

**Shirenewton  
Parish  
Magazine  
May 2022**



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## **SHIRENEWTON PARISH MAGAZINE EDITORIAL INFORMATION**

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

Monthly copies are available at the Church.

Previous editions of the magazine are available online on the Church website at [www.shirenewtonchurch.info](http://www.shirenewtonchurch.info).

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

### **Advertising Rates for Commercial organisations**

Full designated page for 12 months £150

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**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 June 2022 issue is  
9:00 a.m. Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022**

## **FROM THE VICARAGE**

Julian E LI White

Dear People of the Parish,

In this age of 'air-brushed' presentation and 'fake-news' it is often difficult to establish the back story of a particular institution or establishment. This is often true of the local church where out of date information can be found displayed on the notice board alongside details of the Incumbent who moved on (sometimes as a result of mortality) years ago.

The Church in Shirenewton, to its credit, largely avoids this difficulty. You have to peel a layer or two back to gain an insight into how it operated in the past in its attempt to address local needs and issues. Here the PCC Minutes and the variety of service registers can flesh out the wider picture. The ubiquitous list of past Vicars, often hung in the porch (names, not individuals I hasten to add) is of passing interest. They will, on occasion, record who was kicked out for promoting the type of religious practice that was considered out of order by the ecclesiastical authorities of the time.

A little piece of local history was created in this respect recently by the low-key visit of our Bishop. Usually, we welcome our distinguished visitor with pomp and ceremony and hope that they will not notice our foibles. This time it was a bit different. For a start, this was the first time a female prelate was invited into our church under her jurisdiction. Secondly, she only had me for company which is a sad situation indeed. Actually, the circumstances and itinerary of her visit were solely of her own choosing. The Bishop had requested a whistle-stop tour of the four churches in our group and it was telling that she wished to acquaint herself with their historicity and fabric without the distraction of other ecclesiastical duties. I felt it very much to her credit that she left the urban commitments of Newport to experience the contrast of rural life. I thank the Bishop for her sensitivity in this respect.

It was uplifting, this year, to celebrate Easter in a more joyous spirit than that evident in the more recent past as a result of the Covid pandemic. It was pertinent, however, to be reminded that God is always present in both comfortable and challenging times. With every blessing to you as we continue on our pilgrimage path through this life.

Julian White (Rector)

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## **Shirenewton Community Council**

### **Extracts from the minutes of the April meeting**

#### **Annual grants to local organisations**

Application forms are now available from the Clerk for local organisations to apply for grants from the Community Council's 2021/22 budget. **Please note the closing date of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022.**

#### **Proposal for Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

The Council agreed to the purchasing of 25 x Platinum Jubilee Lamp Post signs and 20m (4 x 5m lengths) of Platinum Jubilee 2022 bunting.

Councillor Dunn confirmed he would co-ordinate the hanging of decorations with a team of other Councillors meeting at 10am on Monday 30 May outside the Tredegar Arms in Shirenewton.

Councillor Butterworth confirmed that 6-7 members of the WI will attend on 2 June to serve tea and cakes. The clerk agreed to draft an Event on "Eventbrite" and to advertise in the Parish Magazine, inviting people to register their interest in the event, to help with estimating numbers for catering. Councillor McKenna agreed to advertise on Facebook, also inviting people to go to Eventbrite to register interest.

The council noted that in the absence of Councillor Adams, the confirmation on beacon availability and lighting registration would need to be re-visited.

#### **Summer Planting**

The Council approved a red, white, blue and purple planting colour scheme, in-keeping with Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

Bedding plants will be sourced in April and planted in May.

The Community Council would welcome any volunteers who would be able to help with planting. Please contact the clerk if you are interested in getting involved.

#### **Update on Hard Path Project**

Councillor Williamson confirmed to the Council receipt of the formal approval of SCC's application for funding to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for £74,239.00 (seventy four thousand two hundred and thirty nine pounds). SCC have a period of 10 days to finalise a few information requests and then 50% of the funding can be requested and three months to get the project underway. No further funds can be applied for and any unused funds must be returned. The clerk was requested to contact Ground Rich to clarify if they need to revise the quotation received for hard path works in July 2021, in addition to chasing up additional quotes from BW

Rees and South Wales Sports Grounds. The raised Boardwalk specification was confirmed by Councillor Williamson. The Clerk was also requested by the Council to clarify status of the Diversion Order with MCC's Footpath Officer with regards to the re-location of steps, before a public meeting can be held.

### **Shirenewton Community Council Logo Design Competition and Winners**

Councillor Dunn updated the Council on taking the Shirenewton Primary School winner of the SCC Logo Design Competition, to Chepstow School on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to get the artwork for their winning entry digitised and a jpeg produced. Councillor Dunn advised the Council that he was exploring different avenues to use the new logo locally, including badges, stickers etc. and invited ideas from fellow Councillors, he also advised that he would draft a press release.

### **Update on Defibrillators**

The Council noted that the Shirenewton Recreation Association are awaiting delivery of a defibrillator which they will manage and that will be located at the Shirenewton Recreation Hall. An installation date is tbc.

Councillor Butterworth updated the Council with regards to the potential relocation of the defibrillator at the Tredegar Arms to a Church location and noted that the warden Andrew Baker is managing this. The potential relocation is currently with the Diocese and awaiting a response. The Council noted that the defibrillator currently located at the TA building is currently offline and is being reported as online and available on the NHS network. The clerk agreed to contact the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust, to ask for this incorrect status to be corrected.

### **Update on 20mph Traffic Regulation Order**

The Council noted the MCC communication re: the end April forecast implementation of the 20mph speed restrictions, due to the shortage of road signs. The Council requested that the clerk respond to Mark Hand at MCC expressing their disappointment that adequate provision of road signs had not been made previously and requesting confirmation that the speed restrictions were approved by the respective Cabinet Member on the 9<sup>th</sup> March. The clerk was also asked by the Council to query why there is no map for Shirenewton when you click on the link that has been provided and stating that the Council need assurances that this will be happening and when.

## **County Councillor Report**

County Councillor Louise Brown advised that there is no County Councillor report this month due to the pre-election period (purdah) and a quiet County Council period prior to the May elections.

## **From the Clerk's Report**

Clock Service update – undertaken Thursday 24th March 2022 and invoice included on March's Expenditure and Invoices report for Council approval.

New swing set for play area – work commenced 28th March 2022 and as you can see from the below photos this work has now been completed.



**Dates of next meetings - Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 (including Annual Meeting) and Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022 both 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](http://www.shirenewtoncc.org.uk)**

**Contact the Clerk to the Community Council - Mrs Natasha Jones**

**Tel: 01291 650133**

**E-mail: [Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com](mailto:Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com)**

## **COSTS OF THE MAGAZINE**

Over the last few years, we have endeavoured to keep a lid on subscription and advertising rates for the magazine. However, in the current higher inflationary environment, printing costs have increased by about 15% since last year and some printing stocks have increased three-fold. As a result of this we will need to increase the subscription rate next year, probably to £15 (or more, depending on economic conditions). Advertising costs need to increase immediately, so as advertisers renew their arrangements their fees will increase to £100 a page (£50 a half page, £25 a quarter page). Free advertising will continue for charities and local organisations, but they may have to settle for black and white advertisements which will reduce costs of printing. To date we have been fortunate in being able to print whatever we receive, but it may be necessary in future to limit the page count which will mean that we would ask contributors to limit their articles to a set number of pages. We thank you for your understanding and support in these challenging times.



**Shirenewton Church and School Fete**  
**18<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:seirianedmonds@gmail.com)**

## ***Gardening Corner***

I'm not a gambling man, but I'm not risk averse if there is a need to take a chance. Unfortunately, with the weather these days there is more of a risk in things going wrong, due to the uncertainty of what nature might deliver and when. With a new tunnel cover on order (but not yet delivered), and the weather set fair, but a perfect day forecast for the following Thursday there was a decision to be made. Shall I cut the old tunnel cover off and get everything ready for the new cover to be delivered or sit and wait. I contacted the suppliers of the cover and they thought it would be delivered on either the Monday or Tuesday. Perfect timing, so long as it turned up on time. The deciding factor was the nectarine tree inside the tunnel which was now in full blossom, but with few bees finding their way inside to pollinate the flowers I thought it would be the perfect time to remove the cover. So off it came on the Saturday morning, and by the end of the day everything had been tidied up ready for the arrival of the new cover – hopefully. Sunday dawned nice and sunny but quite a breeze was blowing, the bees soon found the blossom and all was looking well. Monday dawned and by late morning a cover had arrived and the very nice driver helped me to carry the bundle down the garden. At 75 kilos it wasn't the easiest delivery to carry on one's own. At some 3.5 metres long, balancing the weight on just one shoulder was never going to be easy! Tuesday and Wednesday were both sunny, but the wind would have been way too strong, although the bees were still loving the blossom – fingers crossed that all was going to be well. At 25 metres long and 11.1 metres wide, just a slight breeze is enough to see the cover take on a life all of its own. The forecast for Thursday remained as sunny and calm, all we could do was keep the fingers crossed. The day dawned just as forecast, by 7.00 am, the cover had been unrolled and pulled up over the frame of the tunnel. Time for coffee and breakfast. By 9.30 the heat under the cover was starting to build up nicely and it was time to start fixing the cover to the frame. The cover needs to be warm to allow it to stretch so it can be tight on the frame. This prevents large puddles of rain forming, or worse still, snow. Extra weight like this can soon ruin the cover itself as any folds will gradually stretch further under the weight and will keep on stretching until it tears.

By dinner time, all the hard work had been completed, with just the last bits around the doors to finish off. The cover was on tight, but not too tight, as this can be just as bad as a slack cover in the failure stakes. The following day dawned sunny,

but the breeze was back again – the sun Gods really had worked their magic. Unfortunately, the sting in the tail was that the following week we had three hard frosts, with the last being the worst. This was surely going to impact the blossom, and sure enough, most of the bees' efforts have been destroyed as the vast majority of the blossom has now dropped off on the ground. So not much of a crop again this year. A decision is going to have to be made as the tree gets badly affected by red spider mite every year, despite all of our best efforts to try to prevent this happening. I'm going to try a predatory wasp this year, but if this doesn't work then maybe it is time for the tree to go, as we haven't had a decent crop for many years thanks to late frosts. It can impact many other crops that we grow in the tunnel as well. It will be a shame if we do have to get rid of it. I think the sun Gods were really looking down on us this week as out of the blue, our new wood burning central heating cooker was also delivered from Germany, so things were looking up. One thing you can say about the Germans is that they don't often change things if there is no need to. This is the third stove – exactly the same model – that we have had in the 35 years or so we have lived here. The design has been tickled a little to keep it looking 'modern' but the hard-working bit, the boiler, has remained exactly the same. With the water connectors in exactly the same place it was a case of reversing the cooker into the fireplace, fitting the in and out pipes and the chimney and all action again. At long last, hot water on tap, and heat in the radiators!

Outside, things have been flat out for several weeks now. Some of the work is now proving a challenge, as, with little rain, the ground is starting to get quite hard to dig, and the removal of weeds is getting more of a problem. I have started some of the early planting outside in the vegetable areas, so broad bean plants and mangetout peas have gone out. I saved our own seed last year to help with the costs (seed is getting very expensive now) and so far, the results are proving to be excellent, which is more than can be said for some of the seed purchased from reputable dealers. I've sown two lots of celery and one of onions, with not a single seedling showing its head. I've also sown the parsnips and some flower seeds direct in their beds, but the results thus far are not looking good. This will be the final year for parsnips. They can be fussy at the best of times, but seed is not cheap, so it will be a case of buying the finished article from the shop next year. Carrots will be the same as well and when British carrots can be bought for 25 pence per Kilo you get to the point where it really isn't worth the effort. This Winter we have had some funny results with vegetables, and as a result we had late Winter cauliflowers early in November, but some of them did grow as they were meant and were harvested recently. The last had

grown so big, that it gave us five meals out of the same head! Calabrese was planted last Autumn as well and meant to mature in May, but we have been eating heads and then side shoots since February. We even had our own fresh salad leaves the first week in April. We are still eating our own shallots and onions, and even our stored apples lasted until February – all due no doubt to the milder Winter weather. Greenhouses and tunnels are now bulging with young flower and vegetable plants. The tomatoes and peppers were sown at the beginning of February. They have been potted on twice so far and are now in 5 litre pots – and are really starting to get growing now. I planted our potatoes in the 5 litre pots about 3 weeks ago and these have also responded well. They really need to be planted outside now, but I just need to check what the frost risk is over the next week or so, before I do. It is now time for the least hardy seeds to be sown. This includes cucumbers, courgettes, and marrows as well as most of the root crops such as carrots and beetroot. We grow a lot of French and runner beans and I have sown some indoors already. These will be grown on in the large tunnel and will hopefully give us an early crop before they get attacked by the red spider mite. For those going outdoors to grow on, I usually leave sowing these until 1<sup>st</sup> May as it takes them about four weeks to get to the size just right to go outside to grow. Hopefully the last frosts will have left us by then. Even a sniff of a cold night is enough to finish them off! We will still carry-on sowing some of the hardier varieties in order to get a succession of different crops through the year, so there will be more peas and broad beans as well as calabrese, cauliflowers and cabbages up to the start of June. I don't bother with these after that as they are more prone to diseases and pests if you start them off later.

Over the next few weeks, we will sow all of the annual flowers for cutting and as with the vegetables, we will continue to sow some of the hardier varieties, such as scabious and antirrhinums a couple of more times. What we do need is some gentle and warm rain, but there appears to be nothing much due in the coming few weeks. I promise not to do the rain dance just yet, but it's not looking good!

Happy gardening until next month, best wishes,

*Steve and Felicity Hunt.*

## FAIRTRADE NEWS

For those of you familiar with my Parish Magazine rants, you will know that I often manage to pitch the benefits of Fairtrade in the context of current events.



So – Rwanda. . .

It is a fact that immigration is a topic that provokes impassioned argument. The UK has seen itself as a safe haven for many over the years – to mention a few : The Kindertransport (although I believe we were a bit less keen on accepting adults), Uganda Asians (fleeing the repression of Idi Amin – I believe Priti Patel’s parents were beneficiaries), citizens of Hong Kong and now of course Ukrainians. There are many other examples. Clearly, as is often said ‘We cannot accept everyone’, we are a densely populated country and the ghastly illegal trafficking of desperate people across the Channel is simply a disaster.

Recently I have been stressing the environmental credentials of Fairtrade. Sustainability is a key criterion for the award of the FT mark. But it is worth, I think, making the general point that FT enables poorer producers to achieve a better standard of living which encourages them to stay on the land and reduces the pull of the cities, even with the worsening conditions occasioned by climate change, which is addressed by FT initiatives. Poor living standards and unemployment encourage people to seek a better life elsewhere where there is a hope that their families might enjoy a more positive future. In addition overcrowded cities in less developed countries with poorer governance can provoke unrest and sometimes violence. The line between economic migrant and asylum seeker is sometimes not at all clear.

Instability is a key cause of the movement of people, and FT is a wonderfully stabilising influence in many challenging areas of the world.

To mention just one FT product in the Traidcraft catalogue— rubber. Sri Lanka is currently in turmoil. Rising food and fuel prices, exacerbated by poor governance and latterly the war in Ukraine is resulting in violent clashes on the streets. Since 2007 Traidcraft has worked with Sri Lanka rubber tappers to sell rubber gloves for washing up and tough, puncture resistant gardening gloves. This means that 1,800 small scale farmers have a reliable, reasonable and secure income. They have invested their extra income and the FT premium in local education and medical support. FT has also

provided capital to the farmer associations helping them establish savings and loan funds.

As ever I urge you all to consider the provenance of your purchases. We, consumers have the ultimate power to change the world for the better.

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Do contact me for info or a catalogue. Or see Ethical Superstore. Btw Oxfam are now selling some FT items again!

Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316@gmail.com



### SAKURA CHERRY TREE



Before the Easter holiday, the whole school came together in celebration of a new era of UK-Japan friendship and cooperation with the official planting ceremony of our cherry tree gifted from Japan. The Sakura Cherry Tree Project will see the planting of over 7,000 trees across the UK's parks, gardens and schools – the trees will be a lasting symbol of the friendship between the UK and Japan. Our youngest and oldest pupils, Theon and Sophie, helped our visitors plant the tree.



Each class enjoyed spending the week focusing on a different aspect of Japanese culture and were able to share some of their learning during the ceremony, including:- welcome posters in Japanese writing, Japanese and Welsh flags, cherry blossom & Haiku poems, cherry blossom art work, traditional Japanese and Welsh dances (Bon Odori and Cylch y Cymru) and a Japanese Sakura folk song.

Members of our Pupil Leadership Team (PLT) led the ceremony and extended a very warm welcome to our special visitors: Mr David Davies MP, Mr Peter Fox M.S, Mr & Mrs Keith Dunn OBE, Mr Matt Simms (Headteacher of Chepstow School), Mr Phillip Butterworth (Chair of Shirenewton Community Council) and our Governors – Mr Martin Boddy, Mrs Lisa Williams & Mrs Ceri O'Connell-Cohen. Thank you to Keith Dunn for arranging for us to be one of only 6 schools in Monmouthshire to receive a tree; in addition to being our Governor is also the Honorary Consul for Japan in Wales.



We had an extremely enjoyable and entertaining afternoon, blessed with glorious sunshine. This is the first time in two years we have been able to come together as a whole school and for our youngest learners it's the first time they've ever performed to a "live" audience!

For more information about our school, please visit our website:
   
[www.shirenewton.monmouthshire.sch.uk](http://www.shirenewton.monmouthshire.sch.uk)

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## **THE BELLS, THE BELLS**

Normal service has now resumed. We have re-established our normal Friday evening practice (7.30–9.00pm) and Sunday service ringing (9.15-9.50am). We are extending our repertoire of 5 bell methods (Doubles) having now largely mastered Reverse Canterbury Pleasure Place we will soon move on the St Simons and St Martins. Hopefully by Christmas St Nicholas will be under our belt.

On April 4<sup>th</sup> at 2.00 pm we rang the bells for year 1 children from Shirenewton School in advance of a pre-Easter event held in the church. The children were to be brought in minibuses but only the first tranche arrived so we speculated whether a modern day Pied Piper had abducted them. Lack of further published news has probably dismissed this speculation.

Traditionally during Holy Week the bells remain silent after Palm Sunday until Easter Sunday. This means a normal Friday practice cannot occur. We use the opportunity to spring clean both the ringing room and the actual belfry, as well as sweeping all the way down the spiral staircase. Clearing out the belfry gives the opportunity to inspect the bells at close quarters, grease the pulley block bearings and generally seek any odd nuts and bolts that may have come loose or detached. The wooden bell wheels are constructed in two halves and are bolted either side of the bell's headstock to complete the circle. The side rims of the wheels need to be in perfect alignment at the join otherwise there is a danger of the rope slipping off the wheel. When the wheel halves are manufactured a slit is machined at the join and a wooden fillet inserted. Over the years some of these fillets had worked loose and disappeared. Although not a ringer Will Smith-Haddon came to the rescue and manufactured a complete set for the 6 wheels (4 fillets per wheel making 24 in all). Several of these were fitted where the original had gone and the remainder stored for future replacements.

Since the beginning of Covid restrictions over 2 years ago through moving away we have lost 3 of our ringers so are looking to recruit. We would particularly welcome family members although children must be at least 10 years old with an accompanying adult. Ringing is a team effort combining a learnt physical skill (to ring the bell) together with an intellectual component (ringing permutations in ever increasing complex patterns). It also is highly social. So if interested just come along one Friday evening to see if this would be of interest.

M.D.Penney.

May 2022

## **The PT Shed – 2022 Episode 4 – Setbacks, Opportunities & Comebacks**

Hello everybody! I hope that you have all had a wonderful Easter and had the opportunity to take some down time over the holiday period.

I was fortunate enough to be away for the second week of the school Easter holidays and we were really lucky with the weather. It was gloriously warm and sunny – plus a great opportunity to reflect on the year to date.

As often happens, my break got me thinking. It takes me a few days, as my mind and body relaxes, for my brain to start reflecting. This is what gave me the content for this episode and I wanted to share it with you, in case you find it useful.

For context, I break down my life into three key areas – Personal, Professional & Physical. It can be very difficult and overwhelming to grow in all three areas at the same time. However, the key is to maintain one or two areas while progressing one or two. Finding a space where you can ensure that an area isn't regressing is the happy place!

Now, being away on a break with the family clearly ticks the boxes in the Personal space. There is no more valuable time than that. My concern was regression due to setbacks in my Physical and Professional space.

I was thinking about how, prior to my holiday, I had got into a really good training routine and I was making good physical progress. I felt that would be disrupted by being away.

I had also been thinking about the disruption to my clients and how my absence could be a setback to their progress. After all, if my clients don't progress, that doesn't reflect well on me as a coach. Therefore, my professional progression is impacted.

I was also thinking about how my Welsh 3 Peaks challenge, which I spoke about in the previous episode, had been postponed due to adverse weather conditions. Yet another setback, where I had mentally prepared only to be thwarted less than 48 hours before the event. I saw this as a setback to both Physical and Professional progress, as it was a significant milestone for both aspects.

I was thinking about these setbacks and all the work that had gone into them. I was thinking about the efforts made, which should induce progress, that could result in regression in important areas of my life.

What you will notice in the above paragraphs is the use of the phrase “thinking”. You will also notice that the way I have portrayed these thought processes are quite negative. This is the key to this month’s article. Everything that I have spoken about is a potential perception of the situation.

Let’s flip everything on its head and take the negative perceptions out. What is the positive side of each situation? Where do opportunities present themselves?

Taking a break from training for a week. Hard-earned progress does not disappear in the course of a week. Taking a break can allow the body and mind to rest and recuperate. This allows us the opportunity to come back after a short break and really strive to push on towards our goals, refreshed and rejuvenated.

My absence stalling client progress and reflecting poorly on me as a coach. My absence allows my clients the opportunity to start to find their feet when training alone. It can take the safety catch off for them and allow them to explore their own feelings when training without me in their corner. This experience increases their education, knowledge and confidence. This can only benefit me professionally.

Postponement of the Welsh 3 Peaks. This allows an opportunity to be even more ready for the challenge. It also allows the opportunity to complete the challenge in slightly less inclement weather conditions! (and raise more money!)

As you can see, there are two sides to every story I have told today. As I have reflected, none of the efforts that I have invested to date have gone to waste. Every perceived setback actually presents an opportunity that can be more beneficial to progress than if the setback never occurred.

I’d like for you to think about this and your own individual situations. What have you experienced this year that has felt like a setback to you? What are the benefits of that setback occurring? I promise that, if you look hard enough, they are there. When you can see the benefit, you can then decide on how you come back from the perceived setback.

That wraps up my main message for this episode. It was a bit focused on my experiences recently but I hope that you can draw some benefit from it for yourself. Your challenge from this episode is to identify your own perceived setbacks, find the opportunity presented and then decide on your comeback.

The Welsh Three Peaks Challenge is now due to take place in a few weeks' time (21-22 May). As previously mentioned, I will be tackling Wales's three highest peaks (Mt Snowdon, Cader Idris and Pen-y-fan) in 24 hours. I'm completing 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, you can do so via Just Giving. If you go to [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com) and search for Alex Hopkins Welsh 3 Peaks, you should find my page. If you would like the direct link, please contact me via my details below.

To summarise:

- There always 2 ways to perceive a situation – positive and negative
- Setbacks are usually opportunities in disguise
- You get to choose your own comeback

As always, I would love to hear if this article has helped you. 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](mailto: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! Hopefully the nice weather will persist for a while and we can all enjoy the wonderful outdoors around us!

Until next time, look after yourselves

Alex – Optimal Exercise

## SHIRENEWTON W.I. Easter Bonnets



We had a relaxed, enjoyable meeting in April as we joined together to make our Easter bonnets. There were some very original creations which we no doubt donned over Easter weekend. We were a smaller group than usual, as sadly some of our members were unable to attend due to Covid and in addition it was Maundy Thursday so others had already begun their Easter break. Our next meeting will be our A. G.M. on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 7.15pm at Shirenewton Recreation Hall, followed by Leslie Ashton-Smith talking to us about A Woman Pioneer. The theme of the talk will be Women in Science. If you would like to join us, then please contact Jane Butterworth at [janeb247@gmail.com](mailto:janeb247@gmail.com) or Diane Ashton Smith (01291 628838). Jackie Broughton



# **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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## And a final 12 ...13 ways to be British

- 1 "You'll have to excuse the mess" Translation: I've spent seven hours tidying in preparation for your visit.
- 2 Indicating that you want the last roast potato by trying to force everyone else to take it.
- 3 "I'm off to bed" - Translation: "I'm off to stare at my phone in another part of the house"
- 4 Mishearing somebody's name on the second time of asking, meaning you must now avoid them forever.
- 5 Leaving it too late to correct someone, meaning you must live with your new name forever.
- 6 Running out of ways to say thanks when a succession of doors are held for you, having already deployed 'cheers', 'ta' and 'nice one'
- 7 Changing from 'kind regards' to just 'regards', to indicate that you're rapidly reaching the end of your tether.
- 8 Staring at your phone in silent horror until the unknown number stops ringing
- 9 Hearing a recording of your own voice and deciding it's perhaps best never to speak again.
- 10 The relief when someone doesn't answer their phone within three rings and you can hang up.
- 11 Filming an entire fireworks display on your phone, knowing full well you'll never, ever watch it again.
- 12 Looking and being reassured by the contents of other people's full recycling bottle box.
- 13 The relief of genuinely being away when asked to run the Bouncy Castle for the Church Fete. Glynis



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May 16<sup>th</sup> 2022 at the Tamarind Indian Restaurant,  
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# SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Our March meeting took place at the Church Room, Shirenewton and our speaker for the evening was Jonathon Jenkins who gave us a talk entitled 'The Lent Lily'. Jonathon had done his research into the lent lily or daffodil, into the origins of the bulb, and how it was introduced into this country.

He had a table full of the many varieties of daffodil and the explanation of their botanical names. The Romans had brought the flowers to this country and this had started our obsession with the flower, in the interim years our collection started to grow, into hundreds of different varieties.

Jonathon kindly donated his speakers' fee to charity.

Our April meeting will take place on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> April at the Church Room, Shirenewton at 7.30pm. The speaker for the evening will be Roger Morgan who will give a talk entitled 'Serving a Custodian Sentence'. No, nothing to do with the law, Roger will be taking about looking after our historic building.

We will be out and about in May, we will be visiting St Fagans on Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Everyone welcome.

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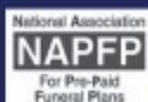
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## **CHURCH SERVICES**

Please note that all Church services start at 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings in the church of St Thomas à Becket, Shirenewton. Times may vary for the periods over Easter, Christmas and New Year, but they will be reported in this magazine.

## **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.

## **LOCAL BUS SERVICES**

Since the pandemic the No. 63 bus service to Chepstow from Cwmbran (via Shirenewton) and vice versa has been 3 hourly.

This is totally unacceptable for elderly people who don't drive, to have to wait such a long time to return home. The previous time table was 2 hourly. The bus stops at Usk ,Pontypool and Cwmbran giving passengers many shopping options. I have contacted Phil Anslow buses and also the Monmouthshire county council to try to persuade them to revert back to the old time-table, but I think a bit more pressure from the villagers who might like to use this service would help greatly. Many thanks. Barbara Davies.



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## 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.

The Moon is full on 15<sup>th</sup> May. Many cultures refer to May's full moon as the flower moon thanks to the abundant blooming that occurs as spring gets going properly.

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

To get a detailed view of the stars and planets "Stellarium" can be down-loaded from the web. It is also available as a mobile app.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Sat 7 <sup>th</sup> May 8 p.m.	The Ha Ha's concert, The Tin Shed, Huntsman Hotel
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> May 7.30 p.m.	Ministry Area Praying Together St Christophers Church, Bulwark
Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup> May 7.15 p.m.	W.I. AGM and "A Woman Pioneer" Shirenewton Recreation Hall
Fri 13 <sup>th</sup> /Sat 14 <sup>th</sup> May 7.30 p.m.	A Right Royal Review, Earlswood and Newchurch West Memorial Hall
Sat 14 <sup>th</sup> May 10.30 a.m.	Homecraft Committee Coffee Morning, Newchurch Farm Shop
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> May 6.30 p.m.	Rwanda Rugby fundraiser Tamarind Indian Restaurant
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> May 7.30 p.m.	RNLI Concert (Chepstow Male Voice Choir), Shirenewton Church
Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 7.30 p.m.	Ministry Area Praying Together St Christophers Church, Bulwark
Tues 31 <sup>st</sup> May	SLHS visit to St Fagans
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> June 1.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.	School/Church fete, Shirenewton Recreation field
Sat 13 <sup>th</sup> August	Chepstow Agricultural Show, Chepstow Race Course

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

## Nerys's Natty Nosh



### Sharing: -with Janet Horton

I adapted a Mary Berry recipe - it was delicious!

Pear Frangipane tart (Mary's original used tinned apricot).

I had some frozen sliced pears (from our garden) and thought they would work - and they did.

#### Pastry

175g plain flour

75g cold butter cubed or sliced

25g caster sugar

1 egg, beaten

#### Filling

75g soft butter

75g caster sugar

3 eggs beaten

75g ground almonds

1/2 teaspoon of almond essence

Fruit for the tart

#### Method

I used a 9" round loose bottomed fluted tart tin, MB recommended an 11" which I didn't have. So, I used a bit of the excess pastry I

had left to make half a dozen jam tarts too! 😊

Mix the flour and butter so it gets to the 'breadcrumb' stage, add the sugar, give it a bit of a stir, then add the egg and a tablespoon of cold water to create a dough that just holds together. Roll it out and pop into the tin. Trim edges and prick all over with fork.

For the filling, cream butter and sugar so it is light and fluffy, add eggs, then add almonds and almond extract. Make sure it is well mixed. Make sure fruit is as dry as possible before putting it into the pastry then cover the fruit with the filling. I put some flaked almonds on top.

I baked it on a heated baking tray for about 35-40 mins at 170C (fan oven).

I added a bit of glacé icing too.  
Yum!

## Sharing: -with Tony Wilson

SLOW COOKER.  
Rogan Josh Lamb Curry

### Ingredients

1 large onion sliced  
2 tbsp Kashmiri, Rogan Josh curry paste  
400g can chopped tomatoes  
200 ml stock  
40g red lentils 210g can chickpeas  
1 tbsp grated ginger  
4 garlic cloves, diced  
1 tsp cumin seeds  
1 cinnamon stick  
75g curly kale  
340g stewing lamb, fat removed, diced  
cooked brown rice, to serve  
Garnish with coriander



### Method

Pre heat the slow cooker.  
In a frying pan sweat the onion and garlic.  
Add the lamb and seal.  
Add the spices, lentils, chickpeas, stock and tomatoes. Bring to boiling point.  
Add all the ingredients into the warmed slow cooker.  
Cook on Low for 6 hrs until the lamb and vegetables are tender.  
Serve with brown rice or cauliflower rice.

**Sourdough fruit scones**, dairy free. It would be a shame to throw away excess sourdough starter when you can quickly make delicious scones. These are 1 measure sourdough starter, 2 measures self-raising flour, half measure of sultanas, half measure soya cream, 4 teaspoons sugar, 2 teaspoons baking powder, 1 teaspoon salt. Mix the ingredients together to form a dough (no kneading required), roll on floured surface and cut shapes around half an inch thick.

Immediately bake on a tray in a preheated oven, gas mark 8 for around 23 minutes until they tap hollow underneath. Delicious!

Enjoy! *Thank you both for sharing your delicious recipes with us.*



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## CHEPSTOW AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY



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## **EARLSWOOD AND NEWCHURCH WEST MEMORIAL HALL**

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of the Executive Committee is  
to be held at the Hall on

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 7.30pm

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current chair by email – [chair@earlnew.com](mailto:chair@earlnew.com)

Chepstow Agricultural Society

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## SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

Last month I looked briefly at a number of individual technical/web-based initiatives with respect to the war in the Ukraine. It is clear that technology continues to play a significant role both in the publicity surrounding the war and in its implementation.

The Ukraine war has been characterised by mobile phone footage from the battlefield itself, the published drone footage and published intercepts of mobile phone conversations. Likewise, the commercially available satellite imagery of the bodies in Bucha which appear to confirm claims of Russian atrocities are a game changer in terms of the propaganda war which is affecting Western public opinion and therefore political action.

There is no denying that internet platforms have become the purveyors of information in this propaganda war and, while all wartime governments resort to propaganda, the Ukraine war has highlighted two key things: (i) the multitude of and power of the various internet platforms, and (ii) that they have been forced to take sides. Claiming to be a neutral platform which just publishes and has no control over user content was simply no longer tenable and all Western platforms have sided with Ukraine and 'de-platformed' Russia.

Ukraine is winning and arguably has won the propaganda war. Whether it wins and survives the next physical onslaught is yet to be seen but the savvy use of internet delivery platforms has had its desired effect on public opinion which, in turn, has stiffened the politician's backbone and resulted in increased weaponry being delivered. It is therefore a weapon in itself and, if Ukraine does survive, I suspect future historians will point to the Ukrainians mastery of the social media platforms as being equally as important as the bravery of Ukraine's soldiers and civilians.

Where this leaves the internet platforms post war is an interesting question. Arguably they had been trying to have their cake and eat it. They promoted free speech yet followed local censorship laws in authoritarian states. Pressures regarding the freedom of speech and local laws have been steadily building. An example was last year's raid by Delhi police on two of Twitter's Indian offices because Twitter had labelled a tweet by the ruling party's spokesperson as "manipulated media." A few months before that Twitter had a 'spat' with the Indian Government when it was forced to block multiple accounts posting criticisms of the government related to a farmers protest against the government. This was later reversed but the pressures in the system were clear. These pressures extend, of course, to China and other governments who want to control the information its citizens hear.

So, it seems the Ukraine war will bring these pressures to a head and how the global internet platforms will respond is unclear. Presumably, other governments will start to follow China's lead and block many Western platforms such as Facebook, Google, Twitter, etc. Wikipedia has a useful page of all the websites/platforms blocked in mainland China. YouTube is on the list (blocked since 2009). Funny how TikTok (a Chinese company) has emerged since then. Needless to say, WhatsApp and Facebook messenger are also blocked, and the Chinese app WeChat is as universal in China as WhatsApp is in the West. This is 'convenient' for the Chinese government as it has backdoors into WeChat and it is generally recognised that WeChat is under constant government surveillance with all content subject to heavy censorship.

Undoubtedly things will change. No government is going to allow itself to get into the position of being as comprehensively de-platformed as the Russian government has been and, perhaps, the global internet as we have known it will become an historical anomaly.

Finally, I move onto a new scam which the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center has recently publicised. The scam starts with your bank purportedly sending you a security text asking you to confirm a transaction and asking you to reply 'Yes' or 'No'. I think we have all had such texts from our bank. This is the clever bit as there is no phishing attempt at this stage. Assuming you reply 'No' you get a return text telling you to expect a call from a fraud specialist shortly. The fraud specialist calls and seems to know a lot of personal information about you and therefore establishes credibility. It gets cleverer, they explain that the attempted deduction wasn't from your bank account but from one of the many instant cash transfer apps which abound. The fraudster never asks for a password or any information which may raise the standard red flags. Ultimately, they ask you to transfer money to yourself to 'reverse' the fraud and, of course, you are not transferring it to yourself but to them. To read more about it read The Register's article [here: https://www.theregister.com/2022/04/15/the\\_latest\\_scam\\_pay\\_yourself/](https://www.theregister.com/2022/04/15/the_latest_scam_pay_yourself/) . Remember – they are out to get you!

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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.

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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](mailto:parishmagshirenewton@gmail.com)*

### Church of St Thomas à Becket, Shirenewton

Ministry Area Leader (designate)	Revd Philip Averay <a href="mailto:revphilipaveray@gmail.com">revphilipaveray@gmail.com</a>	01291 620980
Rector	Revd Julian White <a href="mailto:Jel.white@btinternet.com">Jel.white@btinternet.com</a>	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	<a href="mailto:jmontyvet@hotmail.co.uk">jmontyvet@hotmail.co.uk</a>
	Wendy Montague	<a href="mailto:wendymontague@hotmail.co.uk">wendymontague@hotmail.co.uk</a>
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

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

### Ministry Area Transition Team

<b>(Mathern Group)</b>	Graham Lambert	01291 641 175
	James Leney	01291 641 271
	Ros Downs	

### MP/Monmouth CC & Community Council Representatives

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

## **Police Neighbourhood Watch Contacts**

**Neighbourhood Police Officer** Matt Scree [matthew.screen@gwent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:matthew.screen@gwent.pnn.police.uk)  
**Neighbourhood CSO** Andrew Jones [Andrew.jones@gwent.pnn.police.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:cannhelen@gmail.com)  
**Recreation Association** Beverly Lyndsay 07798 780971 [beverlylyndsay@btinternet.com](mailto:beverlylyndsay@btinternet.com)  
**Recreation Hall booking** Beryl Saysell 01291 641637 [saysellberyl@gmail.com](mailto:saysellberyl@gmail.com)  
**St Peters Church Newchurch**  
Enid Heritage 01291 622708  
[enidheritage@gmail.com](mailto:enidheritage@gmail.com)

## **Shirenewton Local History Society**

Dorothy Brabon 01291 641376 [brabonn1@hotmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:crcandkili@tiscali.co.uk)  
Bridget Evans 01291 408125 [bridget.caldicot@gmail.com](mailto:bridget.caldicot@gmail.com)

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

Glynis MacDonald 01291 641818  
[glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com](mailto:glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com)

## **Shirenewton Play Group Shirenewton Primary School**

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[jillianmitchell@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:jillianmitchell@monmouthshire.gov.uk)  
Jayne Edwards 01291 641774  
[jayneedwards@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:jayneedwards@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

## **Shirenewton Toddler Group**

Jude Langdon 07981 368213  
Paula Rimmer [rimmerpaula@mac.com](mailto:rimmerpaula@mac.com)

## **Shirenewton Tennis Association**

Paul Bennett [paul.bennett@pb-recruit.co.uk](mailto:paul.bennett@pb-recruit.co.uk)

## **Fairtrade/Traidcraft**

Marion McAdam 01291 641316

## **Womens Institute (WI)**

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