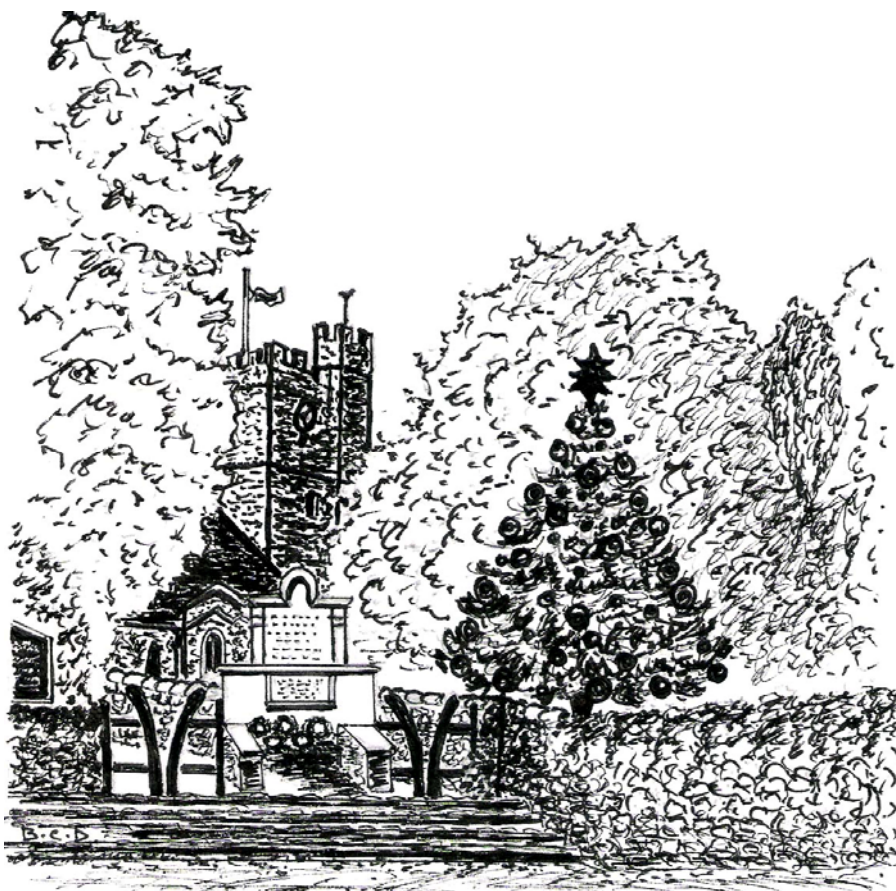


Shirenewton



Parish Magazine

Dec 2013 / Jan



Sketch by Barbara Davies

Price: 50p

Dear friends,

The other day I had a meeting with the newly appointed Diocesan Learning Advisor at the Vicarage. He is an American (but we shall not hold that against him!) and we discussed, among other matters, the changing role and composition of the parish structure. A few days later I met with our Bishop in Newport and part of the conversation touched upon much the same subject. In both instances it was clear that in terms of parish ministry and outreach there was no such thing as 'one size fits all'. Indeed, it was noted that even within neighbouring parishes there was often a significant difference in social composition and aspirations. As far as I am concerned, long may it be so! The idea of imposing a 'parish structure', based along the lines of a long existing model, is rapidly disappearing. This, it is argued, reflects a number of contemporary considerations. At St. Pierre, for example, out of a regular congregation of 25 or 30 only a handful are domiciled within 'the parish'. For some time now, people have thought nothing of travelling some distance to a church where they feel 'at home'. In this sense, 'parish boundaries' hold little relevance. Indeed, only a few years ago you had the situation in this area where, technically, one had to cross-through a separate parish to reach the second half of the other one!

Add to this mix other factors, for example the continuing reduction in the number of parish priests and the amalgamation of formerly distinct parishes on the retirement of their incumbent, and you have a situation far removed from what previous generations would recognise as a 'parish system'. Again, we have as an example, the addition of Shirenewton to our group following on from the linking of Mathern, Mounton and St. Pierre back in the 1970's or thereabouts. As a result, the idea that a parish priest 'knows best' (and he – yes, in those days it was always a male) and muddles through somehow on a variety of parochial undertakings, is long since gone. Just as well, say most of my colleagues. Clearly, it seems to make sense to have many tasks directed by lay people who have an expertise in any given area. The Church, after all, is theirs and they have a right to fully contribute to an establishment where they have a valid claim of joint ownership.

Change continues. At my recent meeting with the Bishop he pointed out that there is growing trend among lay people to 'reclaim' the Church. Their Church. As uncomfortable as this will feel, from time to time, I believe that this is how it should be. The Christian Church is not 'set in stone' and – whilst always seeking to preserve the best of the past – should always continue to evolve. The alternative is to stagnate and this leads to spiritual death. Jesus founded a movement that was fresh, engaging, challenging and let us not be cautious about saying it – exciting. These, I believe, are to be counted among our core values in the journey of faith.

We live in changing times and this affects our Church as well as other systems. Let us be prepared to help shape the present and add to future diversity.

With every good wish and blessing,
Julian

Shirenewton Operatic and Drama Society

Presents

Ali Barber and the 40 Thieves



At Earlswood Memorial Hall

Thursday 23rd, Friday 24th &

Saturday 25th January 2014

Show starts at 7.30 pm

Tickets Adult £6, Child £4

To book tickets:

call Alison on 641739 or

email [sods2014@gmail](mailto:sods2014@gmail.com)

Ali Barber and the 40 Thieves

SHIRENEWTON PARISH VISITORS

We have a team of five Parish Visitors who are members of the Church of St Thomas á 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.

200 CLUB

November Winners

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1st Prize | Liz Drake |
| 2nd Prize | Margaret Woodliffe |
| 3rd Prize | Gareth Davies |
| 4th Prize | Diane Reid |

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS



Marriage

Kirsty Lee Sugar to Ralph Christopher Mould
Saturday 16th November 2013

St. Thomas á Becket Church REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

It's always a moving time down at the Shirenewton War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday – with the sun glinting on the autumnal leaves and the people standing quietly. It's especially so when there are as many young people there, as there are of the older generation, all there to remember those who have died, not only in the two World Wars but in subsequent conflicts. The uniformed brigades were extremely well represented with the Brownies, Guides, Cubs, Beavers, Scouts and Explorers carrying their colours.

Later, during the service in Shirenewton Church, we heard about the bravery of Captain Ian Oswald Liddell VC whose name is on the Shirenewton War Memorial, and whose family lived in Shirenewton and Mounton. In the January of 1945 Ian had got married and then, in April he had single-handedly defused the bombs set to destruct the Bridge over the River Ems whilst under enemy fire. But then, sadly only 2 weeks later he was killed by a stray sniper bullet. Only three weeks later, the war in Europe ended. He was only 24 when he died. He, like so many young people who have died in war, had his whole life in front of him.

The Church was full for the service and it was particularly moving to have Ian Liddell's nephew Colin Liddell, in the congregation. Later when we all went into the Church Room for coffee and cake – we were able to see the fine oak plaque that has been put up to remember Ian Liddell's parents.

EARLSWOOD HALL REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

The service was led by Rev. John Waters with the wreath laying by Raymond Jeremiah

Thanks for all who attended and for their help



**Carols Around the Village
Christmas Tree**

Sunday 15th December @ 6.30 ish for about ¾ hour
in the Tredegar Arms Carpark
(Thank you Julie!)

The Collection will go to support young orphaned children in
Chibolya School in Zambia

Oh and bring a torch. And some gloves.
And a warm hat

*Tredegar Arms would like to welcome all carol singers back to the T.A.
for warming mulled cider and mince pies.*



**'Carols and Christingles'
Shirenewton Church.**

Everyone is so welcome to this lovely warm family-friendly service
4.00 on Christmas Eve

Refreshments of the mulled wine and mince pie variety served
afterwards in the Church Room

**Collection to Children's Society
and the Archbishop of Wales Fund**

And if anyone would like to join in, be a shepherd, an angel or a king
or even a villager, Shirenewton Sunday Club would be delighted
to see you. Just come along to Sunday Club at the Shirenewton
Church Room on a Sunday at 10.00.

You would be more than welcome.

For more details, ring Dr Kerry Baker (Sunday Club leader) 641 925
or Glynis MacDonald 641 818

Let's Share Christmas Together



Christmas 'Bring and Share' Evening

Friday 13th December

Shirenewton Church Room 7.30

Bar Available

Bring a plate of food to share!

£2.00

Contact Joanne Tomlins on: 641 005

Or: Glynis MacDonald 641 818

Shirenewton Church ADVENT FAIR!



Come along for Coffee, Cake and a lovely selection of Homemade Christmas Goodies

with our young Sunday Clubbers running some of the stalls

Sunday 1st December

11.00ish – 12.30 ish

The money once again will go to Chibolya School.

Chibolya is an urban slum of about 100,000 people in the middle of Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. The money raised will go directly to support orphans where they will receive education at Chibolya School.

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Extracts from the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2013

Planning applications considered

1. DC/2013/00863 'Hillside', Usk Road, Shirenewton
Demolition of existing porch and erection of single storey garden room.
This Council recommends approval.
2. DC/2013/00829 'The Old Coach House', Shirenewton
Proposed new entrance gates.
This Council recommends approval.
3. DC/2013/00763 'Yew Tree Cottage', Usk Road, Shirenewton
Retention of existing walled entrance splay with electric gates.
This Council recommends approval, subject to the ongoing Rights of Way investigation by County Councillor G Down.

The Clerk informed members of the receipt of Appeal Ref: E6840/A/13/2206372, Planning Application DC/2013/0023. Appeal against a refusal for Change of Use, Shirenewton Village Shop.

An informal hearing is to be held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk on 29.1.14 at 10 am. This item will be considered at the next Council meeting on 2.12.13.

Items of local concern -

From the monthly police report - members noted that there has been a considerable drop in incidents in recent months and PC Jones explained that this was due to better communication between the policing team and the community, also the Neighbourhood Watch and OWL initiatives.

Broadband presentation - Mr Richard Williams attended the meeting to present information on the community broadband project in Llangwm and Llansoy. Further information can be found at www.llangwmbroadband.co.uk

He explained the background of the scheme and that 90% of Wales is to receive faster broadband, although neither Llangwm, Llansoy nor Shirenewton are included in this upgrade as BT has limitations in rural communities because installation costs are so high. Welsh Government funding is available to 2015 for broadband delivery to the other 10% of Wales but it relies on how many people in the community register an interest. Currently any property receiving less than 2mb can be included in receiving £1000 per property to improve broadband, and communities all over the UK are coming to their own solutions. BT is the only provider in the public funding scheme and if government funding is obtained either BT, or a contractor, would do the work, although government funding may not cover the whole of the cost of this.

In response to a question Mr Williams said he would be prepared to talk to residents within the Shirenewton Community Council area, but that someone with an interest in taking the initiative forward would need to be found locally.

Council agreed that this item should be included in the Parish Newsletter to gauge the amount of local interest in putting pressure on the relevant bodies to improve the broadband service in this area. If you want to take this further by registering an interest or are willing to help move the initiative forward please contact Councillor Paul Harris on 01291 650871.

Should new road sign read 'Ditch House Lane'? - Mon CC has used the name 'Ditch Hill Lane' since 1942, but if you believe this is incorrect and have written proof as evidence, please contact the Clerk (details below). If none is forthcoming, the issue will not be pursued.

Meetings attended -

- Mon CC's Community Events held throughout the county during October 2013 to look at ways the local authority could save/not waste money - a wide variety of points were raised by the public in the following areas - Highways, Outsourcing, Transport, Health, Waste, Education, Leisure and General

- The Lower Wye Valley Area Committee meeting held on 30th October was very interesting and a way of local perspective feeding into future policy. Issues discussed were local policing; the future of the Severn bridges (the companies that own them are giving up their stakes in 2017); strategies Mon CC could put in place to save/not waste money - food for thought that Mon CC could translate into action.

The mobile police station will be at the Huntsman Hotel on Sunday 15th December from 9.30-11.30am and the Tredegar Arms car park on Thursday 21st from 9-11am.

Date of next meeting: Monday 2 December 2013 at 7.30pm at Shirenewton Recreation Hall. Members of the public may attend meetings and speak to Councillors about issues/problems/compliments for the first 15 minutes.

Shirenewton Community Council wishes all residents the compliments of the season and a happy and healthy 2014.

Find more information in the draft copy of the minutes in the Community Council notice boards. Previous minutes of meetings can be found on the Council's page of the church website.

Contact the Clerk to the Community Council -

Mrs Hilary Counsell

Tel: 01291 421307

E-mail: shirenewtoncc@gmail.com

FAIRTRADE NEWS



For several years Traidcraft has produced durum wheat pasta products containing a small amount of fairly-traded quinoa (pronounced keenwa - I think!) This astonishing grain grows at 4000m on Peru's majestic Altiplano and was considered the sacred mothergrain of the Incas. As the marching energy food of the Imperial Inca army it was suppressed by the Spanish conquistadores because of its links to Pachamama, the local earth goddess. Sidelined for years this warrior superfood (yes even veggies can be warriors!- I suspect there might be some currently enjoying Putin's hospitality after their capture in the Artic) is now enjoying a renaissance. Apparently it's NASA's food of choice for fueling man's deep space exploration

It is the gluten free, crunchy, organic vegetable protein that most closely resembles the food values of meat. There are three types - red, black and pearl. It is a wonderful alternative to rice, couscous or potatoes or can be used as an addition to soups and stews. It can be eaten hot or cold. Generally it is grown by small-scale farmers, who farm in a sustainable way.

Traidcraft's new offering is the pearl version, called quinola. I urge you to try it! £3.50 for 500gms (it cooks in 12 minutes).

Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316@gmail.com

P.S. Traidcraft's fairly traded, wonderfully soft, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal bamboo socks make wonderful stocking fillers (!?). Alternatively look at Braintree's own website www.braintreeclothing.com

WANTED

Dog Walker to take Silas and Ginny out for an hour's walk around the village.

Initially Wednesdays or Thursdays about lunchtime, but in March 2014, Monday to Friday for three weeks, then back to once a week.

Going Rate paid.

Please either call Carole 07929 869681 (anytime) or 01291 421600 or call in at 2 The Laurels, Mynyddbach. Evenings or weekends are best.



STARGAZING



In the evening to the southeast, the constellation of Orion the hunter is a very prominent sight. Three bright stars make up his belt; two stars are his shoulders, and two more make his legs. Hanging from Orion's belt is his sword. One of the stars in the sword appears fuzzy compared with other stars and is well worth looking at through binoculars. This is the Orion Nebula and is a huge cloud of gas and dust, approximately 1,500 light-years away and hundreds of light-years across. It is one of the most intense regions of star formation visible in our galaxy. The W-shape of Cassiopeia lies to the northwest, whilst the 7 stars forming the Plough can be seen in the northeast.

In the evening sky the very bright planet Jupiter is in the east, to the right of the bright stars Castor and Pollux. On the 18th the almost full Moon lies to the right of the planet. Venus is the brightest planet and can be seen just above the south-westerly horizon after sunset.

The yellowish planet Saturn is in the morning sky to the south-east. On the 29th the crescent Moon sits just below the planet. The slightly orange planet Mars can be seen in the south. The crescent Moon is below Mars on the 26th.

We reach the Winter Solstice on Dec 21st, the shortest day of the year. On the bright side it gives a nice long night under which to do a spot of Stargazing!

Dave Thomas

WHIST DRIVES



Our next meeting is on the 5th December which will be our Christmas Special. - being on the first Thursday of the month. 22 players were at the November Drive - New players are always made welcome, **please join us**; our Table fee is £1.50 per person which includes light refreshments. We also have a Raffle that raises funds for the upkeep of the Recreation Hall, where we play - opening at 7 and starting to play at 7.30 p.m. promptly. In January we will continue through the year playing on the first Thursday of each month – we would love to see some new faces.

Auriol Horton. 01291 641844

REMEMBER, REMEMBER THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER

We have had a very distressing 10 days covering the annual celebrations for Bonfire Night. Our dog, Silas, who I think is well known in the village, is very scared when fireworks go off, to the point of huge distress, panting, pacing the house and trembling throughout his whole body. If I had prior warning I would be happy to sedate him, but feel it would not be right to sedate him for 10 or so consecutive nights, just in case.

So I just wondered if we, as a village community, could have a pact, to communicate to each other when we plan to let off fireworks? This could be via the notice boards? No need to give addresses even, just a note saying for example, 'We intend to have a firework display in this area on 4th November between 6 and 8pm?'

Carol Waite

REMEMBER, REMEMBER THE 21ST OF DECEMBER

Please note that there will be fireworks near West End of Earlswood on the evening of 21st December starting between 8.45 and 9.45 and lasting about 6 minutes.

Thanks

Pip Penney



SHIRENEWTON WI NOVEMBER 2013



What wonderful autumn colour we have had this season and a nice slow march towards winter, even if we have had some very wet and wild weather. Colour was very much the theme for our November meeting with our speaker Dawn Kinman's talk titled 'Image Matters'. Dawn works as an image advisor, 'Colour Me Beautiful' aims to provide people with a chart of the colours and shades which suit them, so that they can choose with confidence the colours which will help them to look their best.

Dawn told us we should always look at colour first and style afterwards when buying clothes. People fall into colour categories from cool to warm with some being soft or deep.

Our colour category changes through our life, and many of us are aware that a colour we were once happy with no longer suits us. The reverse also happens with colours we would never have considered actually looking very good.

Sometimes we don't have a choice, especially if your job requires you to wear particular colours. If you buy just because something is in fashion it may not suit and you may find yourself taking it out of the wardrobe and putting it back because it doesn't feel right.

If you get the colour right everyone will say you look well, if you get it wrong people may tell you you look tired or ask if you are okay.

Once the colour is right you can work on style and don't forget your makeup and glasses. Then there's your hair, for you to look good it needs to suit your face shape and it can make a very dramatic difference to how you look. It's okay to do what you like most of the time, so long as you know what to do when you need to. There aren't many places where you need to dress up now so most of us don't get the practice and need a little help when we have to. If everything you have suits you then you always look good, but there aren't many who can completely change their wardrobe as they change.

Dawn told us that 'Colour Me Beautiful' is based in London so that's where she trained. Dawn uses material squares to help assess each person's colour needs, she demonstrated on two of our members and we could see how the different colours affected the way they looked.

Dawn certainly gave us a lot to think about. We all enjoyed Dawn's talk and we are looking forward to December and our Christmas dinner meeting at the Huntsman which will give us all a chance to dress up. Thinking of Christmas we would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Why not get the New Year off to a good start!!!!

Join Shirenewton WI for their open evening 7:15pm Thursday 9th January at the Rec Hall.

Come and hear Mr Ali Ansari give us a personal story of the Black American experience, from slavery through to the present day.

All are welcome, men included.

Ladies come and join us in February for some socializing and card making.

Thursday 13th February 7:15 pm

(Materials supplied to make Valentines, Birthday, Easter, thank you or make up your own event).

You will be very welcome.

CHURCH WEBSITE & SHOPPING PORTAL

www.shirenewtonchurch.com

So, Christmas is almost upon us and the buying frenzy beginneth. You know what I'm going to say

Yes, folks, don't forget to spend your hard earned cash through www.shirenewtonshop.com where there are approximately 250 shops on the portal in over 30 categories. Each one pays us a small commission on sales made by clicking through from the portal. All special offers, etc. at the linked shops are the same as if you went onto the site directly.

As some of you know, at the time of writing, I've just got back from a manic 3 week road trip (business) around the USA. It took in four conferences and two clients visits - requiring eight flights, two car hires and seven different hotels spanning Washington DC; Columbus, OH; San Diego, CA; Dallas, TX; Los Angeles, CA; and Orlando, FL – in that order! All, of course, booked through the church website where ever possible.

And the 1st thing to do on my return? Sort out the wife's computer. She managed to pick up a disagreeable 'unwanted program'. This was a particularly tenacious 'product' called the 'Conduit Search Toolbar'. I say particularly tenacious because one pass of Malwarebytes wasn't enough to clear it. I also need to run Spybot. Although, technically, it's not a virus –it's 'adware' which forces your search engine through Conduit Search, it's annoying and no one likes their computer hijacked. Why do they do it? Great question. I suspect it's something to do with Conduit.com being number 68th in the top 100 sites visited in the world – according to Alexa.com. Yes – it's all about traffic and hits and advertising revenue. Needless to say it's also, allegedly, keeping track of your browsing habits, etc., etc.

How does Conduit Search install itself. The answer is generally through 3rd party free software. These bundle toolbars and other such extensions and you need to actively uncheck the 'please also install' box. Most people pay little attention and just install the defaults. This is what they rely upon. Sometimes, with such installs, there isn't even an option not to install it.

So, I ran Malwarebytes followed by Spybot. These are both free. Just make sure you download them from a reputable source. www.malwarebytes.org and www.safer-networking.org respectively. There are other sources – filehippo springs to mind. Cnet.co.uk used to be recommended until they launched their own installer. If you use cnet be sure to use the direct download link.

Even with the direct sites, be clear what you are downloading. For example, if you go to www.safer-networking.org to download Spybot and click on the first option which takes you to 'Fosshub' the first thing the eye catches is a big advert with 'download free malware removal tool now'. The real download link is above it in small text. Unfortunately it's a fact that these download sites need to earn money from ads to stay in business. Now the advertised tool may be perfectly legit (I simply don't know) but be alert – we all know the country needs lerts! Other tools which the forums recommend are 'adwcleaner' and 'HitmanPro'. The former is free the latter costs but has a 30 day trial period. I've not tried either.

So, given the above, I'd reiterate the warning I posted a few months ago regarding the increase in 'drive-bys'. This is where you get infected by malware for just visiting a site. Even though the wife's PC follows these recommendations I made (see below), she still managed to get an unwanted install – almost certainly piggybacked on another program.

It is strongly recommended that you disable Java and ActiveX in your standard browser. For example, the wife's PC uses Chrome as its default browser which has both java and ActiveX disabled (just google 'disabling Java in Chrome' for how to do this – you'll only have ActiveX with Chrome or Firefox if you installed it). Then Internet Explorer with both these options enabled (as it is sometimes necessary to use them for things like online banking, etc.) is available. But IE is only used to go direct to trusted websites.

Safe browsing. David Cornwell. Webmaster – Shirenewton Churrch

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

October is the month we hold our Annual General Meeting, officers' reports were dispatched and general we all agreed that we had had a very successful year, our speakers had done us proud and with attendance at meeting staying steady during the year. The summer visits to High Glannau Manor, Gaer Fawr Iron Age Hill Fort and Caldicot Castle had been a success with the exception of one when the weather was against us. Our archive meetings have a few regulars and during the summer months attract people from further afield tracing their family history. Our finances are in a reasonable healthy state, with grants received from the Wye Valley Committee and the Community Council. We are always pleased to welcome new members. We continue our research into the history of the older buildings of the village and welcome anyone who would like to join us at this task, or have any old photographs or documents relating to Shirenewton we would be pleased to see them.

We proceeded with the election of officers and committee for the coming year and duly elected the incumbent committee. It was commented, 'It was good to see British democracy at work!'

Once this was all over we proceeded with the speaker for the evening being Naylor Firth who gave us a talk entitled 'Monmouthshire Oddments'. The talk was excellent as usual, Naylor's research on such an eclectic mix of subjects connected to Monmouthshire was amazing.

A few arms were twisted to form a team to enter the Chepstow Big Quiz, eight *volunteers* tramped along to the Drill Hall, and had an enjoyable evening. We did not come away with any prizes but we did not disgrace the society by coming last!

Our forthcoming meetings are as follows:

Monday, 9 th December	Archive Meeting, Recreational Hall, 2.00 – 5.00pm
Tuesday, 17 th December	Visit to St Mary's Church, Caldicot, 7.00 pm Talk, tour and mince pies.
Friday, 27 th December	Winter Solstice Walk, 7.30 a.m. meeting at the Woodland Tavern Sunrise at 8.10 am, breakfast after at the Woodland Tavern at 9.00 am
Tuesday, 28 th January 2014	Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall, at 7.00 pm
Monday, 10 th February	Archive Meeting, at the Recreational Hall 2.00 - 5.00 pm



MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL

Chepstow Choral Society – 2013/2014

SUNDAY DECEMBER 1st -- CAROLS AT ST PIERRE

11.45am. In aid of St David's Foundation (Christmas Fayre).

SUNDAY DECEMBER 8th – CHRISTMAS CONCERT

St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow, 3.00pm.

Peter Cook - Organist

Marjorie Duerden - Piano

The Dell Primary School Singing Group

Beachley Military Wives Singers

Musical Director – Graham Bull.

*Selection of seasonal choral items, family carols, readings
Tickets (£8.00 incl. programme, students, under- 18s free). Available
from Chepstow Bookshop, & choir members (tel. 01291 620414,
650472, 623310).*

SATURDAY APRIL 5th 2014 – G.F. Handel's "MESSIAH" (complete).

St Mary's Priory Church Chepstow, 7.00pm

CCS Orchestra (leader Paula Kempton)

Alison Wray (Soprano)

Helen Bruce (Alto)

Gareth Treseder (Tenor)

Stephen Hamnett (Bass)

WEDNESDAY JUNE 25th – SUMMER CONCERT - Arts Hall, Chepstow.

The Kempton String Ensemble

Michael Lowe (Baritone)

CCS is affiliated to Ty Cerdd & Making Music, and is a Registered Charity (no. 112798).

For further information about singing membership, please contact

Marjorie Duerden (tel. 01291 623310). Log on to our website

(www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk) for more

Just Some Notes from the Community Council Meeting Monday 4th 2013 - Glynis MacDonald

There were very few councillors at this month's meeting... very few indeed. But the good news was that this boded well for a quick meeting.

Police Report

- 7/10 It was back to the good old days with honest crimes like cows on the road near Shirenewton
- 19/10 A car was stopped for having no insurance and the car was seized by the police.
- 26/10 4 sheep were seen heading towards Shirenewton.
- 29/10 A field Hercules energizer and batteries attached to an electric fence was stolen in broad daylight.
- 2/11 Another cow was spotted, this time on the Crick Road.
The community council thanked Louise, Andy and Sally for all the good work of the Police Team .

BROADBAND CONNECTIONS

The Council had asked Richard Williams from Llangwm to come along to tell them and anyone else who was at the community council meeting (I'm afraid that was only me) about how Llangwm are hoping to go it alone in terms of installing a better broadband scheme. Richard is a civil engineer and was less than impressed with the feebleness of broadband in his area. He'd like to work from home but the incredibly slow speeds meant that carrier pigeons would have been quicker. The councillors around the table also agreed that it's a similar tale around here. Now if you live in towns or cities, BT are putting in serious upgrades - you know fibre optics and stuff to speed up things but if you live in the sticks this is going to take for ever. If at all. And so Richard gave the council information on the Welsh Assembly schemes which can assist financially to help rural areas and individual properties install their own super fast broadband set-ups. There would be economies of scale if people err.. banded together though and this is what Llangwm people hope to do in their patch. The Council asked if could be done here in the Shirenewton area and Richard said 'yes', if enough people were able to get together. It is a scheme which is driven by communities - not government and money is available until 2015. The cllrs wondered if the two areas could work together on this project and Richard cautiously agreed although he did point out that it would need a groundswell of local public support for the plans and that it would certainly need a local person, or persons to drive the scheme forward. The Council thanked Richard for coming to talk to them and they will consider what to do next.

PLANNING

1 DC/2013/00863 'Hillside' Usk Road, Shirenewton
Demolition of existing porch and erection of single storey garden room.
Apparently this very old cottage needs some TLC and the application was approved

2 DC /2013/00829 'The Old Coach House', Shirenewton
Proposed new entrance gates.No probs – Approved

3 DC 2013/00763 'Yew Tree Cottage', Usk Road,
Retention of existing walled entrance splay with electric gates.

There was some rather more lengthy discussions over this application. It was retrospective for a start as the applicant didn't realize that permission had to be obtained. And secondly there were disagreements over whether the new fences sat sympathetically with the nearby fences and walls. And finally there were very lengthy discussions over the issue of The Footpaths which run through, or next to, the property. Although the MCC Footpath officer was happy with the application, some members of the SCC were most definitely not happy. In fact it was suggested that the MCC officer had probably not looked at the right right of way.

The application was, I think, approved subject to the ongoing investigation of the footpath issue.

An 'informal appeal' as to the change of use concerning the 'Shirenewton Shop' will be held in Usk on 29th January 2014 in Usk.

FINANCE

The council then perused at some length the draft precept 2014/15.

This deals with the planned expenditure and there were the usual cries of dismay over the amount of money that needs to be spent on various things. For example the maintenance of the Church Clock . Until, once again it is pointed out that it is not a church clock but a Community Memorial Clock which was sited on the church and it was paid for by local donations to commemorate those who had fallen in the First World War. (This is written in stone. On the War Memorial) Similar queries were raised over the necessity of paying to belong to One Voice Wales but again it was pointed out that this can be a very useful body which gives local councils independent advice and information. And the poor old horse in the play area must have felt its ears burning when it was suggested that the high cost of maintaining him was too high and that really he was due for the knacker's yard. But a supportive councillor galloped to his rescue and said there was nothing really wrong with him other than he needed his head screwing back on. That's the horse's head, not the councillor's of course.

Mind you, it was pointed out that soon, very soon, MCC, being strapped for cash, will be devolving more powers to local councils and therefore the budget and the responsibilities of local councilors will be hugely more onerous and indeed challenging.

This is a problem which is looming... but it hasn't reached us just yet. Meanwhile a problem that has arisen is the terribly tatty state of the Mynnyddbach notice board which needs some attention and some expenditure.

Continued from Page 19

EXTRA ITEMS

The Poor Land Field. Registration of this land is taking an extraordinarily long time and the Clerk hopes that the registration will take place by the end of the year. That's this year....

The Play Area. MCC have completed their part of the maintenance of the play equipment but the rest of the work which was to have been finished by local people is STILL waiting to be completed. Hep hem.

Communal Web Portal. No progress yet.

The New Road Sign. Is it wrong? Is it 'Ditch House Lane'? or 'Ditch Hill Lane'? or 'Ditch Hill House Lane'? or 'Ditch House Hill Lane'?

Hedges . A hedge must be replaced at Mynnder farm and another hedge must be trimmed on Ditch Hill Lane. No that should read 'Ditch House Lane... No... (Oh, see above for clarification)

Earlswood Hall Sign Sigh. Sadly the highways department will not fund this. Annoyingly, the post code for the Hall is inaccurate and so people are sometimes lost for days travelling the intricate byways of Earlswood looking for the Hall.

Chevrons outside the school. Apparently the metal posts will have been replaced by smart wooden ones by the end of October.

Noise and Speed Monitoring Equipment. These machines were issued to volunteers to register the nuisance of traffic on the Usk Road but it turns out that this equipment 'was inappropriate and impractical for outside use'. (Is it me or does this seem particularly daft?)

Footpath Obstructions . These footpaths up near Ridge House Stables and Yew Tree Cottage have not been followed up by MCC. The Council will follow up on this non-following up.

Right that's it. Have a Happy Christmas –
The Community Council's informal note taker - Glynis MacDonald

TREDEGAR ARMS

CHRISTMAS EVENTS



15th December: Carols around the tree in the car park, the Tredegar Arms would like to welcome all carol singers back to the TA for warming mulled cider and mince pies.

18th December: Community Lunch at 12.30pm

Christmas Eve: For the Christingle, the Tredegar Arms will be serving food all day until 8 pm.

29th December: Annual Christmas Quiz from 8.30pm

1st January: Annual Village Treasure Hunt around lunchtime

As a side note our coffee morning for Macmillan raised a total of £535.20 and we would like to pass on our thanks to all who attended and those who loaned us additional cups and saucers

Christmas Opening Hours

23rd Food 12-3pm, 6-9.30pm closed afternoon

24th Food 12-8pm, bar only 8pm - late

25th Restaurant bookings, Bar 11-1pm only closed evening

26th Food 12-6pm, closed evening

27th Food 12-3pm, 6-9.30pm closed afternoon

28th Food 12-3pm, 6-9.30pm closed afternoon

29th Food 12-7.30pm – Christmas Quiz 8.30pm

30th Food 12-3pm, 6-9.30pm closed afternoon

31st Food 12-3, 6-8pm closed 10pm

1st Village Treasure Hunt, Food 12-6pm, Closed evening

2nd Normal service times apply

For clarification please see our website. We will also be giving daily notification on facebook to avoid any confusion.

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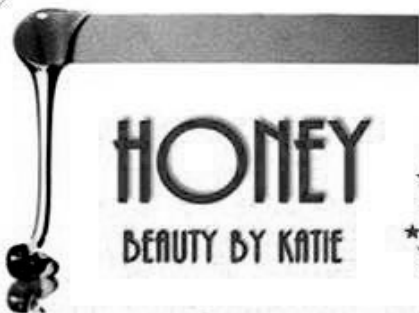
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GARDENING CORNER

With Christmas just around the corner the garden is probably the last thing on people's minds. True, the next couple of months are probably the quietest that it will ever be outside on your patch, but there are still plenty of jobs to be done that you never ever seem to get the time to do when things are in full flow in the summer months. We do have a larger garden area than most, so our list of 'little' jobs is always large, and never ever really goes away. But it doesn't matter what they are there is always a sense of deep satisfaction as you start to knock lines off the list and the garden takes on the appearance of neatness. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not one of those gardeners where every blade of grass leans a certain way and every flower bed is completely weed free. I do admire such gardens, but these are for the urban situation not out here in the countryside, where you can get away with a bit more unmanaged management! I have to admit that this isn't the case with the vegetable areas as you have probably heard me say before. I do like to have everything here in neat little rows and weed free if I can achieve this. This is really a habit inherited from both my late father and father in law, both of who were great vegetable growers and both insistent on keeping the weeding hoe moving. It was a case of having to really as both fed families on limited budgets and it was a case of maximising food production as much as possible.

Our list of jobs here start with clearing old crops from the vegetable beds, weeding, then manuring, before covering up with a landscaping fabric that prevents weeds growing over the winter. This work ensures that the beds are ready for the off in spring, with the minimum of fuss, as soon as conditions are right. All of the raised beds are edged with wooden boards to retain the soil. These have been there for ten or more years and many are showing signs of rotting now so these will need replacing during the winter months. Most of our hedges have now been cut, but there is about 100 metres of native hedge still to do, so this is definitely near the top of the list. We also have a number of boundary trees which require some attention, mainly removal of lower limbs and a bit of thinning out in the crowns to help keep them light and airy. There is also quite a bit of squirrel damage, especially in a couple of the oak trees, so this will need removing before the wood starts to rot and infects the main parts of the tree. There are also several more areas in the garden that have gone wild that need taming and bringing back into management but that may have to wait until an expanded period of leave over the Christmas period. This work will need a mega bonfire, and there is nothing better than a good bonfire on a cold winter's day!

We have always struggled with our drive down to the house. The main part of it is a bridleway and when we moved in was totally overgrown and inaccessible. We had to buy a strip of land off the then Welsh Water (who owned the fields below us at the time), fell a row of trees widen the track, then re-instate a bank and

plant a hedge. Unfortunately the track is the lowest bit of land where it happens to run, and as a result water likes to run down this rather than anywhere else – which at this time of year always cause us problems. There is one drain to channel the main water source away but this often blocks with fallen leaves, leaving the track as the only option for the water. It has got to the point where we will have to do something about it, so we are currently planning what we can do and how best to secure the water keeps running where we want, rather than where we don't! So this is definitely a key priority, especially as we have to get a bridal car down it next year and I don't think it will make it as it is at present!

We grow probably between two thirds and three quarters of our vegetables here. The main art is trying to manage what you grow so that you get little and often, concentrating on the high value crops and possibly not growing what will always be low value (relatively speaking) ones, which take up a lot of room. Every year I consider what has turned out best and try the following year to maximise the production of these crops. In addition to this however I also think about likely commercial growing and what level of chemical treatment that is going into producing such a crop. Those that are likely to have a high chemical input I try to grow myself, whereas others with a lower likely input we are most likely to buy.

For the last two years we have been wholly self sufficient with potatoes. However slugs and potato blight always prove a problem, especially for the main crop ones and I'm now considering not growing these any more. We don't eat a huge amount of potatoes any way. By the time you have bought the seed, it probably isn't worth the effort as a large bag will cost you well below £10. Calabrese however, where you may be paying £2 per head is a different proposition, so we grow as much of this as we can, under cover to avoid having to spray against caterpillars, freezing the excess for when the vegetable is out of season. With carrots, although cheap to buy, I always prefer to grow my own. However, in recent years carrot root fly has caused major problems and this year has been no exception. The crop has been completely spoiled. To prevent this you can erect an insect free flying barrier (as the fly apparently only ever flies around 0.5 metre off the ground or less. Unfortunately I often end up sowing the carrots and never getting around to erecting the barrier. One of my first jobs is to make a series of fence sections that can be stored during the winter, but put in place immediately after sowing, hopefully stopping the little devils in mid flight. Another job I have already sorted is to shut the bees down for winter. Unfortunately we are back to two hives as these have robbed the third of all its honey and driven the colony away. I despair with bees at times – they certainly don't hold any prisoners in their efforts to survive. Why they rob their cousins I'll never know.

Well I have the timber, so it's off to make the carrot frames as it is too wet to do anything outside. Happy gardening, have a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to catching up with you in the New Year.

Steve and Felicity Hunt.



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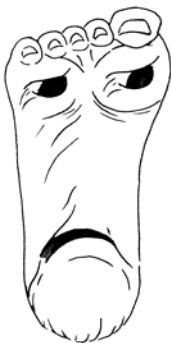
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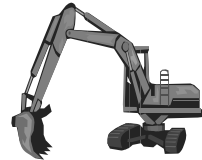
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NERYS'S NATTY NOSH

Nerys's Natty Nosh



Hi Nerys,

I used to make these Mince Pies the nearest Sunday to Christmas. To me that was the beginning of the celebrations. When we lived in the Swan Inn, Rhewl, Mostyn. I would put some on the bar on Christmas lunch time for the customers and also New Year. Sadly the Swan has closed now, but I have very fond memories of these Christmas days.

Eirwen Wilson.

Eirwen Wilson's Special Dairy free Mincepies. .

Ingredients.

14 oz. SR flour
2 oz. ground almonds
4 oz. Pure Soya margarine (cold)
4 oz. white Flora (cold)
Very little cold water
Mincemeat with vegetable suet
Milk and egg wash
Icing sugar for dusting

Method

- 1 Pre heat the oven. Gas 3, 170C, 325 F
 - 2 Rub almonds, flour, and margarine and lard together.
 - 3 Add cold water a little at a time until the pastry comes together,
 - 4 Wrap the pastry in cling film and leave to rest in a refrigerator for an hour before using.
 - 5 Roll the pastry out, thinly.
 - 6 Cut with pastry cutter, the base and top being the same size.
 - 7 Lay the cut pastry on a flat tray, dampen the edges with a little Soya milk or water.
 - 8 Put mincemeat on the bottom piece and another on top.
 - 9 Brush with milk and egg wash.
 - 10 Bake in the oven until golden
 - 11 Dust with icing sugar. Delicious.
- Enjoy!
Many thanks to Eirwen's (my mother in law) for her recipe. It's a favourite in Ty Twr.

Christmas is the time to share with friends and family. A time for giving and expressing your love and fondness for ones near and dear to you. It's a time to Celebrate.

Nerys's Natty Nosh



Ricciarelli - Sienese almond biscuits

These are so easy to make and taste wonderful. They take a little time because you need to leave the mixture to dry out overnight before baking.
They keep well in an airtight container.

These may be useful for gluten free diets as there is no flour used, only ground almonds.

Ingredients

2 large egg whites
pinch of salt
225g caster sugar
zest of one lemon
½ tsp. vanilla extract
1 tsp. almond essence
300g ground almonds
icing sugar for dusting

Method:

- 1 Whisk the egg whites and salt until stiff and dry, then whisk in the sugar a little at a time until you reach a marshmallow consistency.
- 2 Add lemon zest, vanilla extract, almond essence and ground almonds. Mix to a hard paste.
- 3 Shape into small diamonds - dust hands and surfaces with icing sugar to stop the mixture sticking. Lay on lined baking sheets and leave to dry out overnight.
- 4 Heat the oven to 140° C (fan 120° C / gas mark 1) and cook the biscuits for 25-30 mins - they should be pale and slightly cracked. When cool, dust with icing sugar and serve.

Enjoy!

*A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.*

It's Going to be a cold winter!

One day in early September the chief of a Native American tribe was asked by his tribal elders if the winter of 2011/12 was going to be cold or mild. The chief asked his medicine man, but he too had lost touch with the reading signs from the natural world around the Great Lakes.

In truth, neither of them had idea about how to predict the coming winter. However, the chief decided to take a modern approach, and the chief rang the National Weather Service in Gaylord Michigan.

'Yes, it is going to be a cold winter,' the meteorological officer told the chief. Consequently, he went back to his tribe and told the men to collect plenty of firewood.

A fortnight later the chief called the Weather Service and asked for an update. 'Are you still forecasting a cold winter?' he asked. 'Yes, very cold', the weather officer told him.

As a result of this brief conversation the chief went back to the tribe and told his people to collect every bit of wood they could find.

A month later the chief called the National Weather Service once more and asked about the coming winter. 'Yes,' he was told, 'it is going to be one of the coldest winters ever.'

'How can you be so sure?' the chief asked.

The weatherman replied: 'Because the Native Americans of the Great Lakes are collecting wood like crazy.'

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Telephone 01291 641338 or email terencewalters@hotmail.com*

Church of St. Thomas à Becket Shirenewton

Rector	Revd. Julian White	01291 622317 jel.white@btinternet.com
Parish Priest	Revd. Nansi Davies	01633 400519
Parish Visitor Co-ordinators	Revd. Nansi Davies Diane Marlow	01633 400519 01291 641407
Secretary and Church Warden	Monnica Williams	monnica.williams@virgin.net
Church Wardens	Sally Saysell Andrew Baker	01291 641369 01291 641925
PCC Secretaries	William Clark	01291 641783
PCC Treasurers	Kevin Bounds	01291 641818
PCC Members	Mark Broughton Charles Eickhoff Janet Horton Dr James Leney Allan Saysell Jane Smith-Haddon	01291 641797 01291 641716 01291 641783 01291 641271 01291 641369 01291 641525
Gift Aid Secretary	Ruth Savagar	01291 641411
Organists	Karen Millar Ruth Savagar	01291 650521 01291 641411
Sunday Club	Kerry Baker	01291 641925
Tower Captain	Mike Penney	01291 650653
Church Hall Booking	Glynis MacDonald	01291 641818
Safeguarding Officer	Dr. Kerry Baker	01291 641925
Church Flowers	Maureen Moody	01291 641524
Parish Magazine Editor	Terry Walters	01291 641338
200 Club	Bob O'Keefe	01291 641686

MP/Monmouth CC & Community Council Representatives

Clerk to Community Council	Hilary Counsell	01291 421307 shirenewtoncc@gmail.com
Shirenewton Ward:	David Adams Tony Hughes Carol Jones Phil Moles Beverley Moore	01291 641792 01291 641360 01291 641791 01291 641521 01291 641532
Mynyddbach Ward	Lynne Prosser Ian Moore, Chair	01291 641666 01291 650766
Newchurch West	Elizabeth McCombe	01291 652957
Earlswood Ward	Paul Harris Ken Morton	01291 650871 01291 650268
MCC for Shirenewton	Graham Down	01291 621846 grahamdown@monmouthshire.gov.uk
Member of Parliament	David Davies	020 7219 8360 daviesd@parliament.uk

Police Neighbourhood Watch Contacts

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Shirenewton & Mynyddbach Beverley Moore 01291 641532

Earlswood Sue Leat 01291 641207

Other Local Organisations

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Brownies Bev. Leaf 01291 641680
Jaci Crocombe 01291 641681
Church Fete Seirian Edmonds 07980 757802
andyandseze@aol.com
Earlswood Hope Mrs Sylvia Jeremiah, Mr Raymond Jeremiah 01291 641726
Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall
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Earlswood Valley Methodist Chapel
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Girl Guides Helen Cann 01291 650835 cannhelen@gmail.com
Kids Ad Lib (KAL) Karen Millar 01291 650521 Gail Jones 01291 650861
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Enid Heritage 01291 622708
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Paula Rimmer rimmerpaula@mac.com
Fairtrade/Traidcraft Marion McAdam 01291 641316
Whist drive Auriol Horton 01291 641844 aur10l@btinternet.com
Womens Institute (WI) Jenny Bonner 01291 641929

DIARY DATES

Dec	Event	Location
1	CCS. Carols	St Pierre
1	Advent Fair	Shirenewton Church
2	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
5	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
6	Festive Christmas Fayre	Recreation Hall
8	CCS. Annual Christmas Concert	St Mary's Priory Chepstow
9	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation Hall
13	Lets share Christmas Together	Shirenewton Church Room
15	Carols around the Christmas Tree	Tredegar Arms Car Park
17	Shirenewton Local History Society	St Mary's Church Caldicot
21	Fireworks Warning	Earlswood West End
24	Carols & Christingles	Shirenewton Church
Jan	Event	Location
1	Village Treasure Hunt	Tredegar Arms
2	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
9	Shirenewton WI	Recreation Hall
23, 24 25	Ali Barber and the 40 Thieves Pantomime	Earlswood Hall
28	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation Hall
Feb	Event	Location
10	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation hall
13	Shirenewton WI	Recreation Hall

	Saint Thomas áBeckett Shirenewton	Sunday Services	Start 10.00 a.m. Unless stated otherwise
1 st December	1 st Sunday of Advent Holy Eucharist	Joanne Tomlins Diane Marlow	Joanne Tomlins Diane Marlow
8 th December	2 nd Sunday of Advent Holy Eucharist	James Leney Jane Smith-Haddon	Claire Lewis Jane Smith-Haddon
15 th December	3 rd Sunday of Advent Holy Eucharist	Bill Clarke Bob Grattan	Bill Clarke Bob Grattan
22 nd September	4 th Sunday of Advent Carols and Readings	Mark Broughton Ruth Savagar	Mark Broughton Claire Lewis
25 th December	Christmas Day 11.30 p.m. Christmas Eve	Sally Saysell Andrew Baker	Allan Saysell Claire Lewis
25 th December	Christmas Day Family Service 10.00 am		
29 th December	1 st Sunday After Christmas Group Service at Mathern 10.00 a.m.		

***A merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year from all the staff at
Shirenewton Parish Magazine***



Earlswood
Chepstow



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EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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The views expressed are those of the contributor.

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