expertise – a competition. Ringing is no different to classical team sports, music, dance, literature, horticulture, viticulture, cider making, ploughing and all other skilled human activities - so that a Striking Competition is the comparison of the skill level of bands of ringers from different churches. The basis of the competition is a set piece of ringing which is judged by independent examiners, who at the time have no knowledge of the identity of the band ringing. In practice bands assemble at a predetermined church on a specific day and draw lots as to the order in which the bands perform. The independent examiners, who are appointed from outside the locality, are positioned so they cannot observe the bands entering and leaving the ringing chamber, so have no knowledge as to the origin and identity of each band until the order is revealed after judging has occurred. Once the competition begins the bands in turn enter the ringing chamber, ring a short practice piece lasting 3 minutes and then with a predetermined signal to the examiners (usually 4 strikes of the lightest bell) begin the ringing to be judged, which usually lasts for about 5 minutes. Once completed the band leaves the ringing chamber and the process begins with the next band. Now why am I telling you all this?

The 2012 Striking Competition of the Monmouth Branch of the Llandaff & Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers is being held at Shirenewton on May 19<sup>th</sup> 2012 commencing at 4.30 pm. There are 2 sections, the first of call changes competing for the Audrey Bruton Trophy, and the second of method ringing competing for the Gordon Wilkinson Trophy. So if you are around please drop in to see what is going on and hopefully you will hear some good quality ringing. It should be just like the episode of *Midsummer Murders* but hopefully without the violent deaths involved  
Mike Penney

## Christian Aid 'Ploughman's Lunch'



Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May

Just pop into The Chantry, Shirenewton  
between 12.00 - 3.00

and help yourself to a Ploughman

Adult £5.00/ Cons £3.00 Family £15.00

All the money will go to Christian Aid

**ALL VERY WELCOME!**

From Glynis, Kevin and Jane

And on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May

**The Christian Aid Service**

At 10.00 in Shirenewton Church.

A short light service with the younger members congregation and this  
includes Glynis and Jane.

Tea, coffee, cake and chat afterwards in the

Earlswood Hall invites you to our

## 'Jubilee Barn Dance'



on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May

Fabulous food, great dancing, good family fun  
and a well stocked bar.

For more info/tickets go to Christine Stanley 641 616,  
Gail Jones on 650 861

# Music Tuition

## Rhiannon Rhys-Jones

- Piano Lessons
- Cello Lessons
- Oboe Lessons
- Vocal Lessons, Flute and Violin
- Music Theory Lessons, GCSE Music Tuition

Will travel to you

Please contact Rhiannon for a trial lesson

01594 829504 or 07957 419313



Professional and specialised music tuition from a dedicated studio, situated on the outskirts of Chepstow.

Tuition covering all ages, abilities and styles; from the absolute beginner to the more-advanced musician. Classical to Blues, Rock, Pop, Country and beyond – we've got it covered.

Professional music facilities in a local studio:

- A range of quality instruments
- Industry standard drum kit
- Recording and editing software



Join us on Facebook & Twitter for news, competitions and more.



**First Lesson Free!**

**Call us now to book your free introductory 30 minute lesson**

Contact us:  
(01291) 470045  
[info@spotmusic.co.uk](mailto:info@spotmusic.co.uk)

Quote voucher code 'SPOTOFFER' to redeem this offer and get started

**Electric & Acoustic Guitar | Bass | Drums | Theory**

**Call: (01291) 470045 | [info@spotmusic.co.uk](mailto:info@spotmusic.co.uk) | [www.spotmusic.co.uk](http://www.spotmusic.co.uk)**

## **The Studio at the Old Rectory Shirenewton**

Warm, welcoming and spacious holiday accommodation for two in the heart of Shirenewton  
It's the perfect place for your friends and family to stay, whether it's for the weekend, a week or even longer.  
Please see our new website for photographs and availability.

For more information please contact Sarah  
Tel: 01291 641277  
Email: [studio@omar1.com](mailto:studio@omar1.com)  
Website: [www.shirenewtonstudio.co.uk](http://www.shirenewtonstudio.co.uk)

## **PANT-Y-COSYN HOLIDAY COTTAGES**



Have you got relatives or friends visiting?  
Are you looking for somewhere local for them to stay?  
Then look no further, situated approximately 1 mile from the village of Shirenewton this could be the ideal place for your guests.

For further information  
Tel: 01291 641256  
Email: [shelly.whittington@shirenewton.org](mailto:shelly.whittington@shirenewton.org)  
Website: [www.pant-y-cosyn.com](http://www.pant-y-cosyn.com)

# E. LOVELL Bricklaying

Est. 1973

**Do you need an experienced bricklayer?**

If so contact Eddie, he specializes in...

new house building  
extensions  
patios  
garden walls  
and more!

Contact Eddie on:

Home Phone 01291 420443

*or*

Mobile Phone: 07906 504951



# **RICHARD KOPP PLUMBING & HEATING**

**4 TAN HOUSE COURT**

**SHIRENEWTON**

**CHEPSTOW**

**NP16 6AH**

**TEL: 01291 641581**

**MOBILE: 07780703530**

**E-mail richardkopp70@hotmail.co.uk**



# Practical Drum Lessons

No Theory



Get Started

**Play From The Heart!**

Call Garry on 01291641553  
or mobile on 07968034377



## GARDENING CORNER

I never remember from one month to the next exactly what I wrote last time, so I have to have a quick recap each time to make sure that I don't repeat myself. I'm pretty sure that I repeat myself from year to year, but hopefully your memories are equal to mine and whatever I write always appears to be a revelation to you! I note that I was talking about the unusually warm weather and here we are now suffering unusually cold weather. The poor plants can't keep up with these extremes, although I have to admit with the recent bit of rain we have had most things are looking spectacularly green and healthy. There have been a few hiccups on the way. The early potatoes had shot out sooner than I expected, so the hard frost the other night gave them a wee bit of a trim, as the fresh growth turned a not very healthy black colour. The tops have recovered to some degree so hopefully they won't suffer any check. The salad potatoes have yet to appear so no problems in their direction. The bumble bees had done a good job in the tunnel and it looked as though we were due a good apricot and nectarine crop later in the year. Sadly the apricots, which had reached the size of a pea must also have been caught by the same frost as the bulk of the crop now lies wrinkled on the ground. Yet another year of disappointment when it comes to the apricots, but hopefully the nectarines will have fared better as there is no sign of the young fruits dropping off at the moment, so fingers crossed that they survive.

With the weather being a bit of a mixed bag, I change work plans depending on what is happening. If it's raining I work inside the greenhouses or tunnel and if its dry I work outside. I have now finished preparing the bulk of the vegetable beds and this morning dug the bean trenches before filling them with manure, ready for the runner beans. I have got some nice plants growing in the greenhouse, but it is far too cold for them to go outside yet. Hopefully it will warm up enough soon, but in the meantime I can get the sticks put up and tied together so that we are ready for the change. I may have to pot the plants into slightly bigger pots if it stays cold, but at least that way they don't suffer any check. Once planted I always protect them with horticultural fleece, as I have found in recent years that they get sun burnt far too easily, and the fleece will protect the young plants from not just the sun, but also from any cold nights. Just one layer of fleece will protect down to -1 or -2 degrees, so enough protection generally for this time of year. Both the greenhouses are now brimming with plants and I could do with getting some outside. Fortunately some of them are hardy annuals and perennial flowers, so they can take a bit of cold without any problems, so as space is at a premium, some of these will have to go outside to harden off. The tomato and pepper plants really started to get drawn up with the warm weather, but with the change to colder conditions they have now slowed down. They are looking healthy and really need to be potted on to the next size pots in order to keep them growing on. When they are, they will also need some sticks so that they can be tied up, before they start to fall down. They will need to be in pots for at least the next month before they are planted into the borders in the tunnel. In the meantime I have place their 'growing rings on the ground, so that I can see roughly where they will be planted. In between I am planting some calabrese, which, because it grows so quickly, will provide a crop before the tomatoes begin to grow too large. I will pick the heads whilst still relatively young and then freeze ready for making broccoli gratin or



something similar. This is purely a catch crop, making the most of the ground, so I don't worry too much about growing large heads that only require one for a meal. I have also planted several succession crops of salad leaves in the tunnel as well. Some we have been picking for two or three weeks, so when these are finished I will use the ground for planting the sweet peppers. Sometimes when the weather goes cold it upsets all these plans, but that's the risk you take. I have some large bags that are filled with compost (these are some three or four times bigger than purpose made shop bought grow bags and as a result are so much better. There are 9 down one side of the tunnel, where there is not enough room for a vegetable bed. These have been growing lettuces, leaves and spring onions so far, but once these finish, they will be removed, the compost topped up, and then replaced with melons, cucumbers and courgettes. These are also growing in pots at the moment. One or two have died as a result of 'damping off' but the rest will hopefully survive. I have just sown the other half of the packet to ensure we spread harvesting as long as possible and also means that we don't put all our eggs in one basket at the same time.

Outside in the vegetable beds the garlic has come through the winter and is looking well. We are still picking purple sprouting and had our first crop of asparagus for Sunday dinner – and lovely it was too. In between showers I planted the main crop potatoes from seed saved from last year. We are still eating our own potatoes and at this rate it looks as though we may well go completely through the year without having bought any. We have a few earlies in one greenhouse which may just fill the gap if necessary. The peas and beans are being nibbled by bean beetle, but as these only munch around the outside edge I don't get too excited and certainly don't bother to spray against them. One lot of peas suffered in the same frost as the apricots, which was surprising as these are normally quite hardy. They have recovered a bit since, so hopefully they will still crop all be it not as good as expected. I only ever grow sugar snap or mangetout peas for stir fries – Bird's Eye grow 'normal peas' on my behalf!

I'm concerned about the bees as on the coldest days they are not flying. Numbers will be building up no as the queen senses that it is time to get the colony expanding, so with more mouths to feed and no decent flying conditions, they run the risk of starving. I would like to open up the hives and give them some supplementary, but the cold north wind is still keen, so I am reluctant to lift the lids off as yet. When they are flying they are bringing in plenty of pollen, which is a sure sign that there are young larvae in the brood chamber. Normally the bees rely on wild flowers and trees around here, but I noted that there is some oilseed rape just outside Shirenewton, which is just within the three mile flying distance, so this may be a big help in ensuring the bees survive this cold spell. I'll need to keep an eye on them when it warms up though as rape honey is very quick in setting and needs removing as soon as possible. Well the sun has come out again and Sunday lunch has sunk a bit so time to get on. Also the assistant head gardener has sat down reading a book so time to make her feel guilty! Happy gardening until next month.  
Steve and Felicity Hunt.

## HandyMann Property Maintenance

- Lawn & Hedge cutting
- Fence & Wall repairs
- Tiling
- Concreting
- Welding
- Painting & Decorating
- General Maintenance



For a no obligation quote please contact:  
Ian Mann: 01594 829504 or 07854 173743

## GRW Services

*Doors, Gates, and Railings for Agricultural  
and Ornamental Use*

*Welding, Fabrication and Repair Work  
On all Farm, Plant Machinery & Commercial Vehicles*

Full on site facilities and over 25 years experience

### **Graham Weavin**

Druid Heath Farm, Earlswood, Chepstow,  
Monmouthshire NP16 6BA

**01291 650622 and 07899 081038**

*Breath new life into your garden*

## *Emotive Garden Designs*



*Professional, personal design service.  
Imaginative, Contemporary and  
Traditional Designs.  
Planting and Plant Care*

[www.EmotiveGardenDesigns.com](http://www.EmotiveGardenDesigns.com)

*Tel: 01291 641245*



## **Dragon Lance Garden Services**

***Patio & Decking  
Cleaned***

- \* Grass Cutting
  - \* Hedge Trimming & Topping
    - \* Weeding
    - \* Fencing
  - \* Chainsaw & Treework  
Undertaken
  - \* NPTC Qualified
- Call for a Free Quote

***Call Martin on 07933087731***

# Help at home

## **Lougher Home Care Ltd**

*Companionship*

*Personal Care*

*Meal Preparation*

*Shopping*

*Accompanied Trips*

*Over Night Stays*

**We can help with the things you find difficult.**

We are a local company with mature local carers

Contact Sadie or Hywel Lougher

Tel 01633 88 11 77

Email [sadie@lougherhomecare.co.uk](mailto:sadie@lougherhomecare.co.uk)

Web site [www.daycarewales.com](http://www.daycarewales.com)

Members- Care Forum Wales

UKHCA (United Kingdom Home Care Association)

Regulated by and registered with

CSSIW(Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales)

Approved by and working with Monmouthshire County Council



## B.L Reece & Sons

- JCB
- 5 Ton Dump Trailer
- Tractor
- Topper
- Bush Whacker

From Ponds to Ditches, Hedges to Fields. We offer competitive prices for any job large or small.

With over 30 years experience of contract hire B.L Reece & Sons offer a friendly and reliable service!

B.L Reece & Sons  
Tyna Rhos  
Usk Road  
Shirenewton

***For a quote call Jimmy on 01291 641272***

# H M Beauty by Hayley White

Qualified Mobile Beauty Therapist

Manicures

Tanning

Eye Lash Perming

Pedicures

Body Massage

Indian Head Massage

Facials

Ear Piercing

Nail Wraps

Waxing

Tinting

\* Pamper Evenings & Children's Parties \*

\* Gift Vouchers Available \*

Call today to book an appointment

07580849051

**Curiously,** most home insurers don't  
have a branch in Newport.  
But at NFU Mutual...

**We do.**

So you know, that we know exactly where you're  
coming from. For a home insurance quote, call  
**NFU Mutual on Newport 01633 413571.**



**NFU Mutual**

Agent of The National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Society Limited.

**We do right by you**

# Garden Maintenance & Tree Surgery



Over 10 years experience at commercial and domestic grounds maintenance.

NPTC approved tree surgery.

All aspects of tree work undertaken

Tree & Shrub Planting, Hedge Trimming,  
Hedge Laying, Agricultural & Domestic Fencing,  
Turving / Seeding, Rough Areas Cleared,  
Rubbish Removal

## Lawn Care:

Weed Control, Spraying,  
Grass Cutting, Strimming,  
Scarifying, Aerating,  
Fertilizing

*Competitive rates, Free Quotations.*

Contact: Daniel or Matthew Haines  
01633 400548, 07930 893680, 07930 893678

## LOCAL CONTACTS

*If you know of any changes or omissions please contact the Editor Terry Walters  
Telephone 01291 641338 or email [terencewalters@hotmail.com](mailto:terencewalters@hotmail.com)*

### **Church of St. Thomas à Becket Shirenewton**

<b>Parish Priest</b>	Revd. Nansi Davies	01633 400519
<b>Parish Visitor Co-ordinators</b>	Revd. Nansi Davies	01633 400519
	Diane Marlow	01291 641407
<b>Church Wardens</b>	Sally Saysell	01291 641369
	Andrew Baker	01291 641925
	Mrs Susan Lenthall	Newchurch 01219 626389
<b>PCC Secretaries</b>	William Clark	01291 641783
	David Heritage	Newchurch 01291 622708
<b>PCC Treasurers</b>	Kevin Bounds	01291 641818
	Enid Heritage	Newchurch 01291 622708
<b>PCC Others</b>	Mark Broughton	01291 641748
	Charles Eickhoff	01291 641716
	Janet Horton	01291 641783
	Peter Jones	01291 641627
	Dr James Leney	01291 641271
	Mrs Diane Marlow	01291 641407
	Allan Saysell	01291 641369
	John Nicholas	01291 641368
<b>Gift Aid Secretary</b>	Ruth Savagar	01291 641411
<b>Maintenance &amp; Safety</b>	John Nicholas	01291 641368
<b>Organists</b>	Karen Millar	01291 650521
	Ruth Savagar	01291 641411
	Kath Whittington	01291 641600
<b>Sunday Club</b>	Kerry Baker	
<b>Tower Captain</b>	Mike Penny	01291 650653
<b>Church Hall Booking</b>	John Nicholas	01291 641368
	Sally Saysell	01291 641369
<b>Child Protection Officer</b>	Dr. Kerry Baker	01291 641925
<b>Church Flowers</b>	Maureen Moody	01291 641524
<b>Parish Magazine Editor</b>	Terry Walters	01291 641338
<b>200 Club</b>	Nerys Wilson	01291 641935
<b><u>MP/Monmouth CC &amp; Community Council Representatives</u></b>		
<b>Clerk to Community Council</b>	Hilary Counsell	01291 421307
	<a href="mailto:briancounsell@tiscali.co.uk">briancounsell@tiscali.co.uk</a>	
<b>Shirenewton Ward:</b>	Beverley Moore	01291 641532
	John Eede	01291 641257
	David Adams	
	Beverley Leaf	01291 641680
	John Harvey	01291 641279
<b>Mynyddbach Ward</b>	Bill Clark	01291 641783
	Suzi Squires (CHAIRMAN)	01291 641787
<b>Earlswood Ward</b>	Charles Eickhoff	01291 641716
	Ken Morton	01291 650268
<b>Newchurch West</b>	Liz McCombe	01291 652957
<b>MCC for Shirenewton</b>	Graham Down	01291 621846
	<a href="mailto:grahamdown@monmouthshire.gov.uk">grahamdown@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Member of Parliament</b>	David Davies	020 7219 8360
	<a href="mailto:daviesd@parliament.uk">daviesd@parliament.uk</a>	



## **Police Neighbourhood Watch Contacts**

**Comm. Police Officer** Louise Thorpe 01633 642068  
louise.thorpe@gwent.pnn.police.uk  
**Shirenewton & Mynyddbach** Beverley Moore 01291 641532

**Earlswood** Sue Leat 01291 641207

## **Other Local Organisations**

**Beavers** Julie Hitchcock 01291 650548

**Brownies** Jackie Broughton 01291 641797

**Comm. Carol Services** John Nicholas 01291 641368  
jdrnicholas@tiscali.co.uk

**Church Fete** Diane Ward 01291 641843 lordward99@hotmail.com

**Cubs**

**Earlswood Hope** Mrs Sybil Cullimore 01291 641563

**Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall**  
Glynis MacDonald 01291 641818  
glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com

**Earlswood Valley Methodist Chapel**

Avril Smith 01291 650733

**Gaerllwyd Baptist** Mrs E Remnant Brooklands, Usk Road NP16 6SA

**Girl Guides** Helen Cann 01291 650835 cann71@btinternet.com

**Kids Ad Lib (KAL)** Karen Millar 01291 650521 Gail Jones 01291 650861

**Recreation Association** Gordon Hughes 01291 641356 gordon.hughes3@tesco.net

**Recreation Hall booking secretary**

Beryl Saysell 01291 641637

**St Peters Church Newchurch**

Enid Heritage 01291 622708

**Shirenewton Local History Socty**

Dorothy Brabon 01291 641376 brabonnl@hotmail.com

**Shirenewton and Mynyddbach Fields Association Ltd (SAMFAL)**

Stu Dutton 01291 641677 stu@dutton47.freemove.co.uk

**Shirenewton & Mynyddbach Initiative for Local Enterprise (SMILE)**

Charles Eickhoff 01291 641716 eickhoff@shirenewton.org

**Shirenewton Mothers Union**

Rosemary Carey 01291 425010 crcandkill@tiscali.co.uk

**Shirenewton Mothers Union Branch Treasurer**

Auriol Horton 01291 641844 aur10l@btinternet.com

**Shirenewton Operatic and Dramatic Society (SODS)**

Glynis MacDonald 01291 641818

glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com

**Shirenewton Play Group**

Bev Lindsey BeverleyLindsay@btinternet.com

**Shirenewton Primary School**

Jayne Edwards 01291 641774

jayneedwards@monmouthshire.gov.uk

**Shirenewton Tennis Association**

P Brabon 01291 641376 brabonnl@hotmail.com

**Traidcraft**

Marion McAdam 01291 641316

**Whist drive**

Auriol Horton 01291 641844 aur10l@btinternet.com

**Womens Institute (WI)**

Jenny Bonner 01291 641929

## *Shirenewton and Mynyddbach Fields Association*

The Shirenewton and Mynyddbach Fields Association Limited (SAMFAL for short) was formed in November 2006 to protect and enhance the high biodiversity and special ecological value of the "Green wedge" between the two villages, and to allow the use of the fields as an educational resource for the adjacent primary school, with particular emphasis on its environmental curriculum, including the Forest School element

You can help protect and improve this valuable Village resource by becoming a member.

- Membership Subscription Rates are:
- Single Community Member £10 PA
- Concessionary Community Member (OAPs, Full Time Students, Disabled, Unemployed) £5 PA
- Family Community Membership £15 PA
- Corporate Member (Non Commercial) £15 PA
- Corporate Member (Commercial) £50 PA

Membership application forms are available from the Web Site  
[www.shirenewtonchurch.info/samfal](http://www.shirenewtonchurch.info/samfal)

## **MONMOUTHSHIRE MEADOWS OPEN DAYS**

The Monmouthshire Meadows Group is holding a number of Open Days throughout the summer. Sites are open between 11.0 am and 4.0 pm.

These open days provide an opportunity to see the varied landscapes and flora of Monmouthshire including rare orchids and other unusual wild plants. Some of the events include training in plant identification.

6 May: to see and count Green Veined Orchids at New Grove Farm

23 May and 26 May: Training mornings in plant identification at Pentwyn Farm, Penallt.

3 June: visit to Richard Cornock's smallholding, Leechpool, near Portskewett.

10 June: Open Day at Chris Parson's meadows and orchard near Little Dean

17 June: Open Day at Parson's Grove, Earlswood

23 June: Biodiversity blitz at Tymawr Convent, Lydart

1 July: Open Day at Bettws, near Forest Coal Pit to see an upland smallholding

15 July: another chance to visit Leechpool Holdings to see arable flowers growing among the sacrificial crops

Full details of the events and venues including directions to the sites are to be found on the meadows group website: [www.monmouthshiremeadows.co.uk](http://www.monmouthshiremeadows.co.uk)

<b>Saint Thomas áBecket</b>		<b>Sunday Services (Note Change of Service times)</b>	<b>Start 10.00 Unless stated otherwise</b>
Date	Service	Readers	Sides-persons
6 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Easter Holy Eucharist	Bill Clark Janet Horton	Bill Clark Janet Horton
13 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday After Easter Matins	Annabel Hancock John Nicholas	Annabel Hancock John Nicholas
20 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Easter Christian Aid - Family Service	The Children	The Children
27 <sup>th</sup> May	Pentecost Holy Eucharist	Bob Grattan Mark Broughton	Bob Grattan Mark Broughton
3 <sup>rd</sup> June	Trinity Sunday Holy Eucharist	James Leney Ruth Savagar	Clare Lewis Allan Saysell
10 <sup>th</sup> June	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday After Trinity Holy Eucharist	Margaret Lock Wendy Baker	Margaret Lock Wendy Baker
17 <sup>th</sup> June	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday After Trinity Holy Eucharist	Bill Clark Janet Horton	Bill Clark Janet Horton
24 <sup>th</sup> June	John The Baptist Holy Eucharist	Bob Grattan Kevin Bounds	Bob Grattan Kevin Bounds

## DIARY DATES

For further details see inside the magazine

May	Event	Location
<b>3</b>	Local Election	Recreation Hall
<b>3</b>	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
<b>5</b>	Shirenewton History Socty. Visit	Allta Bella
<b>10</b>	Shirenewton History Socty. Visit	LASKETTS
<b>13</b>	Shirenewton History Socty Beating the Parish Bounds	Start Church
<b>14</b>	Shirenewton History Socty Resource.	Recreation Hall
<b>14</b>	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
<b>29</b>	Shirenewton History Socty. Meeting	Huntsman
<b>10</b>	Christian Aid Ploughman's Lunch	The Chantry Shirenewton
<b>19</b>	Striking Competition	Shirenewton Church
<b>20</b>	Christian Aid Service	Shirenewton Church
<b>26</b>	Jubilee Barn Dance	Earlswood Hall

Earlswood  
Chepstow



# Parsons Grove

## Holiday Cottages

### Bed and Breakfast

Parsons Grove offers recently refurbished Self Catering or Bed and Breakfast accommodation, ideal as a holiday or short break location, perfect to come back to and unwind if you are in the area on business.

## Is Someone You Know Visiting This Area?

*Walking, Rambling, Canoeing, Diving, Watching Nature, Working, Relaxing*

**Parsons Grove is a gateway to it all & more**

Contact Chris or Joni Gooch

Tel: 01291 641382 Mob: 07780 968353

Email: [parsonsgrove@btconnect.com](mailto:parsonsgrove@btconnect.com)

Website: [www.parsonsgrove.co.uk](http://www.parsonsgrove.co.uk)

*2 miles from Shirenewton*

*Magnificent Views*

*Stunning location*

*Peace and tranquility*

## EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Published: by The Church of St. Thomas á Becket Shirenewton

Editor: Terry Walters 01291 641338 email: [terencewalters@hotmail.com](mailto:terencewalters@hotmail.com)

The cost of the Magazine is 50P per issue/10 issues for £5

Copies are delivered free by local distributors to those who have pre-paid.

Monthly copies are available at the Church.

Advertising Rates for Commercial organisations

Full page 12 months 10 issues £50

Half Page 12 months 10 issues £25

Advertising for Local and Charity organisations is free

Editorial policy is to print what you provide, space and technology permitting.

The views expressed are those of the contributor.

**Deadline for contributions to the June 2012 issue  
is the 21st May 2012**