

Shirenewton Parish Magazine April 2022



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SHIRENEWTON PARISH MAGAZINE EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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Editor: Bill Clark 01291 641783 email: parishmagshirenewton@gmail.com

The cost of the Magazine is £1.50 per issue/10 issues for £12.

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Monthly copies are available at the Church.

Previous editions of the magazine are available online on the Church website at www.shirenewtonchurch.info.

**To order your regular copy, contact Aileen Doggett
01291 641459**

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Editorial policy is to print what you provide, space and technology permitting. The views expressed are those of the contributor.

Preferred Document format is an MS Word document attached to an email. Preferred Advert and Photograph format is JPEG attached to an email

**Deadline for May 2022 issue is
9:00 a.m. Monday 23rd April 2022**

FROM THE VICARAGE

Julian E LI White

Dear People of the Parish,

Spring has arrived – the recent run of sunny days and the changing of the clocks bear witness to this annual land-mark and we ignore, for the moment, the probability of plunging temperatures and the onset of driving rain to follow.

I draw your attention to other pressing matters of the moment – the situation in the Ukraine and the resulting refugee issue.

By now you will be familiar with the tragedy unfolding in that country and the plea to respond in some meaningful way. I am proud to inform you of how churches in this area have responded accordingly with speed and generosity. These have ranged from individual acts of kindness, impressive donations from congregations at fundraising events, such as Glynis's marvellous Coffee Morning (Shirenewton Church is notable in this respect), through to churches of various denominations making property available in which the homeless may be housed. The Christian community, along with other affiliations, have responded magnificently in such a crisis.

The unselfishness of others is evident in a variety of ways. Recently, for example, we have the offer from Peter Morris (Chartered Surveyor – retired) to help with various small jobs needed to be undertaken in and around the church building. We appreciate his offer and gladly accept his generosity regarding light remedial work in and around the church.

Very soon we shall reach that time of year when we hold our Annual General Meeting, otherwise known as the Easter Vestry. Forget the opinions of those who would have it that this is a guaranteed cure for insomnia. Instead, this gathering provides the opportunity to reflect on the course of the past year and to anticipate the forthcoming twelve months. A little bit of history is being made this time. In future, and as part of us becoming part of an extended Ministry Area, this will change into some kind of congregational meeting with a degree of realignment of purpose and authority. Details to follow in due course.

With every good wish and blessing for the Easter season.

Julian White (Rector)



Shirenewton Church and School Fete

18th June 2022

After a 2 year break the Fete is back ! This year we will be combining the Church and School Fetes into a single, bumper family event

Activities, Stalls, Entertainment, Refreshments and yes lots of cake!

Please come and support our wonderful village

Volunteers needed - if you can help in any way then please contact Seirian Orrell for more information;

seirianedmonds@gmail.com





A Right Royal Review!



A village production, featuring SODS & Friends.

EARLSWOOD HALL 13th & 14th May

Tickets: £10 for adults £5 for children.

7:30pm

Box Office: Contact Alison Broughton

01291 641451

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All profits to DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.



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Shirenewton Community Council

Extracts from the minutes of the March meeting

Planning applications considered in March:

DM/2022/00265 Green Acres Usk Road, Mynyddbach

The council noted an application for the conversion of existing garage into new kitchen/dining area with utility & Boot room. New pitched roof to replace GRP flat roof. New sliding sash windows to replace existing to main house.

Recommendation: No Objection with the recommendation that a condition be included that the conversion can only be occupied as part of the main building as a single family use.

DM/2021/02091 Buckwell Farm, Old Road, Pen Y Cae Mawr, Usk

Conversion of barn to dwelling and installation of sewage treatment plant.

Recommendation: No Objection but conditions in respect of the following are requested:

Withdrawal of the GDO so that any future proposals to extend require full planning consent

A full bat and other protected species should be undertaken and its recommendations implemented

Exterior lighting shall not permit light spill to distract bats or disturb the night sky

The footpaths shall be preserved at all times.

DM/2022/00045 Sunrise, Red House Road, Earlswood

Demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with single storey side extension.

Recommendation: Objection due to being unsympathetic to the character of the existing building or to the landscape (as per original objection).

Other items of interest

The Council agreed the following actions for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations:

The lighting of a beacon on 2 June 2022 at approximately 9.35pm

WI serving teas and cakes with SCC funding to an agreed budget of £200

Flags/poles to be sourced by the clerk to signpost celebrations in the village and Councillor Keith Dunn volunteered to hang

Please can you contact either the Clerk or a member of the Community Council if you or anyone you know is a Piper who might

Be available to play on the 2 June at the celebration.

Councillor Butterworth informed the Council about a communication advising the Community Council that the defibrillator on the outside of the Tredegar Arms was no longer active. On receipt of this communication Councillor Butterworth liaised with the letting agent, owner of the building, Chair of the Recreation Hall and Shirenewton Church, on potential church sites to relocate the defibrillator. The Council agreed to donate a grant up to a value of £250 that could be used to fund an electrician to re-locate the defibrillator to the new agreed site. The Clerk agreed to forward a communication from the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust to Councillor Butterworth to share with Shirenewton Church. This communication details how to register the defibrillator on The Circuit, guardian (s) and responsibilities.

Councillor Martin shared a communication from a resident drawing the Council's attention to proposed changes to ambulance service provision in Chepstow and Monmouth and inviting the Council to join a petition and share links on SCC's website. Councillor Dunn and Councillor Brown offered to draft a letter to Welsh Ambulance Services Trust on behalf of the Community Council communicating their strong objections to the proposals.

Councillor Dunn updated the Council on the Shirenewton Primary School - Community Council Logo Competition and his visit to the School to engage with the School Council. He noted that students tabled lots of ideas and requested that the Community Council finalise votes on winning logo designs by Friday 11th March, so that book voucher prizes could be awarded. Councillor Dunn also updated the Council on proposals to take the winner and their design to the Art Department in Chepstow School to finalise the logo artwork.

The Council approved the purchase of a full size, free standing litter bin, for the Green off Old School Hill, Mynyddbach. This will replace the current post mounted bin with no lid.

From the Clerk's Report

SCC received confirmation from MCC that the roof replacement has been completed on the West End bus shelter and the shelter has been added to the schedule of works for painting when the weather improves. See photos on next page.

A new noticeboard has kindly been installed by J Saysell in Shirenewton village.



Extracts from County Councillor Louise Brown's monthly report:

County Councillor Brown advised the following:

20MPH SPEED LIMIT IN SHIRENEWTON AND MYNYDDBACH

The individual Cabinet Member will be making a decision on the traffic order for Shirenewton and Mynyddbach on the 9th of March 2022, which can be found in the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIid=147&MIid=4772>

It is expected for this to be implemented this year.

Second Candidate Sites- RLDP

There has been a second call for sites for the RLDP which was published in February 2022, it updates and replaces the register published after the initial call for candidate sites and supersedes the first call for sites and can be found in the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIid=147&MIid=4772>

The above link can be followed through to see the sites put forward by landowners in the Shirenewton Ward area:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/monmouthshire-rldp-candidate-sites-register/>

There is expected to be a report to the County Council on how MCC proposes to go forward with the RLDP in view of the Welsh Government consultation response on a lower rather than a higher growth strategy across Monmouthshire. The County Council report

will be after there is a new Council member administration following the local elections in May 2022.

There is expected to be a consultation on the candidate sites in late summer/autumn time but the date is currently unknown. It is therefore advisable for local residents who wish to put in a response to do so when the consultation itself opens, so it can be considered as part of the official consultation response. But in the meantime local residents may wish to make their own notes on the different sites by reference to C numbers, whilst not forgetting the overall impact, in preparation for the consultation, which normally lasts for 6 weeks.

Cabinet on the 2nd of March 2022

The Cabinet report considered a number of reports including improvement to Chepstow School and Leisure Centre. The ongoing improvements to Chepstow Leisure Centre was discussed, which when completed will represent a total investment of more than £1.6million.

There are three main phases of the investment for the overall project at the Chepstow site. The first phase included measures as part of the council's aim to reduce its carbon footprint and is already completed. Improvements included LED lighting and shower upgrades, swimming pool plant and boiler replacements and a refurbishment of the pool hall.

The second phase starts soon and is expected to be completed by July. This will see health, fitness and wellbeing improvements including an upgrade of the fitness and studio equipment.

The third and final phase of proposed improvements to the outdoor facilities and pitches see improvements to the outdoor play areas and pitches. In December 2021, MonLife was invited to apply for a grant from the Welsh Government, via Sport Wales, and a separate grant from Football Association of Wales, to develop the outdoor playing facilities and pitches at Chepstow Comprehensive School and Leisure Centre. The overall total project funding and grant funding was £101,997 from Monmouthshire County Council, with an additional £433,058 sought from the funding bodies.

The proposed project of improvements has been developed in consultation with Chepstow Leisure Centre, Chepstow Comprehensive School, Sport Wales, Football Association of Wales, Hockey Wales and Monmouthshire Junior Football League.

The Council Budget was also considered at Cabinet, including that a 2.95% increase in the Band "D" equivalent Council Tax is used as the planning assumption in the budget model and to apply for County purposes in 2022/23, reduced from the previous proposed increase of 3.95% and as a result of the public consultation. The increase is below inflation and was approved at full Council on the 3rd of March and the 1% decrease will assist with the cost of living rises.

The Cabinet reports can be found at the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=144&MIId=5260>

Adults Select Committee on the 2nd of March 2022

The above committee considered reports on domiciliary care (including the hours of unmet need due to the need for more carers) and housing the homeless strategy to try to overcome the over-reliance on Bed and Breakfast accommodation which is not sustainable. There is a particular need for single bed accommodation for young people. Private landlords are welcomed to assist.

The meeting can be watched and the reports can be found at the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=140&MIId=5266>

Children and Young People Select Committee on the 3rd of March 2022

The above committee considered reports on family support services which emphasises the importance of helping families on a prevention basis at the early stages by an early help panel and advice lines. The committee also considered the budget monitoring reports.

The meeting can be watched and the reports found at the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=136&MIId=4706>

County Council on the 3rd of March 2022

The full Council received various reports and approved the Council tax changes as detailed in the information under the Cabinet report. There were 2 motions including the approval of the following one on the Welsh Ambulance Trust: (in bold)

Condemns the plans of the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust to remove the rapid response vehicles from Monmouth and Chepstow ambulance stations as part of its National Roster Review.

Believes that downgrading these stations will put the lives of residents in the Monmouth, Chepstow and Caldicot areas at risk, at a time when response time targets for immediately life-threatening category a calls are already being consistently missed, despite the best efforts of paramedics and frontline NHS workers.

Opposes any move to downgrade ambulance stations in Monmouthshire and calls on WAST and the Welsh Government to scrap these plans.

This was amended slightly to add about calling on the Minister for Health and Social Services as opposed to the Welsh Government and along the lines of adding about the Leader and the Members of Senedd (MSs) to meet with the Chief Executive of the WAST as soon as possible.

It is understood that the earliest meeting time offered by the Chief Executive of WAST is the 31st of March. The full council meeting reports can be found here:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?Cid=143&MIId=4731>

The link for the petition on this subject to help with fighting these proposed national roster changes can be found below:

[https://www.change.org/p/welsh-ambulance-services-trust-and-welsh-government-save-monmouth-and-chepstow-ambulance-stations?](https://www.change.org/p/welsh-ambulance-services-trust-and-welsh-government-save-monmouth-and-chepstow-ambulance-stations?recruit-er=1254873278&utm_campaign=signature_receipt&utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=share_petition)

[recruit-er=1254873278&utm_campaign=signature_receipt&utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=share_petition](https://www.change.org/p/welsh-ambulance-services-trust-and-welsh-government-save-monmouth-and-chepstow-ambulance-stations?recruit-er=1254873278&utm_campaign=signature_receipt&utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=share_petition)

Dates of next meetings: Monday 4th April at 7.00 pm and Monday 16th May at 7.00 pm by public meeting in Shirenewton Recreation Hall.

Find more information in draft copies of the minutes on the Community Council notice boards. Previous, approved minutes of meetings can be found on the Council's website www.shirenewtoncc.org.uk

Contact the Clerk – Natasha Jones, Squirrel's Gate, Devauden, Chepstow NP16 6PE Tel: 01291 650133 Email: shirenewtoncc@gmail.com

Gardening Corner

Fortunately, the weather has been reasonably kind over the last month. With no wood-burning stove yet appearing on the horizon it is just as well. One of our mobile phones reminded us that it was last week that the 'Beast from the East' arrived so guess we must count our blessings. When you are told there is a global shortish of containers, the steel to make the stoves comes from Ukraine, and the iron for the boiler from Russia then there is little we can do but be patient. In the scene of things, our plight is just a mere inconvenience compared to the horrors that unfold daily in Ukraine. We pray that there will be an end to it all as soon as possible.

After what seems like endless weeks of grey and wet weather, things now appear on the up with a prolonged spell of settled, and even warm weather. We replaced the cover on our large tunnel several years ago, but for the first time ever, this one has not lasted any longer than the minimum period stated – just three years. This is the worst of any we have had, with the previous cover lasting 8 years. The day it was put on, I remember as being perfect – unbroken blue skies, no wind and very warm as a result. Maybe too warm as I also recall that the cover was very soft due to the heat and I can only think that it was over-stretched at the time. It was so bad, with the plastic breaking away along the base on the sunny side of the tunnel, that I decided that it had to be changed. Not a job I enjoy as the cover is heavy and very unwieldy to begin with whilst you try and open it out and then pull the whole thing over the tunnels frame of steel hoops. It then has to be left for a couple of hours to warm and soften in the sun before beginning to attach it to the frame. The worst thing that can happen is for the wind to pick up after the initial calm of the early morning. If that happens then all can be lost. The forecast for next week as I write this, is for some lovely sunny days with a light breeze from the East. We are sheltered from an Easterly, so hopefully conditions will be perfect. So, I've bitten the bullet and cut the old cover off in the hope that the weather doesn't change. It will be a pain if it does, but we'll just have to manage without this tunnel until we get another sunny day. Hopefully the peach and nectarine trees in the tunnel will benefit, as they are currently in full blossom. Within about an hour of the cover coming off, the blossom was smothered in bees, so we are hoping for a bumper crop this year. Unlike last year when we lost everything as some hard frosts killed any fruitlets stone dead.

With the weather improving and the days getting longer, things in the garden are really taking off. The small greenhouse which we use for propagating plants is almost at full capacity. The warming benches are full up with trays of seedlings and many are at the point where they need to be potted on into small pots or trays of cells. We started some 8 weeks ago sowing the earliest crops, such as onions, leeks and the first salad crops including tomatoes, peppers and cut and come again lettuces. These have all been re-potted in the last couple of weeks, and in the case of the lettuce, we are already cutting the 'cut and come again' leaves. It is lovely when you get the first of your own crop. We are still cutting calabrese in the tunnel, and have also started picking purple sprouting as well outside. I did experiment by growing some purple sprouting inside the tunnel to see if we could get an early crop, but this was a failure. The plants grew well and started to form heads, but these just ran to seed, so we will have to remember that one for the future! Although we start early with our sowings, there is still plenty of time for those of you who have limited greenhouse and tunnel space, or perhaps have just windowsills. It is amazing what can be achieved with the smallest of spaces, and the sheer pleasure of growing your own, and then eating it when it is just picked, is one of the most satisfying feelings. Food miles measured

in feet and inches rather than hundreds of miles. With the cost of everything set to rise, now, more than ever, is the time to give it a try if you haven't already. As I said, there is plenty of time to get plans made and to get seed into pots and trays.



All of our raised bed area has now been cleared and the first plants are starting to go in the ground. The first peas and broad bean raised in the greenhouse have now been planted out, as have the first sweet peas. All of these are relatively hardy and will withstand a couple of degrees of frost, so fingers crossed the weather doesn't do a reverse. It is too early for anything remotely tender to be planted out, so no need to rush with these yet – there is plenty of time to go. The ground is starting to warm up, so I will be starting to sow the first seeds directly into the ground. The first to go in will be parsnips, as well as some carrot seeds. I need to select the best bed for the latter as we tend to have quite stony ground which is not good for carrots as it makes them fork all over the place. As I have mentioned several times, we now know that the scourge of carrots, root fly, can actually fly higher than three feet off the ground and so are always a challenge. I am going to try and cover them with horticultural fleece this year and will see how things go. If the roots still get damaged by the root fly, I will simply stop growing

them. Some battles you can win, some you can't! I intend to sow the seed sparsely so that there is no need to thin them out as they grow. Pulling excess seedling out crushes the foliage, releasing the scent, which in turn attracts the flies. I will also be sowing some of our flowers for cutting directly into the ground, such as larkspur. As I have said, most of our seeds are sown in the greenhouse, but there are some varieties that do not like being moved, so you have no option but to sow directly into the ground.

In the flower garden the better weather has allowed us to start tackling all of the herbaceous borders. This is just a case of going through them all, the assistant head gardener in front cutting all of the old materials down and putting into heaps, whilst I come along behind removing all of the weeds and pronging over the ground. You can then see where there have been losses during the winter and get an idea of what replacements you need. We always grow a selection of short-lived perennial plants, such as foxgloves and aquilegia, so we always have a stock of these available. Also, if needed, I dig up some of the congested plants during the weeding work, and divide these up, before replanting some in the border, with some of the excess being potted up for use elsewhere when the space becomes available. One job that we completed last month was pruning all of the roses. These really should be finished in February or March, but if you simply haven't had the time, then it is better to prune them late, rather than not prune them at all, so try and finish this job by Easter if at all possible.

On better days, the bees have been out flying, bringing in any early pollen that is around. I did lift the tops of the hives several weeks ago, and placed some fondant icing packs on top to give them a bit of a boost. I didn't take any honey off last year, so there should be plenty of food available to the bees, but because it remained mild for so long, the hives also contained a lot of bees, so I suspect food supplies might have been dwindling. All of the books tell you to lift the corner of a hive to get a feel for how much food supply is left. But I've never been very good at doing that. I'd sooner put more food on than the bees need, rather than not enough. If they don't consume it then so be it. Hopefully the weather will be warm enough this week to be able to open them up 'proper'. It needs to be over 15 degrees otherwise the new brood can get chilled and die – and we don't want that after hopefully surviving the Winter. With longer evenings, there is now time to have a short walk after work. It is a sheer pleasure to see wild daffodils growing and spreading further in our small woodland areas.

Happy gardening until next month, best wishes, *Steve and Felicity Hunt.*





ST WOOLOS SINFONIA

SPRING CONCERT 2022

Beethoven Triple Concerto
Schubert Symphony No 5

Frank Dupree piano/director

Gernot Süßmuth violin

Dagmar Spengler-Süßmuth cello

Sat 23rd April 2022 7:30pm

Newport Cathedral NP20 4ED

Tickets £20 (under 16 free) online

via the website or at the door



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by the

CHEPSTOW MALE VOICE CHOIR

in

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH

on

FRIDAY 20 MAY 2022 at 7:30 p.m.

Tea, coffee and biscuits at half-time

All proceeds in aid of the RNLI

Tickets £10 from Peter Merrick, Chemist of Moor Street

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

A charity registered in England and Wales (259633) and Scotland (SC037736) Charity number 0472479 in Republic of Ireland





Lifeboats

Coffee Morning Invitation

on Saturday 2nd April 2022 at 10:30 a.m. to noon.

at the Chepstow Club, (formerly the Conservative Club)

Come and drink a cup of coffee & eat some biscuits or cake.

£3 entry on the door. RNLI souvenirs, jams & chutneys, raffle, plant stall.

Proceeds in aid of the Lifeboat Service

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rnli.org.uk



SHIRENEWTON TENNIS ASSOCIATION

After 34 years we have decided it was time to retire from running Shirenewton Tennis Association and therefore the running of the club will revert to Shirenewton Recreation Association.

We started in 1988 with a committee of 5 local people which has now reduced through moving away/bereavement to a committee of 2.

When we started in 1988 the court was unusable and in a poor state of repair. Over the years we have re-surfaced/re-fenced/re-lined the court on a number of times when it was needed, and we hope that the Recreation Association will now maintain it to its usual standard in the future years.

It is a valuable facility for the village and I'm sure the Rec Association will look after it, going forward.

Phil Brabon
Treasurer

St Peter's Church Llandeud

QUIZ FOR UKRAINE

FRIDAY 8TH APRIL
at LLANDEVAUD HALL
DOORS OPEN 7.30PM

ALL PROCEEDS to DEC UKRAINE APPEAL

Teams of 4-6, £5/head
Bring your own drink & refreshments!

Book your place with Roly Arthur: randmarthur@gmail.com
or Sue Hurd: hurd_brockweir@yahoo.co.uk

A raffle prize from each team would be appreciated!

FOOD & DRINK? *SPORT?*
HISTORY? *MUSIC?*

Bill Clark is putting a team together for this quiz, so please contact him on parishmagshirenewton@gmail.com if you would like to join the team



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I also carry a range of handmade Soy Wax Candles

Easter Workshop Easter Egg Hat Box Arrangement (Less calories than chocolate!) Earlswood and Newchurch West Memorial Hall Saturday 16th April 10.30am-12.30pm or 1.30pm-3.30pm £30



All floral materials, hat box, equipment, tuition and plenty of light refreshments are provided. (Bunny not included – sorry)
Places will be limited. Book early to avoid disappointment

Rebecca 07889 762 840



Another 12 Ways to be British. Glynis

- 1 Waiting for permission to leave after paying for something with the correct change
- 2 Saying hello to a friend in the supermarket, then creeping around like a burglar to avoid seeing them again
- 3 Watching with quiet sorrow as you receive a different haircut to the one you requested
- 4 Being unable to pay for something with the exact change without saying "I think that's right"
- 5 Overtaking someone on foot and having to keep up the uncomfortably fast pace until safely over the horizon
- 6 Being unable to turn and walk in the opposite direction without first taking out your phone and frowning at it.
- 7 Deeming it necessary to do a little jog over zebra crossings, while throwing in an apologetic mini wave
- 8 Punishing people who don't say thank you by saying "you're welcome" as quietly as possible
- 9 The overwhelming sorrow of finding a cup of tea you forgot about
- 10 Turning down a cup of tea for no reason and instantly knowing you've made a terrible, terrible mistake
- 11 Suddenly remembering your tea and necking it like a massive, lukewarm shot.
- 12 Realising you've got about fifty grand's worth of plastic bags under your kitchen sink.



An Illustrated Talk

By Su Baldwin

My Journey Circumnavigating the World
on an Ocean Racing Sailboat

The Huntsman Shed

6th April 2022 @ 6pm

Tickets not required but
donations to Unicef for
the current crisis in

Ukraine will be welcome



LLANGRANNOG TRIP



Year 6 had a memorable residential trip to the Urdd Centre in Llangrannog and even though Storm Eunice cut their visit short by one day, they still managed to squeeze in most of the planned activities! They enjoyed tobogganing, skiing, horse riding, zip wire, low ropes, high ropes, swimming, climbing wall, quad bikes and go-karts ... to name but a few activities!



MASKED READER



We had fun guessing who the staff member behind the mask was during our Welsh storyline session on World Book Day; the children then had great fun creating their own masked reader for their classmates to guess!

For more information about our school, please visit our website:

www.shirenewton.monmouthshire.sch.uk

EISTEDDFOD



We had a wonderful morning on St David's Day celebrating all our incredibly talented and creative children! It proved to be one of our most closely fought Eisteddfod competitions with only 5 points separating the 1st and 2nd place houses:

Tŷ Wye = 514 Tŷ Usk = 509 Tŷ Severn = 488

There was a wide range of competitions that could be entered including: singing, recitation, painting, model making, dancing, gymnastics tumble, creative Welsh writing, animation, cookery, handwriting, Welsh reading, best Welsh book and a full range of musical instrument competitions.

Congratulations to Gracie for being crowned the bard of our Eisteddfod for her beautiful poem (yn Gymraeg) about living in Wales.

DINO-MANIA DAY



Year 2 and 3 had an exciting hands-on dinosaur workshop last week, studying a selection of fossils, bones and dinosaur teeth, they saw two baby dinosaurs hatch out of eggs and met Ronnie a 4 year old T-Rex! Henry bravely volunteered to let Ronnie take the hat off his head! Thank you to the rangers @Dino4hireuk for this exciting delve and discover day ... a fun introduction to their new topic!

CHEPSTOW AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY LTD

General Secretary Vacancy

The Society is responsible for the organisation of the annual Chepstow Show and is run by a volunteer committee which meets on a monthly basis. The show is a traditional agricultural show and is currently held at Chepstow Racecourse attracting in excess of 5,000 people each year.

Our current Secretary, Isabelle Coates, has advised the committee she intends to stand down from her position. Isabelle has held the position for 6 years and during that time has made a significant contribution to the Show and the Society.

We are looking to appoint a successor, initially to shadow Isabelle in the period before next year's show on Saturday 13th August 2022, and then to assume the role for 2023.

The main responsibilities of the Secretary are;

Acting as secretary at all society meetings, including the monthly meeting of the general committee, bi-annual trustee meetings and the AGM; taking and circulating minutes and dealing with correspondence.

Collating and submitting the report to the Charities Commission.

Organising certain aspects of the annual show including establishing section requirements, liaison with regulatory authorities, suppliers such as those of marquees and toilets and other stakeholders;

Co-ordinate activities on the show site during the week before the show, on show day itself and the following day's clear-up.

Dealing with any issues arising on show day;

Candidates will need good people skills and administrative skills. Experience with agricultural shows or the agriculture sector would be helpful. The workload is variable ranging from a couple of hours per month for most of the year up to a virtually full-time role for several days around the Show itself. An annual honorarium is payable.

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Shirenewton W.I. 70th Birthday Celebrations – March 2022



On March 10th Shirenewton W.I. celebrated its 70th birthday. As this coincided with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year we decided on a 'Royal' theme for the evening. We came dressed in red, white and blue and donning our home made 'recycled' crowns. Our President, Diane Ashton Smith, had made a particularly creative crown from a flan tin, spoons and wine gums! We enjoyed a lovely buffet provided by the Huntsman, followed by a slice of our personalised birthday cake, and the evening concluded with a 'right regal' quiz. It was a memorable occasion, with W.I. members having fun together and also reminiscing about past Shirenewton W.I. celebrations whilst browsing through the old photo albums. Diane presented certificates to five of our members who have served 20 years or more in the W.I. Unfortunately our longest serving member Winnie Jones, who has been involved in the W.I. for 70 years, was unable to be at the birthday party but she did enjoy her piece of cake.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 14th April 7.15 p.m. at Shirenewton Recreation Hall when we will be making Easter bonnets.

If you would like to join us, then please contact Jane Butterworth at janeb247@gmail.com or Diane Ashton Smith (01291 628838)

Jackie Broughton

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SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 1090167

Our February meeting took place on 'zoom', the speaker for the evening was Richard Clammer who gave an excellent talk on 'The Matthew', Cabot's ship that crossed the Atlantic and landed in Newfoundland. A replica of the 'Matthew' had been built in Bristol, Richard had joined it in Canada and sailed down the coast stopping off at each port.

At our March meeting the speaker for the evening will be Jonathon Jenkins who will be giving a talk entitled 'The Lent Lily'. We will be meeting at the Church Room, for the first time this year.

Caerwent Historic Trust and Shirenewton Local History Society will be undertaking a joint venture. We will be undertaking an archaeological dig in the parish in the month of May, with the help of our members, heritage lottery grant, and CADW. I look forward in reporting back on this venture.

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CHURCH SERVICES ON ZOOM

Some services will be available to join via Zoom, if you cannot attend in person. Please contact Gilly Lambert (see contact list) if you would like to be included on the distribution for Zoom service invitations.

Congratulations to our 200 Club winners in March:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Fabian Cornwell | 2. Tony Wilson |
| 3. Mike Pearce | 4. Anna Broughton |

THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE COFFEE MORNING

I would thank everyone who came along to the Coffee Morning. There were so many people here all so keen to help. And so many wonderful cakes. I didn't get a chance to try them all but I made a fair attempt. Thanks to everyone's generosity, we raised £2,352 which I sent off via the D.E.C . Thank you again. Let there be peace soon. Glynis



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Eileen O' Dwyer

The image is a promotional card for Homecare. It features a portrait of Eileen O' Dwyer, a woman with short blonde hair, smiling. To the right of the portrait is the Homecare logo, which consists of a red heart shape with a white house icon inside. Below the logo, the word 'Homecare' is written in a blue, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the card, there is a dark red banner with the text 'Private Carer/Home help' and the phone number '07795 689791' in white. The name 'Eileen O' Dwyer' is also written in white on the banner.

STARGAZING



The seven stars of the Plough lie pretty much overhead. It is one of the “circumpolar” constellations that are always above our horizon. Its classical name is Ursa Major, the Great Bear. The two stars furthest from the handle point to the North Star. The North Star or Polaris is approximately 400 light years away. This is a distance of approximately 2,000,000,000,000,000 miles! The light we now see from this star left the North Star 400 years ago.

American slaves in the southern States of the USA were taught a song in childhood. The first verse runs:

When the Sun comes back
And the first quail calls
Follow the Drinking Gourd
For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom
If you follow the Drinking Gourd

The song gave a time, after the December solstice, when the Sun begins to climb higher into the northern sky and the calls of migratory quail can be heard in the southern United States, and a direction – the Drinking Gourd is the Plough and lies to the North. This gave slaves the vital information which allowed them to escape to the North and to freedom.

On 6th April, in the evening sky, to the West, the Crescent Moon forms a triangle with the red stars Betelgeuse and Aldebaran.

On clear nights, when the Moon is new and seen as a fine crescent, the rest of the Moon can often be seen as a very dark grey against the black sky. Whilst the bright crescent is directly illuminated by the Sun, the rest of the Moon is in its own shadow. The shadow is dark grey rather than black because of “Earthshine”, where light reflected from Earth illuminates the Moon very faintly.

Joke: How does Jupiter hold up his trousers? With an asteroid belt.

NASA has some beautiful images of astronomical objects on the internet at apod.nasa.gov/apod/.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 16 th March 10.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.	Easter Workshop, Earlswood and Newchurch West Memorial Hall
Saturday 2 nd April 10.30 a.m. to noon	RNLI Coffee Morning, Chepstow Club
Wednesday 6 th April 6.00 p.m.	Sue Baldwin's illustrated talk to raise funds for UNICEF, The Huntsman Shed
Friday 8 th April 7.30 p.m.	Quiz for Ukraine, Llandevaud Hall—all proceeds to DEC Ukraine
Thursday 14 th April 7.15 p.m.	WI Meeting, Recreation Hall
Friday 22 nd April 7.00 p.m. to 10 p.m.	Rugby in Rwanda (Mary Watkin), Bring & Share, Church Room
Saturday 23 rd April 7.30 p.m.	St Woolas Sinfonia Spring Concert, Newport Cathedral
Fri 13 th /Sat 14 th May 7.30 p.m.	A Right Royal Review, Earlswood and Newchurch West Memorial Hall
Friday 20 th May 7.30 p.m.	RNLI Concert (Chepstow Male Voice Choir), Shirenewton Church
Saturday 18 th June 1.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.	School/Church fete, Shirenewton Recreation field

Please let the editor know about any events you are aware of
that may be of interest to the readers of this magazine

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

www.shirenewtonchurch.com

At the time of writing the war in Ukraine is in its fourth week and technology is playing a major role. Many will have heard that over 60,000 people booked Airbnb stays in Ukraine just to help the hosts - they had no intention of staying. The mainstream media (MSM) also picked up on the hack which saw various Russian electric vehicle charging stations display pro Ukraine messages. You may have also read about the DOS (denial of service) attacks which have brought down various Russian websites.

However, there are many more examples of less well known technical 'goings on' which are deliberately implemented to hurt the Russians and their Belarusian supporters. This article runs through some of those but is by no means a comprehensive list!

Let's start with one of the more creative approaches. A Polish hacker group called Squad303 has created a website which attempts to bypass Russian government censorship by sending direct messages to individual Russian mobile phones and email addresses. Apparently, they have around 20 million mobile phone numbers and close to 140 million Russian email addresses, presumably as a result their hacking activities. The website allows anyone in the world to send a message to a random subset of these contacts. There is an option to use a pre-drafted message in Russian urging Russians to not believe what they are being told, but, apparently, many send images of Western media coverage and other such messages. It's not known how many of the phone numbers and email addresses are live but there are reports of Russians responding either with expletives or asking further questions.

On a more disturbing note, Reuters reports that Ukraine's defence ministry has begun using Clearview AI's facial recognition technology to uncover Russian assailants, combat misinformation and identify the dead. Apparently, Clearview have over 2 billion images they have scrapped from the Russian equivalent of Facebook (Vkontakte). This database allows Ukraine to identify the dead more easily than trying to match fingerprints or dental records and works even if there is facial damage. It also assists in identifying Russian operatives at checkpoints. On a more positive note, the technology can also be used to reunite refugees separated from their families.

Clearview is itself no stranger to controversy. It claims a database of more than 10 billion photos most of which have been have apparently been scraped from Facebook and Google and not only have Facebook (now Meta) and Google demand that they stop using 'their' data, but various privacy advocate groups such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), are claiming that the acquisition of the database by this methodology is illegal. Clearview is the subject of numerous lawsuits in this respect. It does, however, show how useful and powerful such technology can be.

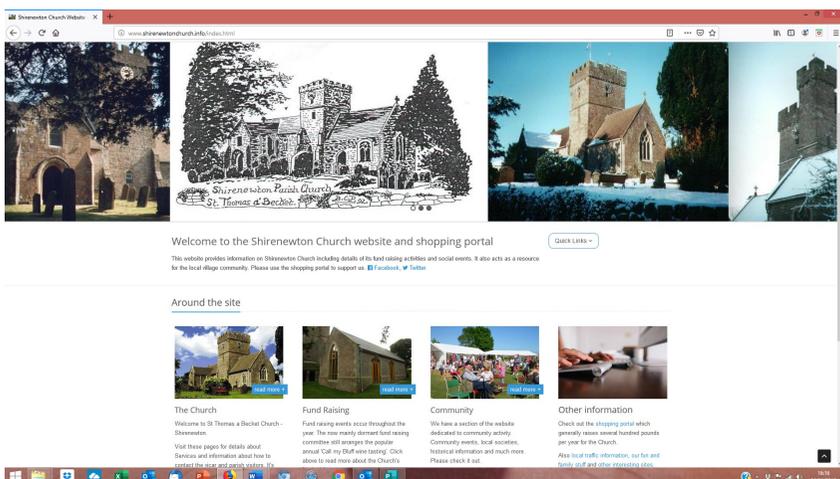
Moving swiftly on. The withdrawal of Western technology has meant that the TLS certificates we associate with the security of HTTPS (i.e. secure

websites which encrypt traffic and are used for financial transactions) are no longer available to the Russians. No problem suggested the Russian government, we'll set-up our own certificate authority to issue TLS certificates to Russians! They overlooked a 'minor' issue. A browser has to trust the certifying authority. This trust is programmed into the browser and if the browser doesn't recognise or trust the certificate authority that issued a cert, a secure connection can't be made. So, in summary, the Russians are limited to Yandex's YaBrowser (when it is updated to recognise the Russian issued TLS certificates). Yandex is the Russian equivalent of Google and YaBrowser had a market share of around 15%.

The bad news for the Russian populace is that it is fairly easy for their government to intercept and decrypt and therefore snoop on connections encrypted using certificates issued by the government because, by definition, they have the decrypt algorithm. So, the unintended consequence of the removal of the western TLS certificates is that the Russian populace who are not fans of Mr Putin are somewhat less safe.

Finally, it is reported that a whole new genre of software has been created, that of 'protestware'. The programmer behind a popular piece of open-source software has deliberately updated their code to wipe data on computers that used the program in Russia and Belarus. The wiped data was replaced by a heart emoji. This piece of code is a networking tool that is regularly downloaded over a million times a week. He has received a massive backlash for doing so being called "a stain on the FOSS [free and open-source software] community". However, he pointed out that the change was documented in accordance with standard procedures. So, in summary, a real good reason to read the documentation!

Safe browsing



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The PT Shed – 2022 Episode 3 – Five minute actions can help us make hay while the sun shines!

Happy Springtime everybody! I hope that you have enjoyed the recent warmer weather and longer days.

As Spring has now officially sprung, how motivated are you all feeling about getting out and about? Do you feel that you can't wait to get out and get active? Or do you feel much the same as you did in the dark, damp mornings and evenings of Winter?

If you don't feel that you've got the "Get up and Go", please don't feel disheartened! This is perfectly normal. The truth is that action often comes before motivation.

We don't as human beings just jump out of bed and feel motivated to take on the day. People who appear motivated have built habits where their actions inspire them.

So, does the sunshine inspire you? The growth of new life, with baby animals and plants springing up everywhere? Maybe just getting a bit healthier and moving about inspires you?

What is it that truly inspires you? I've spoken before about understanding your reasons 'why'. Why you want to achieve a certain goal. Why you want to be healthier.

So, this month, I want you to start thinking about 5-minute actions that you can undertake that will support your goals. What 5-minute action can you do that will put you a step closer to achieving?

Now, before you start thinking about all sorts of actions, there are some rules and boundaries. I want you to only look at one or two actions at a time and you must be confident that you can perform them 80% of the time. Then carry out those actions for a week. Then you can build upon them. I have put some common examples below.

If you don't feel that you drink enough water (I recommend at least 2.5l a day) then solely focus on drinking a little more each day. Identify where you can easily add a glass of water to your day and anchor it in your behaviour. For example, you could have a glass of water upon waking. Or make a point of adding a glass of water to a meal. I particularly like the two anchors of waking up and eating as they are things that we do every day and don't forget them! They are habits/necessities. Let's use them to our advantage.

If you want to increase your daily activity, you can use several metrics. Some people use step count via technology (smart watches, pedometers, phone apps). A simple way is to consciously undertake

a physical activity every day. Go for a walk around the village. Go and do a little bit of gardening. "Ah, but what is the action to help me do this?" I hear you cry. An action can be to lay out the things you need, in a prominent place where you have a visual reminder. This can be your walking boots, outdoor clothes and/or gardening equipment etc. The 5-minute action is getting the equipment ready. The next action could be to just go out for a 5-minute walk to give yourself a break from screens, whether that be phone, work, TV etc. You will soon find that the 5-minute walk becomes 10 minutes, then 15 etc.

You may decide that you want to do some more physical exercise. In which case, the 5-minute action could be to go to the village notice-board and look at the local classes available, or email/call me and ask for advice!

As I have touched on here, the actions are very often the forerunner for motivation. If you didn't have motivation to get out and walk in the winter, it is unlikely to hit you in the face in Spring. We need to take control of our actions and that will lead us to motivation further down the line.

Once you start performing your actions consistently, you will start to establish them as habit and, as mentioned above, things can escalate! I've seen people start with walking, then jogging on downhill sections, to jogging the whole route, and so on until they then ran a marathon. Now, that's not for everybody but it shows how something can grow!

Sometimes, you will try to establish habitual actions and you will find that you don't stick to them. When this happens, consider if you are asking too much of yourself. Are you able to perform the action consistently? Sometimes, the action can be too difficult for where we are at that moment in time. This is why I like to associate the action with non-negotiable events like waking up or eating a meal. You can even do something radical like go for a 5-minute walk around your garden every time you need the loo! You may laugh, but it is something that can work. Whatever you choose, make it simple and achievable and build from there!

As for me, I have some inspiring events coming up. As well as walking/running 1000 miles this year, I am doing the Welsh Three Peaks Challenge in three weeks' time (8th April). So I will be tackling Mount Snowdon, Cader Idris and Pen-y-fan in 24 hours. I've been out walking, running and focusing on my strength work to support this. I'm really excited to have the opportunity to complete this for 2 Wish, the charity that I am supporting this year. 2 Wish provide support to families that have suffered the bereavement of a child or young person. Should anybody wish to sponsor me and contribute to a great cause, the links can be found via my social media pages. I have separate Just Giving pages

For the 1000 miles (jointly with my wife) and for the Welsh 3 Peaks. If you would like the direct link, please contact me via my details below.

To summarise:

Action comes before motivation

Perform a 5-minute action to lead to a bigger event

Make the action something that you are confident you can consistently do (80%)

Simplicity and achievability is key!

Anchor the action to a non-negotiable event (e.g. eating a meal)

If you cannot perform the action, consider if it is too hard and simplify it.

As always, I would love to hear if this article has helped you to establish some 5-minute actions. Please do not hesitate to stop me and talk to me if you see me around. I love talking all things health-related! I'll usually be in my Optimal Exercise gear and will often be accompanied by Winston, the resident Fitness Frenchie.

If anybody would like help with anything that I've discussed in this article, or if you have any specific topics that you would like me to cover in future articles, please don't hesitate to email me at alex@optimalexercise.co.uk or contact me on 07877695510. If you want to see more regular content from me, please follow my Facebook page (Optimal Exercise) or my Instagram (@alexhopkinspt)

That's all for this month! Enjoy the better weather and longer days, use them to your advantage to make some progress towards a healthier you!

Until next time, look after yourselves

Alex – Optimal Exercise



Are you putting your online shopping to good use?

The **Lions Club of Chepstow and Caldicot** are raising funds for the local community even during these lockdowns. With us all being confined to home for work and play, most of us have had to utilise online shopping, and this is looking set to continue as the new normal.

The Lions Club of Chepstow and Caldicot serve local communities including our own, and like everyone else have had to modernise through the use of technology. Some of their fundraising used to take place in supermarket doorways, but now a number of online mechanisms support their fundraising efforts.

One such fundraising tool is **Amazon Smile**. Every time you shop online at **smile.amazon.co.uk** Amazon will donate a percentage of the purchase to The Lions Club of Chepstow and Caldicot.

To find out more about this and other ways to support The Lions Club of Chepstow and Caldicot including **Amazon Smile**, **Easyfundraising** and **Just Giving**, please go to: www.chepstowcaldicotlions.org.uk/page-8.php



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LOCAL CONTACTS

*If you know of any changes or omissions please contact the Editor Bill Clark
Telephone 01291 641783 or email parishmagshirenewton@gmail.com*

Church of St Thomas à Becket, Shirenewton

Ministry Area Leader (designate)	Revd Philip Averay revphilipaveray@gmail.com	01291 620980
Rector	Revd Julian White Jel.white@btinternet.com	01291 622317
Parish Priest	Revd Nansi Davies CBE	01633 400 519
Lay Eucharistic Minister	Gilly Lambert	07821 725 690
Church Wardens – Rector’s	Sally Saysell	01291 641 369
– People’s	Andrew Baker	01291 641 925
PCC Secretary	Vacancy	
PCC Treasurer	Graham Lambert	01291 641 175
PCC Members	Janet Horton	01291 641 783
	James Leney	01291 641 271
	Frances Gray	01291 622 465
	Paul Morcombe	01291 641 671
	John Montague	jmontyvet@hotmail.co.uk
	Wendy Montague	wendymontague@hotmail.co.uk
Gift Aid Secretary	Vacant	01291 641 411
Organists	Karen Millar	01291 650 521
	James Leney	01291 641 271
Sunday Club	Lynn Morcombe	01291 641 671
Tower Captain	Mike Penney	01291 650 653
Saysell Centre Booking	Glynis MacDonald	01291 641 818
Safeguarding Officer	Andrew Baker	01291 641 925
Church Flowers	Maureen Moody	01291 641 524
Parish Magazine Editor	Bill Clark	01291 641 783
200 Club	Aileen Doggett	01291 641 459

Church of St Tewdrics’s Mathern

Secretary	Jen Marendaz	01291 329 422
Church Warden	Elsbeth Morlan	01291 627 538
	Peter Pope	01291 624 453

Ministry Area Transition Team

(Mathern Group)	Graham Lambert	01291 641 175
	James Leney	01291 641 271
	Ros Downs	

MP/Monmouth CC & Community Council Representatives

Community Council Clerk	Natasha Jones	01291 650133	shirenewtoncc@gmail.com
Shirenewton Ward:	Hannah Adams		hannah.a@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
Chair	Philip Butterworth	01291 641704	philip.b@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
	Keith M Dunn OBE	01291 641152	keith.d@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
	Vacancy		
Mynyddbach Ward	Elizabeth Wixcey	01291641216	elizabeth.w@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
	Louise Brown	07598979719	louisebrown@monmouthshire.gov.uk
	Vacancy		
Earlswood Ward	Jayne McKenna	01291 691774	jayne.m@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
	Andy Williamson	01291641451	andy.w@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
Newchurch West	Ian Martin	01291 650014	ian.m@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
MCC for Shirenewton	Louise Brown	07598 97971	louisebrown@monmouthshire.gov.uk
Member of Parliament	David Davies	020 7219 8360	daviesd@parliament.uk

Police Neighbourhood Watch Contacts

Neighbourhood Police Officer Matt Scree matthew.screen@gwent.pnn.police.uk
Neighbourhood CSO Andrew Jones Andrew.jones@gwent.pnn.police.uk

Other Local Organisations

Beavers Julie Hitchcock 01291 650548
Church Fete
Earlswood Hope Mr Raymond Jeremiah 01291 641726
Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall
Glynis MacDonald 01291 641818
glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com
Earlswood Valley Methodist Chapel
Avril Smith 01291 627677
Gaerllwyd Baptist Mrs E Remnant Brooklands, Usk Road NP16 6SA
Ranger Guides Helen Cann 01291 6628534 cannhelen@gmail.com
Recreation Association Beverly Lyndsay 07798 780971 beverlylyndsay@btinternet.com
Recreation Hall booking Beryl Saysell 01291 641637 saysellberyl@gmail.com
St Peters Church Newchurch
Enid Heritage 01291 622708
enidheritage@gmail.com

Shirenewton Local History Society

Dorothy Brabon 01291 641376 brabonn1@hotmail.com

Gwent Wildlife Trust Shirenewton and Mynyddbach Meadows (previously SAMFAL)

01600 740600

Caerwent Group Mothers Union

Treasurer Rosemary Carey 01291 425010 crcandkili@tiscali.co.uk
Bridget Evans 01291 408125 bridget.caldicot@gmail.com

Shirenewton Operatic and Dramatic Society (SODS)

Glynis MacDonald 01291 641818
glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com

Shirenewton Play Group Shirenewton Primary School

Mrs Jill Mitchell, Associate Head Teacher 01291 641774
email jillianmitchell@monmouthshire.gov.uk
Jayne Edwards 01291 641774
jayneedwards@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Shirenewton Toddler Group

Jude Langdon 07981 368213
Paula Rimmer rimmerpaula@mac.com

Shirenewton Tennis Association

Vacant

Fairtrade/Traidcraft

Marion McAdam 01291 641316

Womens Institute (WI)

Diane Ashton Smith (President) 01291 628838
Jane Butterworth (Secretary) 01291 641704.



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