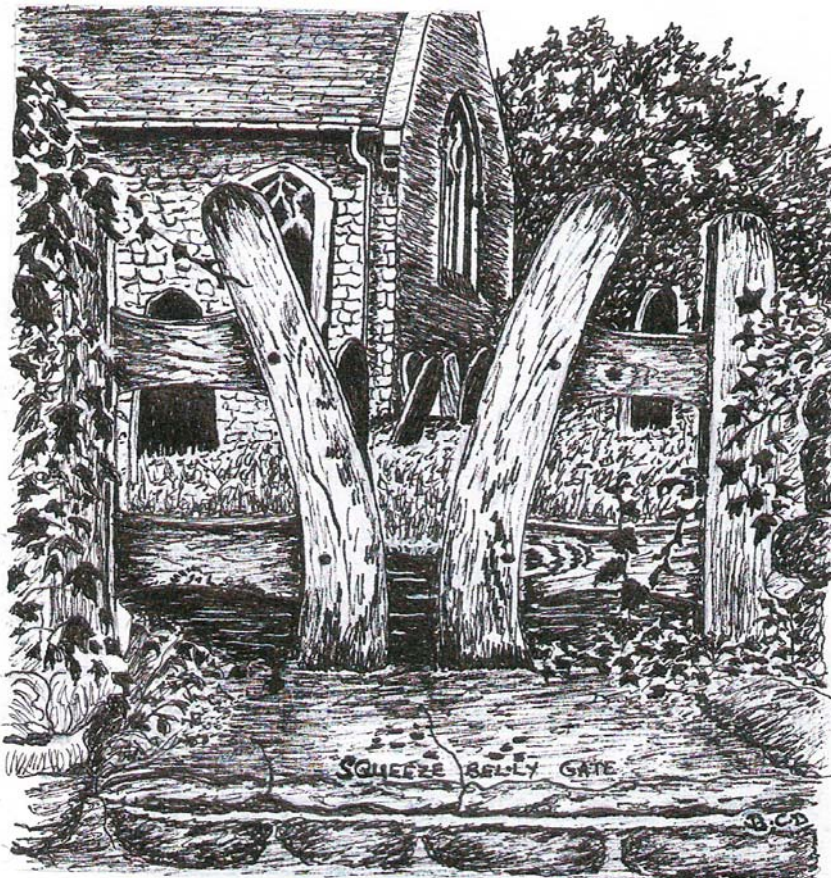


Shirenewton

Parish Magazine

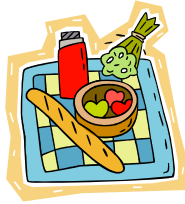
May 2014



Sketch by Barbara Davies

Price: 50p

Christian Aid 'Ploughman's Lunch'



Saturday 17th May

Just pop into The Chantry, Shirenewton
between 12.00 - 3.00

and help yourself to a Ploughman.

No need to book - just come along.

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

For more details ring:- Glynis on 641 818

Or email:- glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com

And on Sunday 18th May

The Christian Aid Service

At 10.00 in Shirenewton Church.

A short light service with Jane and Glynis

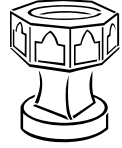
With tea, coffee, cake and chat afterwards in the Church
Room.

Collection to go to Christian Aid

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

Benjamin William son of Philip and Lucy Winterbourne.



Phoebe Hope daughter of Johnathan Mark and Cerys Elizabeth Howard

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH 200 CLUB

April Winners

1st Prize	£40	Mike Peirce
2nd Price	£30	Kevin Bounds
3rd prize	£20	James Bounds

MANY THANKS

The Male Voice Choir Concert in the church on the 4th April raised the magnificent sum of £588.90. On behalf of the RNLI very grateful thanks for all those who supported the event so generously.

DB Robinson President Chepstow RNLI

I would just like to thank everyone for all their generous donations to Oxfam, I raised a staggering £2700 and still counting. I finished the London Marathon in 4 hours 58 minutes. It was a tremendous day and even thinking of entering again next year!

Steph Drake

WHIST DRIVES



Once more we had only 21 players on the 3rd April, the first Thursday of the month but a pleasant evening was had by all. 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. We will continue through the year playing on the first Thursday of each month – we would love to see even more new faces.

Auriol Horton. 01291 641844

SHIRENEWTON WI MARCH 2014



We met on Thursday the 10th for our April meeting, spring had arrived and the field was full of players and spectators. It's the first time we've found the car park overflowing and needed to park off site (recovering our vehicles later in the evening before it got dark).

Several members were unable to attend so we only had three tables for our scrabble evening. Those used to playing instructed those who weren't. It's surprising how blank your mind can go when you have to think up words from the letters available. The time flew by with Shirley keeping us on track and calling out the turns and changes.

A minute to sort out your word started out plenty, but soon turned into no time at all when trying to find a place possible to add to.

Everyone enjoyed having a go and some of us who haven't played before may be thinking of getting a set. A big thank you to those who supplied their sets, for us to play with.

May the 8th is our annual meeting when we will elect committee and president for the next year, review the past year, look forward to future events, and enjoy some drinks and nibbles.

June the 12th we are having an outside meeting at WYNDCLIFFE COURT, St. Arvans - Sculpture gardens. (for further information contact Jenny Bonner 641929).

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

At our March meeting the speaker for the evening was David Priddis who gave a really well researched and documented account of the *'Blakeney Hill Stone Mine, a Family Business'*. The stone mined here was transported to most of the major cities in the U.K. and the stone faced many a prestigious building.

The society's archive was opened for walkers who were participating in the Chepstow Walking Festival. For walkers who were interested in the local history to view old maps and documents that were relevant to their walk route.

Dates for your diary:

- Monday, 12th May** Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall, Shirenewton
Drop-in session. 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm
- Tuesday, 20th May** Visit to Treowen House, outside Monmouth, A Jacobean
Country House, 2.00 pm
- Sunday, 25th May** Beating the Bounds of the Parish of Shirenewton, meeting
at St Thomas a Becket Church at 2.00 pm.
Everyone welcome.
- Tuesday, 27th May** Visit to Cornwall House in Monmouth. 7.00 pm

If interested in any of these visits please contact 641376.

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Extracts from the minutes of the April meeting

Planning applications considered

1. DC/2014/00215 Listed Building Consent - proposed installation of a Blue Plaque to commemorate EJ Lowe on the gatepost of Shirenewton Hall.

Recommendation: Approval.

2. DC/2014/00205 Gaerllwyd Farm, Newchurch

Conversion of barn to a dwelling.

Recommendation: Approval with the following observations -

- that a single story dwelling would be a significant improvement to what is a redundant and unsightly agricultural building,
- the intention to retain the Welsh slate roof, which is in good condition,
- there will be no increase in size,

There were no objections registered on the Mon CC website.

3. DC/2014/00121 Bluebell Farm, Earlswood

Extend existing steel framed barn and construct new manege in adjoining field.

Council noted that according to the website, this application had been approved by Mon CC on 7.4.14 (the day of the SCC meeting). Although this Council also intended approving the application, the following questions were asked of Mon CC .

- Why has the application been passed before consultation was completed?
- Has the applicant contacted the authority regarding Right of Way 156 as instructed by the RoW Officer in his report dated 18.3.14?
- Has an application been made for Change of Use of the ground from agricultural to equestrian, as this should be the first stage of planning procedure?

4. DC/2013/01103 Bluebell Farm, Earlswood

Detached double garage and workshop with office accommodation in roof space.

Council noted from the website that Mon CC had given notice to refuse this application on 1.4.14 due to its poor design, excessive scale and unacceptable massing.

5. DC/2014/00337 Old Home, Earlswood

Demolition of some disused and structurally unsafe outbuildings to be replaced by an annexe.

Council noted that demolition work had already been carried out and that the single storey design would not impose on neighbours. There had been no objections registered on the Mon CC website. Recommendation: Approval.

6. E6840/A/2014/2214033 Hill View Cottage, Shirenewton (Planning application DC/2012/00631) Appeal against a refusal. Council resolved that the following recommendation be sent to the Planning Inspectorate for Wales:

'In December 2012 this Council recommended refusal with the following observations;

- that the property is in a conservation area and that particular row of houses, especially the outbuilding that was the village pound, is of historic interest,
- all alterations should be in keeping with the village character, this proposal is cramped and results in over development of the site,
- although alterations had been made to the original plans, proposals for access and parking were still considered unacceptable.

In September 2013, amendments to the plans were considered and, again, Council recommended refusal. Members acknowledged that amendments had been made but still had serious concerns about access and limited parking space, they felt that not enough of an improvement had been made to change their recommendation'.

7. To receive the appeal decision of the Planning Inspectorate on the proposal for Shirenewton Village Shop. Council noted that the Appeal had been allowed and 'permission granted for the conversion of the existing ground floor shop so as to form a 3-storey dwelling'.

Items of local concern -

From the monthly police report - There were two reports of suspicious vehicles in Penyaemawr and Earlswood which were not taken further and four reports of theft, one walk-in at a house in Shirenewton, two in Earlswood - one from a shed and one of heating oil, the fourth was copper cable from the electricity sub-station in Wentwood.

Update on traffic calming proposals.

The Working Party meeting held in March had finalised suggestions for speed restrictions, the locations of which will depend on the width of verges, and a scheme is to be drawn up with technical assessments made by Highways. CC G Down is expecting to consult with the community by mid-May.

WW1 commemorations in 2014 - a grant of £150 was agreed towards community activities in commemoration of WW1.

Continued on Page 8

Continued from Page 7

Mon CC Pollinator Policy - talk by Nigel Leaworthy - the Pollinator Policy enables the authority to look at the way that open spaces, parks, cemeteries, verges etc are managed. The authority is planting yellow rattle, trialling 'urban mix' wildflower planting - indigenous flowers that enhance pollinators, also perennial flower mixes at some sites and poppies as part of the WW1 commemorations. When questioned, Mr Leaworthy agreed that the verges along the Shirenewton/Crick road may be appropriate for wild flower planting next year. The Spout was another area that was suggested. This item to be added to the July agenda for further discussion and sites nominated, if appropriate.

Date of next meeting: The Annual Meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 12 May at 7.30 pm, to be immediately followed by the ordinary meeting.

Mobile Police Station visits during May:

Thursday 22nd May, 10 - 11 am, Tredegar Arms Car Park

Sunday , 25th May, 9.30 - 11 am, Great Barnets Wood Car Park

Find more information in the draft copy of the minutes on 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

Best Kept Village Competition 2014 Can you help?

Next month judging will take place between 1st - 31st June, this is coming round really quickly and some offers of help would really be appreciated. We need a new planter for the Keep Left sign in the village centre, we also need offers of plants and help with the planting, sponsors for the flower troughs, help with keeping the verges strimmed, litter picking and generally keeping the village tidy.

In 2013 Shirenewton scored well, just one point away from the winner! Help us to do better than that this year and win the Best Kept Village prize.

Please contact - Hilary Counsell, Clerk to Shirenewton Community Council

Tel: 01291 421307 Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com

ST PETER'S CHURCH, NEWCHURCH

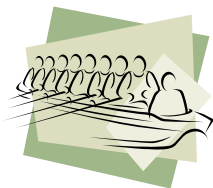
On Sunday, 6th April, during the family service at St Peters, Newchurch, we welcomed the parents, godparents, family and friends of Daisy Scarlett, six months old, who was baptised by Rev John Waters



**A SPRING WALK ON SATURDAY 17TH OF MAY FOLLOWED
BY A CREAM TEA IN THE CHURCH .
A SHORT CIRCULAR WALK TO GAER FAWR.
MEET AT THE CHURCH 1.30.**

**COME AND JOIN US FOR SONGS OF PRAISE AT ST PETERS
NEWCHURCH ON THURSDAY 19TH JUNE AT 7PM**

CONGRATUALTION LAURIE!!!



Laurie Harvey is a local lad who has lived in this village all his life. He is presently at St Hugh's College Oxford, studying Physics.

On Sunday 6th April this year, Laurie was the Cox in the winning Oxford team that beat Cambridge in the Annual Oxford and Cambridge Boat race on the River Thames!

Well done Laurie and Good Luck in your future career!

Rob Davies

**St Mary's Church
Llanvair Discoed**

**Flower Festival, Open Gardens
and scarecrows**



**Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th May 2014
10.30am - 5.00pm**

**Entrance to Flower Festival & Open Gardens
£5 per adult (children free)**

**Follow Basil the gardening scarecrow at:
[facebook.com/llanvairpengardens](https://www.facebook.com/llanvairpengardens)
and read his entertaining tweets at:
[@scarecrowBasil](https://twitter.com/scarecrowBasil)**

STARGAZING



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.

In the evening sky, the slightly orange planet Mars is in the southern sky above and to the right of the bright star Spica. On the 11th, the Moon lies close to Mars.

Yellowish Saturn rises in the south-east later in the evening. On the 14th, the Full Moon is just below the planet.

The bright planet Jupiter is below the stars Castor and Pollux in the west. On the 4th, the crescent Moon is close to the planet. Looking at Jupiter with binoculars should allow a good view of Jupiter's four largest moons: Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto – they form a line with the planet. In 1610 the Italian Galileo used a telescope for the first time and discovered the moons of Jupiter. The four moons have been called the Galilean Moons ever since.

Before dawn, the brilliant planet Venus is low on the eastern horizon. On the 25th, the Crescent Moon is close to the planet.

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH FETE

14th June 2014

A fun day out for all the family!

Carnival Floats, Stalls, Raffle, Entertainment including the annual welly wanging competition and new for this year – the village dog show!

Please look out for details on how to enter the dog show on posters in the village over the next few weeks.

We are still keen to find volunteers to man the skittles, ice-cream and tombola. If you are able to get involved and give up an hour or so of your time on the 14th then please contact Miss Seirian Edmonds, Fete Co-ordinator at andyand-seze@aol.com or 07980757802 or pop into The Barn for a chat (next to the T.A Pub).

CHEPSTOW CHORAL SOCIETY

Presents

A SUMMER FESTIVE CELEBRATION

Wednesday, June 25TH, 2014 at 7.00pm

Arts Hall, Chepstow Leisure Centre & School

Popular choral classics, songs from the shows, folk songs,
and a medley of WW1 popular songs (for all!)

With guests

Michael Lowe (Baritone)

The Kempton String Ensemble

Music includes items by Mozart, Mendelssohn, Faure,
Vaughan Williams, Rogers and Hammerstein, Frank Bridge
and much more!

Tickets £10 to include programme and refreshments (glass of
wine, soft drinks, light supper) available from choir members,
Chepstow Bookshop, the Chepstow Festival box office or tel.

01291 623310

CHURCH WEB SITE

Well two exciting topics this time! No one can have failed to be aware of the recent Heartbleed bug. Needless to say the main stream press reported this with a variety of accuracy and hysteria. Many called it a 'virus' when, in fact, it's not a virus but a security vulnerability which permits hackers the ability to read the memory of compromised machines. Such memory *may* include user names and passwords. The idea being that many people use the same passwords on many sites.

In fact, only around 20% of internet sites were ever vulnerable (those using the OpenSSL cryptography library). Needless to say, some of the advice in the main stream media was not particularly helpful. For example, there was advice that people should immediately change all their passwords. This would not actually help much if the site on which the passwords were changed had not patched their systems and therefore were still open to the vulnerability! Better advice would have been to change all your important passwords (banks, etc.) to something individual and test sites for the vulnerability changing password when they were patched.

So, if you want to check whether a site you use was vulnerable (if it's still vulnerable stop using it) I recommend the LastPass HeartBleed checker: <https://lastpass.com/heartbleed/>.

I strongly recommend that you do not use the same password on all sites. By all means have a standard password on sites where it doesn't matter (that's broadly what I do) but ensure that important sites (i.e. ones with financial data, or where you have a registered credit card) have unique individual strong passwords. To test for strong passwords try the Microsoft password checker – just Google it. Note: include punctuation and capitalisation to strengthen the password.

Managing the passwords is then the issue and the two standard password managers are LastPass and RoboForm. I couldn't live without RoboForm and many people I know use LastPass.

Moving on to another topic. Ever received a 'spam' email from a Hotmail account and thought 'it's been hacked'. I do regularly and always email back the person to say 'looks like your account has been hacked'. However, I always assumed that the password had been compromised. However, one of my technical staff recently witnessed his girlfriend's account being hijacked (technically it's not a 'hack') and this is how it works (names change to protect the innocent):

GF's hotmail account was hijacked yesterday and I actually saw it happen. This is just a techie note in case anyone's interested to understand how it works. If you know a lot of people with hotmail accounts you probably get this kind of spam from them quite often, but I never realised why or how it worked until now.

GF received an email apparently from a friend which had a URL. she clicked it and it popped up a video about some weight loss pill or something. She realised it was spam and closed the window.

Afterwards she noticed some undeliverable and out-of-office replies coming in, so we checked the sent items and there were hundreds of them, all sent during the few seconds she had the weight loss video on the screen.

This is called a "cross-site request forgery" (CSRF or XSRF), basically because you are already logged in to hotmail in one window, another window can also send requests to hotmail which will automatically be executed under your hotmail session.

The hotmail servers detected this and made her change her password and reset her security details. this might make the user feel like they have done something to counteract the spammers but as you can see, it doesn't make the slightest bit of difference to security because the attack doesn't depend on the spammer knowing your hotmail password, just on you opening the link.

There are well documented ways to guard against this kind of attack. Why hotmail doesn't use any of them is a mystery to me but it explains why naïve users can have their hotmail account hacked even when they have a secure password, whereas google users don't suffer from the problem at all.

So if you have a Hotmail account that's how it works. How to avoid it? Open all links in new 'incognito/private' windows. In Chrome right hand mouse click and select 'open link in incognito window'. In Firefox, it's 'new Private Window'. Internet Explorer doesn't appear to offer an easy option. There is a way in Safari as well.

With Private/ incognito browsing, your browser's history (including search history) and cookies will all be deleted once you have closed all of your incognito tabs. Any files you download or bookmarks you create will be kept. I suspect I'm running out of room so we can discuss private/ incognito browsing in more detail next month!

In the meantime please use the shopping portal for your online shopping
www.shirenewtonshop.com

Safe Browsing David Cornwell
webmaster@shirenewtonchurch.com

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING—NOTES

Don't forget, I only write about the things I think people might possibly find interesting - to get the real McCoy you need to go to Hilary Counsell's Proper and Official Notes. And I owe Liz McCombe an apology as I believe I misspelled her name last month. Sorry Liz, and enjoy your retirement from council life.

I think there were as many members of the public at the meeting as there were councillors. This is quite unusual. The neighbourly dispute continues...

And oh dear, once again no representative from the police. And although it's not nice to hear about raves and the stealing of fences and noisy bikers I do like to hear about saucy horses and runaway cows.

We had an interesting talk by Nigel Leaworthy from Mon CC on the 'Pollinator Policy.' Remember last year how brilliant the Coldra Roundabout was covered with wild flowers? Well MCC have decided to do a similar thing to help the birds, bees, bugs and butterflies and the general environment - with the added bonus of it being cheaper than the regular mowing of the grass verges. They are being advised by the Gwent Wildlife Trust. There will be a two pronged attack - some patches will have bushes with berries and what-not and other patches will be treated to a mix of annual wild flower seeds. It all depends on the width of the roads and verges. The councillors were asked if they could think of suitable spots within the Shire where MCC could plough the verge and scatter the good seed on the land. I thought this sounded great! And I even took Mr Leaworthy's email as he has Yellow Rattle Seeds to give away which is pretty good at reducing the robustness of grass. Strong grass stops the wild flowers from breaking through - which is a bit of a problem over in the wild flower bit of Shirenewton Churchyard. But I digress...

Planning

1 DC/2014/00215 Listed Building Consent - proposed installation of a Blue Plaque to commemorate EJ Lowe on the gatepost of Shirenewton Hall. Unanimous. Approval was thoroughly recommended

2 DC/2014/00205 Gaerllwyd Farm, Newchurch Conversion of barn to a dwelling. It seemed that this was a repeat application and as it had been recommended for approval last time, the clls didn't see any reason to turn it down this time.

3. DC/2014/00121 Bluebell Farm, Earlswood

Extend existing steel framed barn and construct new manege in adjoining field. Now this was a bit bonkers because the councillors had spotted – at 5 o'clock that very afternoon – that MCC decide to cut out the middle men ie. the Shirenewton Community Council and to just go ahead and grant approval. The councillors were pretty miffed at MCC

4. DC/2014/01103 Bluebell Farm,

Detached double garage and workshop with office accommodation in roof space. Ditto this application – only this time MCC had decided to refuse the plans. The councillors were not happy.

5. DC/2014/00337 Old Home, Earlswood

Demolition of some disused and structurally unsafe outbuildings to be replaced by an annexe. SCC were allowed to deal with this one and they recommended approval.

6. E6840/A/2014/2214033 Hill View Cottage, Shirenewton
(Planning application DC/2012/00631) Appeal against a refusal.

The reasons why the application was rejected in the first place still stood and so the councillors saw no reason to change their minds.

7. To receive the appeal decision of the Planning Inspectorate on the proposal for Shirenewton Village Shop. It seems that SCC have reached the end of the line. There will be no Village Shop in Shirenewton.

Vacancies on the Community Council

Apparently two brave people have shown interest in becoming councillors. There as a bit of a discussion as to whether to go to the bother of interviewing when there were only two applicants for the two posts. 'Well I was interviewed' said one councillor. "Yes, and you still got the job' retorted another. It was of course, in jest.

Best Kept Village Competition 2014. Ideally, this needs someone to co-ordinate the efforts of the local people to weed, trim strim and generally tidy their patches but The competition runs through the month of June.

Traffic Calming Measures

There was a meeting some weeks ago with Paul Keeble of MCC and it was suggested that perhaps the best plan to slow down vehicles in the village was to have a gate system like they have on the A48 at

Continued on Page 22

Continued from page 21

Caerwent and/or road markings but definitely not narrowing of the roads. Where these gates will actually be sited will depend on the width of the verge. And there will be a speed limit of 20mph in-between those gates.

MOD Meeting

This is to be held on 28th April in the morning. No it's the afternoon. Or is it in the evening? No-one was quite sure. Anyway somebody asked why these meetings were being held in the first place and no-one seemed particularly keen on going. It's more a Caerwent thing as they have more boundaries with the MOD than Shirenewton. But with all the bangs and machine guns and helicopters manoeuvres and night-time activities, the army likes to keep the neighbours sweet and to win hearts and minds and so it was agreed it was 'a good thing'. (I certainly enjoyed the MOD Curry last year)

Clerks Report

Poor Land Field. Is this ever going to get off the agenda? The solicitor is moving at a snail's pace.

Play Area The good news was that finally new bark had been put down to top up the area but the bad news was that sadly the chips were too big and rough and so they will have to be removed and replaced with smaller grade chips. There was some discussion over the horse's head too. Whose bed will it turn up in?

Communal Web Portal. Well, I know you are all sitting on the edge of your seats to hear of the progress of this potential portal but...No. It's No Progress. Again Other than should it be in Welsh as well? I think that by the time this is set up we will have moved to other modes of communication – telepathy for example. Or the community council system will have disappeared into the annals of time, like the feudal system.

Rights of Way. Issues involving footpaths around Yew Tree Cottage and also Ridge House Stables have been reported to 'Enforcement' and hopefully these problems will be resolved.

Breaking News over the Bin at Mynnyddbach. The usual augment with MCC. 'This one's yours' 'No it isn't'. 'You should empty it'. 'No we shouldn't' Anyway, Merlin will empty this bin on a fortnightly basis. Wizard!

Telephone Kiosk. One cllr was heard to ask, 'Do we want it?' 'What are we doing with it?' 'Why do we need a lease?' They were reminded that a grant has been applied for in order to get it tidy and painted etc. And then it might become a Wi Fi Slot Box Hot Spot!

The Keep Left Bollard in the centre of Shirenewton. Someone didn't.

Items of Local Concern

The Village Benches need to be sanded. And treated.

Pot Holes in Mynnyddbach haven't been filled properly.

Bikes on the Usk Road are getting increasingly noisy and there have been requests for monitoring although the last attempt didn't work as the wrong monitoring equipment was provided. It's the good weather that does it. Brings them out like flies.

A Large Stone for the community plaque has been located and is ready to be placed appropriately 'We need all of us to lift it into place'.

The WW1 Memorial Clock on the Church Tower should be mended soon. Well sort of soon. A grant has been awarded to get it fixed but the menders seem a little busy at the moment. So time ticks on slowly. Or in the case of the north face of the Tower, not at all.

Another Dog Poo Bin has been requested by a local resident perhaps to be sited near The Spout. There was animated discussion about this. Quite sad really. It was pointed out by one cllr that 'Poo bins cost money' But a Tidy Town Grant could help there. 'What about bigger poo bins?' No the bins we have are adequate. 'But it costs money to empty poo bins' (see earlier) Well poo can be put in ordinary bins as well. (Horrid) We spend hours on poo bins.

Metaphorically speaking. There's got to be more to life than poo. No wonder no one wants to take on the mantle of reporting what goes on at the community council meetings.

Finally, Cllr Ian Moore is stepping down as Chairman of the SCC and so hopes someone else will step up to the mark.

The next meeting will be on Monday 12th May 7.30 at The Rec. It's a week later because of the Bank Holiday. And it's the AGM closely followed by the ordinary meeting. I can hardly wait...



**Poppy Rastall BSc (Hons), MSCh, SRCh, HCPC reg
Podiatrist / Chiropodist**

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- Verruca treatment
- Sports Injury treatment and prevention
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**Visit our Clinic or have a home visit
for only £20, our special offer for Parish Mag
readers only !**

**Fairlight Dental Practice,
Welsh Street, Chepstow, NP16 5LR**

Tredegar Arms Shirenewton

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY LUNCHEON CLUB

28th May at 12.30

tredegararmsshirenewton@hotmail.co.uk

SHIRENEWTON TODDLER GROUP

Meet every Thursday (Term Time Only)
at The Recreation Hall Shirenewton 1.30 to 3.00 pm
Age range 0 to pre-school
A nice cupper, chat, toys, crafts, snacks & songs



Keith Rowlands OBE

Artist

"From Valley to Sea"

Oils on Canvas
Prints on Canvas
Fine Art Prints

Shirenewton Home Studio:
To view tel: 01291 641551
www.keithrowlands.co.uk

Author: Newly launched on Kindle and Kindle Fire

"Noah and an Almighty Flood"

'hilarious' 'laughed out loud'

GARDENING CORNER

With southerly winds at the beginning of April I was expecting to hear the cuckoo calling a bit earlier than usual. This thought came reality on 11th April, which is a little earlier than usual. I'd just come back from a fruitful fishing excursion and was unloading the car when I heard it calling. It then disappeared for a couple of days before starting to call in earnest, but this seems usual behaviour. Whilst fishing I noticed the first swallows swooping low for insects. This reminded me that it must be time to get the house martin nests back up, after being taken down at the end of last year, sterilized and then stored for the winter. So the following evening they were placed in their usual positions, and much to my surprise, when I pulled the curtains back in the morning, there were house martins flying in from all directions! It was as if they had been sitting on a telephone wire somewhere, looking at their watches and wondering why I was late putting their summer homes back up. I haven't had the opportunity to check yet, but the impressions are that all eight artificial nests are already filled, so the late comers will be building their own.

The southerly winds and change to 'better' weather has meant that I have been able to get out in the garden and get the spring cleaning under way. I had managed to make a start on some of the flower beds previously, but with the greenhouses already filling up with vegetable plants I had to get on and clear the vegetable garden up with some haste. I have now finished weeding and feeding (with manure), all of the raised bed area. I had been doing this in stages as each bed (from the top of the slope down), gradually dried out from the winter soaking. As I did this they were planted one by one, so some are already full with crops of broad beans, peas, onions and shallots. The one bed had dried up enough to even get the carrot seed sown. To make sure these are a success, I need to get on and build a frame around the bed so that I can put up a physical barrier of netting to keep the carrot fly out, and prevent them damaging the roots. They say you learn something every day and naively I thought that carrot fly only affects – well carrots! Apparently not, this explains why I have had problems with celeriac, parsnips, turnips and radishes in recent years. So I need to build several frames for these other crops as well. I never used to get this problem with carrots and at the price they are in the shops I wonder sometimes why I bother continuing to grow them. But you can't beat the taste of fresh picked carrots – shop bought ones will never be the same. The garlic appears to have come through the winter well with very few gaps. Last year's garlic bed was being cleared and there were a few plants growing, where I had obviously failed to harvest the bulb last year. Waste not want not, these were dug up and replanted in the gaps of this year's bed and have now settled in well. Something else that has done well is the purple sprouting broccoli. We have a fantastic crop at present and may well have to freeze some of it before it spoils.

In the big tunnel the apricots and nectarines have set a good crop, thanks to the weather and the bumblebees. As I write this we are experiencing a few cold nights, and so to be on the safe side the trees have been protected with some

horticultural fleece. This should just keep the temperate above freezing and prevent the small fruitlets from being killed. I have also planted some strawberries that we had growing in pots. This fruit seems to do so much better under cover that I have decided not to grow anymore outside. I have also just bought a new variety that apparently all the French chefs go mad for (called Maris de bois – it has to be a French variety after all!). This is what they call a perpetual fruiter, so will have several flushes of fruit through the season, unlike our current variety which is an early – mid season fruiter. I've also planted the early calabrese, and so far this is looking well. In the small tunnel we are currently picking lettuce. I've also sown some early carrots, broad beans and the very first, early potatoes. These are also looking good at the moment, so fingers crossed we will soon have the first of these on our plates. That is the one best thing with growing crops under protection, you get to eat the fruits of your labour about a month earlier and also a month later as the growing season is extended.

The two greenhouses are starting to burst at the seams especially now that the tomatoes are growing on well and demand to be potted into larger pots every other week. The other salad crops like pepper and cucumber are also doing well. I have some cucumber and melon plants, that have been grafted onto strong rootstocks ordered for May time as these did so well last year. But someone had given me some free cucumber seed and I just couldn't help myself! This is the same with tomatoes, as there are currently some five different tomato varieties all vying for attention! The problem will be picking which ones go forward to crop – does anyone need any tomato plants? I need to get some of the crops out in the ground as I need the space for the runner and French beans. Normally I would have these sown by now, but have decided to leave a little later this year. Traditionally I would put these beans into the propagating bench on the 1st May and then plant out on the 1st June, when all fear of frost should have disappeared. I have had some close calls in recent years though and so have decided to be a bit more patient this year.

Now that the vegetable area has been tamed it is time to turn my attention back to the flower beds. Sadly with lack of time in recent years – the result of promotion at work and changing jobs – some area have been completely neglect and now carry a nice crop of brambles and ash trees. The latter, if they are big enough, will provide either fire wood or bean sticks, but the brambles will have to be cut one at a time and poisoned off. There are still some flowers struggling underneath, so hopefully they will last a little longer whilst I try to restore things back to their former glory. Among all this I have checked the bees. The two surviving hives, including the swarm I was given last year, have come through the winter OK. I was watching the bees flying in other day and had to chuckle. I don't know where the one hive was collecting pollen from, but not only were the bees carrying full pollen sacks on their legs, but they were a bright shade of yellow, as they were absolutely covered in yellow dust. The housekeeper bees were going to be busy giving those foragers a good wash and clean before sending them on their way again!

Happy gardening until next month. Steve and Felicity Hunt.

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Butterfly Survey



Jane and I are doing a butterfly survey on the SAMFAL Fields and Ruffets Wood. It's proper science and all that. All the details collected Jane will send to Butterfly Conservation. We have to follow the same route every week and choose the best afternoon of the week i.e the warmest stillest day. This is a bit tricky to predict.

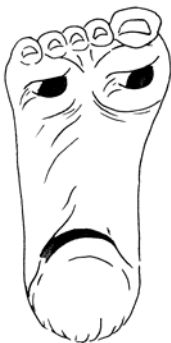
In March we attended a Butterfly Identification course run by Gwent Wildlife - hey easy! There are only about 60 to learn to identify, so much easier than birds. Sadly of course, no. Most butterflies do not sit still long enough on a close handy flower with their wings open. Nevertheless, on our first excursion which was on Friday 11th April we were really pleased to spot Peacocks, Brimstones, Tortoiseshell and Orange Tips.

Hopefully this will be another good year for butterflies. Last year's warm weather was a particularly good for Common Blues and Speckled Woods and drifts of Clouded Yellows which came over from the continent. I was delighted to see them down on the Gwent Levels.

Jane is also checking the bird boxes on the SAMFAL fields and four out of five showed signs of occupation from good old Great Tits.

Jane Smith Haddon and Glynis MacDonald

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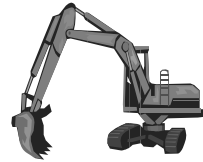
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NERYS'S NATTY NOSH

This is a classic cake recipe that is perfect for birthdays, special occasions or simply for afternoon tea. Strawberry jam, fresh strawberries and cream are used to sandwich the cake together. Alternatively use lemon curd and cream, any soft fruit or flavored buttercream.



Lemon Sponge with Strawberries and Cream serves 10

Ingredients

For the sponge

225g (8oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus extra for greasing

225g (8oz) self-raising flour, sifted

225g (8oz) caster sugar

4 large eggs, preferably free-range or organic at room temperature

1 lemon

For the filling

250g fresh strawberries

1 vanilla pod

150g good-quality strawberry jam

150ml double cream, whisked

Icing sugar, for dusting

Method

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas 4. Use paper parchment to line two 20 cms (8inch) tins.

2 Make the sponge by hand, or in a food processor. Beat the butter and sugar together with a wooden spoon, until very light and fluffy.

3 Beat the eggs in a separate bowl. Gradually add the eggs to the mixture. If it starts to curdle add a little of the sifted flour. Once the eggs have been added gently fold in the flour.

4 Finely grate over the lemon zest then fold it into the mixture.

5 Divide the cake mix into the prepared tins and spread it out using a spatula knife.

6 Bake in the hot oven for around 20 minutes, or until lightly golden brown and risen.

7 Check to see if the cake is cooked by sticking a skewer into the middle of the sponge. If it comes out clean the cake's cooked; if slightly sticky it needs a bit longer, so put it back into the oven.

8 Allow the cakes to cool slightly in the tins, then carefully turn them out on to a rack to cool completely.

To finish

Sandwich the sponge together with the thickened cream, jam and fruit.

Dust the top with icing sugar or decorate with extra cream and fruit. **Enjoy!**

NERYS'S NATTY NOSH



Malt contains a high amount of vitamin B, minerals and some fibre and protein. Malt is produced from the whole barley grain, which means that the nutrients concentrated near the hull are preserved. Malted barley is used to make beer and whiskey and it is the base of some coffee substitute. It is also used to enhance the flavor of certain foods and cakes. You can buy the malt extract from health shops.

Malt Loaf. Makes 2 x 1lb loaves or 1 x 2lb loaf.

Ingredients

300g / 11 oz. Mixed Dried Fruits
175g / 6 oz. Malt Extract
85g / 3 ½ oz. Dark Muscovado Sugar
150ml / 5 fl oz. Hot Black Tea
2 Large Eggs, beaten
250g / 9 oz. Plain Flour
1 tsp Baking Powder
½ tsp Bicarbonate of Soda

Method

1 Grease the loaf tin(s). Cut a strip of greaseproof paper the same width as the tin and use it to line the base and ends.

2 Weigh the dried fruit, sugar and malt extract into a mixing bowl and pour over the hot tea. Stir well, cover and set aside to rest in a cool place for at least two hours or overnight. If you are in a hurry you can skip the resting phase and continue with the recipe but you may find that the fruit has a tendency to sink to the bottom of your loaf.

3 Pre-heat the oven to 150°C / 300°F / Gas Mark 2.

4 Add the beaten eggs to the fruit mixture and mix well. Sift the flour, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda together. Add to the fruit mix, stir well and pour the mixture into the prepared tin(s)

5 Bake the 1 lb. loaves for 50 minutes (1 hour and 20 minutes for a 2lb loaf) until firm and well risen. A knife inserted into the centre of the cake should come out clean.

6 If you wish you can warm a tablespoon of malt extract in a bowl over hot water and use it to glaze the top of the still warm loaf. This will give it a glossy shine and a sticky texture. Remove the malt loaf from the tin(s) and leave to cool on a wire rack. **Enjoy!**

Why not bring your baked goodies to this year's fete and donate them to the cake stall. The fete will be held on Saturday 14th of June. Thank you.

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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
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Organists	Karen Millar Ruth Savagar	01291 650521 01291 641411
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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

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Newchurch West	Vacancy	
Earlswood Ward	Paul Harris Ken Morton	01291 650871 01291 650268
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Shirenewton & Mynyddbach	Beverley Moore	01291 641532

Earlswood	Sue Leat	01291 641207
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	Jaci Crocombe	01291 641681
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DIARY DATES

May	Event	Location
1	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
8	Shirenewton WI AGM	Recreation Hall
12	Shirenewton Local History Socty.	Recreation Hall
12	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
17	Christian Aid Ploughman's Lunch	The Chantry
17	St Peters Newchurch Spring Walk	Gaer Fawr
18	Christian Aid Service	Shirenewton Church / Church Room
20	Shirenewton Local History Society	Vist Treowen House
22	Mobile Police Station	Tredegar Arms
25	Shirenewton Local History Society	Beating the Bounds
25	Mobile Police Station	Great Barnets Wood
27	Shirenewton Local History Socty.	Cornwall House Monmouth
28	Community Lunch	Tredegar Arms
June	Event	Location
5	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
12	Shirenewton WI	Wyndcliffe Court St Arvans
14	Shirenewton Church Fete	Recreation Groung
19	Songs of Praise	St Peters Newchurch

	Saint Thomas a Beckett Shirenewton	Sunday Services	Start 10.00 a.m. Unless stated otherwise
Date	Service	Readers	Sides-persons
4 th May	Third Sunday of Easter	James Leney Cynthia Smith	Claire Lewis Cynthia Smith
11 th May	Fourth Sunday of Easter	Bob Grattan Wendy Baker	Bob Grattan Wendy Baker
18 th May	Fifth Sunday of Easter	Janet Horton Bill Clark	Janet Horton Bill Clark
25 th May	Sixth Sunday of Easter	Gillian Lambert Margaret Lock	Gillian Lambert Margaret Lock
1 st June	Seventh Sunday of Easter	Janet Horton Bill Clark	Janet Horton Bill Clark
8 th June	PENTECOST	Mark Broughton Jane Smith-Haddon	Mark Broughton Jane Smith-Haddon
15 th June	Trinity Sunday	Bob Grattan Bill Clark	Bob Grattan Bill Clark
22 nd June	First Sunday after Trinity	James Leney Diane Marlow	Claire Lewis Diane Marlow
29 th June	Peter and Paul Apostles	Wendy Baker Frances Grey	Wendy Baker Claire Lewis

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Deadline for June 2014 issue is 9:00am 19th May 2014