



Shirenewton

Parish Magazine

June 2019

800 Years

Price £1.20

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH FETE

What is it that makes the Shirenewton fete such a successful event and inspires people to continue to support it in so many different ways? Is it a sense of purpose, a chance to forget the habitual and banal and reconnect with simpler things. The excitement of watching the sheep Baa Baa Humbug beat all comers in the Shirenewton open sheep race ably assisted by David Cornwall, the chance of winning a bottle of Chateau Neuf de Pape (or a version of at the bottle stall), the heady delight of coaching a new Welsh National Welly Wanging record holder or enjoying a WI inspired cream tea.

All the old favourites will be at the Fete again this year on the 8th of June at 1400 hrs, however we are also celebrating 800 years of the Church at the centre of the village and this will be one of the central themes. The Shirenewton primary school children will hopefully be dressing up in historical costumes- peasants, Lords ladies, Robin Hoods merry men, plague victims, Elizabethans, explorers, coal miners, swashbucklers or punks- plenty of choices. I am trying to enthuse stall holders to get into the spirit of things and come similarly attired. Glynis has been ironing out her milking maid outfit (as has Dr Leney).

The bottle, book and toy stalls are all hoping that villagers will be generous with their donations and these can be donated on the day. Any unsold items will be passed onto the school fete which takes place the following week. Plants and cakes will also be sold and please take this as an opportunity to show your prowess or ability to follow simple instructions and bring an offering along.

The fete this year is being opened by Matthew Sims the new Headmaster of Chepstow Comprehensive school. Gwent Wildlife Trust are attending with a stall and this links in well with the Samfal plans.

Pimms, beer, vintage ice cream van, burgers (hopefully) and lots of old food favourites. Donkeys, ponies, Llamas and a dog show, U3A art , historical society, salmon weight guessing, skittles, coconuts and bouncy castle- plenty to get your teeth into. Raffle tickets will need to be printed, distributed and sold and prizes donated.

The usual work party putting up tents on the Friday will need to be recruited and any volunteers will be very gratefully received.

On the following Friday there will be a Church thank you for all supporters in the Saysell centre with a chance to mull over successes and plan for the following year.

Andrew Baker Pressed fete chairman

Shirenewton Fete

June 8th



Recreation Ground



800 Years



CHRISTIAN AID - 'BRUNCH AND BUCK'S FIZZ'



What a wonderful morning we had. The weather was perfect, and people spilled out onto the lawn at The Chantry with their bubbly and their babies. The menu was just what I always have for Sunday brunch – Buck's Fizz followed by granola with Greek yoghurt and Fruits of the Forest, then followed by sausages, baked beans, bacon and home-made toast. I mean the bread was homemade and turned into toast. There was also homemade marmalade and lemon curd and croissant. The only thing that didn't go down particularly well were the carefully prepared, segmented grapefruit halves which were decorated in true retro style, and this is where we threw caution to the wind, we recklessly used a whole glace cherry. Now, I don't think there was anything wrong with the grapefruit but the word 'statins' was mentioned. Maybe it's an age-related-demographic-thing going on here.

We had over 50 people joining us for Brunch which was lovely. There was one thing that was a bit of a nuisance. At exactly 11 o'clock, just as the first people were arriving, it was discovered that the water had been turned off. The Water Board rang to say that it might come back in the afternoon but I have to say I didn't find this particularly helpful. But Jane rang Will and he came galloping to the rescue with a bowser containing the last remaining water in Shirenewton. Anyway, we didn't go thirsty as there was plenty of Buck's Fizz to go round. All the food and drink was donated, and we raised a wonderful £610 for Christian Aid and had a great time too. Thank you to everyone who came along and who supported us and thank you to everyone who helped.

Jane and Glynis

Did you know that Sunday Papers are available in the village?



Sunday newspapers are available by pre-order for collection from the Saysell Centre (also known as the Church Room) between about 9.45am and 11.15am most Sundays.

If you would like us to collect a paper for you, please call Andrew Baker on 641925 or sign up here shirenewtonpapers@gmail.com

And coffee and cake is usually also available at about 11am if you fancy some company.
Organised by Shirenewton Church

Life

Changes

COFFEE MORNING

At the Tredegar Arms Shirenewton
1st FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH
From 10 am to about 12.

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH FETE



Jane and I are on the cadge again and we are asking for donations for the cake stall for the Church Fete.

If you would like to make us a cake or some biscuits or perhaps some bread, cookies, jams, jellies, marmalades, chutneys, muffins, buns or baps we would be very grateful. The Rec will be open between 6-7 pm on Friday 7th June if you would like to drop your goodies off then, or on Saturday morning from 10.30 onwards.

Thank you so much – and happy baking.
Jane and Glynis – 641 818

PARISH MAGAZINE OUTSTANDING SUBSCRIPTIONS

We have now reached the half way mark for the year with the delivery of the June copy of the Parish Magazine. The large majority of people who have their magazine delivered each month have paid their annual subscription- thank you! We are very grateful for your support.

However, there are still a small number of people who continue to have their magazine delivered each month but who haven't yet paid their subscription. Please will they pay their £12.00 annual subscription a.s.a.p. to the person who delivers their magazine or send it to Aileen Doggett, Church House, Shirenewton, Chepstow, NP16 6RL. Please make cheques payable to **Shirenewton Church PCC**.

Thank you

ST PETER'S CHURCH, NEWCHURCH

CREAM TEA AFTERNOON 15TH JUNE 2-4 P.M. AT CHURCH FARM
(IF WET IN THE CHURCH).

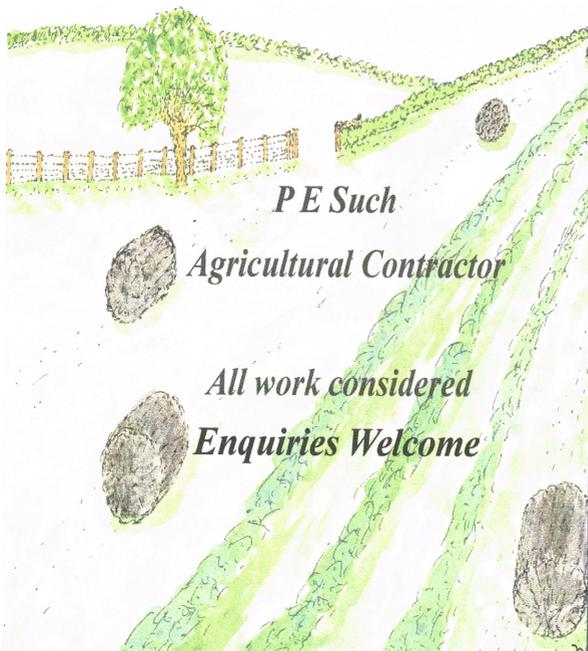
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MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL
*CCS is affiliated to Ty Cerdd & Making Music,
and is a Registered Charity (no. 112798)*
www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk

RUBY ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

Celebrating 40 Years of Choral Singing!

WEDNESDAY 3rd JULY, 2019, 7.00pm
Arts Hall, Chepstow Leisure Centre

Graham Bull (Musical Director)
Richard Kubiak (Accompanist / Piano)
Marjorie Duerden (Piano)
Special Guests – Chepstow School Students

Come and join with us in a Celebration Party – a cross-section of music from 1979 to 2019 – Vivaldi, Handel, Brahms, Folk Songs, Lloyd Webber Medley, part songs – long live Viva La Musica and Thank You For The Music!!!!

Refreshments and Drinks included, displays to view –

Tickets (£10 per adult, U18s and students Free) available from Chepstow Bookshop, also tel. 01291 623310, 620414

Chepstow Choral Society originated initially via the Kingsmark Singers in 1979 when a group of eager and enthusiastic singers gathered together under the first conductor Anne Martin. Since then, the Choir has evolved through several conductors, and became CCS when 3 local groups joined forces as one --and since 1990 the choir has gone from strength to strength, performing concerts with professional soloists and instrumentalists, including many of the great Choral Works, widening horizons as the times dictate and never losing the original aims –to make choral music enjoyable for our audiences, as well as being challenging to perform for our choir members – and to keep 4-part choral music ALIVE and WELL in our town and area –a not inconsiderable feat in these difficult times for small-town Choral Societies!!!

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS – WHY NOT GIVE IT A TRY ?
COME ALONG IN SEPTEMBER! (tel 623310, Marjorie, for info)



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SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Extracts from the minutes of the Annual Meeting and ordinary meeting held in May 2019

Vacancies on the Community Council

There are two vacancies for members to represent the **Shirenewton** ward. If you are interested in the community and would like to become involved with the Council, then please contact the Clerk (details below)

At the Annual Meeting Councillors were sorry to note the resignation of Councillor Ben Allen and expressed their thanks for his commitment to the Council, particularly in his year as Chair. Councillors Phil Butterworth were elected as Chair and Jane Smith-Haddon as Vice Chair.

Outgoing Chair's Report for 2018/19

As I end this year's term as Chair for Shirenewton Community Council I give a brief report of community council activity for the year 2018/19. It has been a privilege and pleasure to represent the Council and our community and I wish to record my considerable gratitude to the team of community councilors who give their time, expertise and community knowledge to the benefit of residents. It would be invidious to single out individuals as each make their unique contribution to the community.

Community Survey

As I write this report the Community Survey has been completed and will be hand delivered or posted to every household in the near future. The Councillors opinion is that the views of the Community will prove invaluable in assisting the Council in setting the budget and targeting the limited funds available toward those areas that mean the most to the Community which the Council serves. To that end I would request that time be given to completing the surveys and returning them so that there is an accurate idea of your wishes.

Planning

Although there were fewer planning applications this year than others. It is never easy to balance the housing needs of a community with the preservation of the rural area in which we live. We always welcome the views on both sides although we must ultimately base our response on the information we have before us in the light of material planning considerations. I feel I should also state that ours are recommendations only. The ultimate decision is made by Monmouthshire County Council and not by our Community Council although ours is the first opportunity for interested parties to air their views.

Playgrounds & Public Spaces

With a pot of money available we are continuing to invest in new playground equipment, refurbishing and replacing benches, planters and replacing fencing around community property. The Quakers' burial ground has received some much needed attention in the last year with the walls being returned to a very presentable condition from their previously dilapidated state. These are in addition to the on-going responsibilities of grass cutting and the emptying of bins etc.

Conclusion

Going forward I believe it is vital that we continue to engage with individuals living within our boundaries and to pursue recruiting new Councillors living within areas for which we currently do not have representation. I believe that the efforts of the community council have had a positive impact on the local community and that further opportunities will arise through the successful filling of existing vacancies. Councillor Ben Allen. (Outgoing Chair)

Planning applications considered:

1. DM/2019/00444 1 Usk Road, Shirenewton
Construction of a first floor extension to improve the accommodation.
Council recommended approval subject to the materials, appearance and external colour finishes matching those of the existing terrace.
2. DM/2019/00466 Red Barn Farm, Crick Road, Shirenewton
Construction of calf rearing unit and workshop extension.
3. DM/2019/00467 Red Barn Farm, Crick Road, Shirenewton
Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of a rural enterprise dwelling.

Both applications at Red Barn Farm were considered together.

Taking application 466 first, an agricultural case was set out for a new calf rearing barn on account of the poor quality of the existing pair of barns and to minimise the risk of diseases spreading from calves to older cattle in particular TB. The application is for a new barn (approx 42x12m) to sit alongside the existing pair (approx 30x15 each) and was intended to be in keeping with those existing, would be largely screened from view from the Crick Road and no new access was required. However, notwithstanding that the application speaks of Red Barn Farm it seemed to be part of Coombe Farm and a precursor to the building of (and the benefit of) a new dwelling yet to be constructed which may be regarded as a farmhouse for Red Barn where none currently exists.

Council then considered this application in relation to 00467 (new rural enterprise dwelling and calving shed). Planning consent exists for the replacement of an existing mobile home/chalet dwelling (set in open ground and visible from the Crick Road) with a new, replacement dwelling (DC/2017/01219). There are no pre-commencement conditions. The new dwelling would have two storeys with three bedrooms and a floor area of 107sqm. It does not have a boot room, farm office, medical storage area or garage. The applicant's case is that it is not suitable for a farm worker which he says he requires. He is prepared to accept an agricultural occupancy restriction.

Councillors took particular note of the Planning Assessment analysis by Richard Anstis dated 15.4.19. In brief, this demonstrated that Red Barn Farm was part of Coombe Farm. It appeared to have no separate buildings (other than the caravan/chalet) nor business separate from Coombe Farm and failed to satisfy the MCC tests for either an additional farm workers house or a new rural enterprise permanent dwelling. No business case in support of a full time worker had been submitted.

Council recommended refusal of both applications on the basis of the applications failing the findings in the above Assessment and pending further clarification from Planning Officers. This council requested a site meeting with Planning Officers.

Continued on page 12

Continued from page 11

4. DM/2018/01981 Rhewl Farm, Shirenewton

Reconsultation on the conversion of existing redundant farm buildings to four dwellings.

Council recommended refusal of the application and expressed concern at the high density development of four redundant farm buildings at this site. There are currently proposals to build 11 houses adjacent to Clearview, plus at least two new dwellings at Little Grondra Farm, all of which will use as access this very narrow country lane which has no passing places.

There is already an overloaded sewage system between Shirenewton, Mounton and Mathern causing regular overflows at Mounton/Mathern. Council was further concerned about the over subscription of pupils to Shirenewton Primary School.

The revised plan showed Barn 4 as withdrawn from the application and there were various comments on hedging and bird nesting but the changes were unclear as the original plans are no longer viewable on the portal.

Barn 4 had been withdrawn but public Rights of Way 373/66/7 and 2 run through barn 4 and should be realigned through the farmyard before any development takes place. This Council requested clarification on the use of the proposed properties ie, residential or holiday lets as this would affect the amount of traffic on this very narrow country lane. Council also requested a site visit with planning officers.

5. DM/2019/00574 Grove View, Bully Hole Bottom, Earlswood

Retrospective application for the erection of a close boarded stock fence.

It was noted that although not situated on the horizon the fence is prominent in its position, however it does not appear to affect the outlook of any of the neighbours.

Council recommended approval subject to the exterior colour being specified as dark green to blend in with the surrounding gardens and fields.

6. DM/2019/00690 Little Bushes Farm, Earlswood

Council was aware that it was unable to recommend refusal for an agricultural application but requested further clarification on why this was an agricultural application in the first place, also why a lean to is required for fodder when it was proposed to replace the building, Council asked whether fodder storage could not be incorporated into the building.

Monthly police report -

07/04/19 – Report of 5 motorbikes stolen from 2 garages at a property. Entry was gained via taking the door off its hinges. The motorbikes were the only items stolen.

It is worth noting that there have been a number of rural breaks in other parts of Chepstow of late, targeting outbuildings/sheds where garden machinery and tools have been taken.

We would stress the importance of remaining vigilant and reporting any suspicious activity/crime at the time via either 101 or 999 if you deem it an emergency.

Other items of interest

Annual Grant availability – application forms are available for local organisations to apply for grant aid from the Community Council's 2019/20 budget. The closing date for applications is 28 June 2019, with decisions being made at the Council meeting in July. Please contact the Clerk for an application form.

Update on the Village Plan Survey – the survey form was distributed at the beginning of May, to be completed and returned by the end of May. Please make every effort to fill in the survey to make sure you have your say on the future of the community. Returned forms may be left at Earlswood Hall, Shirenewton Recreation Hall (in the new post box), completed online at the Council's website or posted direct to the Clerk.

Best Kept Village Competition 2019 - Once again, the Council has entered Shirenewton in the Best Kept Village competition. The rules have changed this year and we have yet to hear what they are, apart from that judging will be held during July, rather than June. Marks are awarded for the appearance, condition and cleanliness of the village. The Council would like to see more residents involved in helping out with the preparation of the public parts of the village before the judging – such as strimming verges, tidying hedges, litter picking etc.

Speaking of which there will be a **Community Litter Pick** starting at Shirenewton Recreation Hall on Wednesday 26th June from 6 – 7.30pm. The litter pick will tie in with tidying up before the Best Kept Village Competition and the more 'pickers' we have, the better. So please get involved and do your bit for the community. Bags have been supplied by Keep Wales Tidy. We hope to see you there.

Dates of future meetings – Monday 3rd June and 1st July at the Recreation Hall, Shirenewton. Members of the public are welcome to attend and may speak with the Council for the first 15 minutes of the ordinary meeting.

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 to the Community Council - Mrs Hilary Counsell
Tel: 01291 421307 E-mail: Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com

BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2019

Can you help?

The Community Council has entered Shirenewton in the competition again this year and we need to rally the troops. Judging will take place in July and marks are given for the appearance and condition of the village, village hall and playing field, war memorial, churchyard, bus shelters and surroundings. The condition of hedges, fences, walls and verges is also taken into account, as well as the tidiness of flower and vegetable gardens, outhouses and sheds. Bonus marks are given for the general appearance of the village, noting the absence of litter and refuse dumps. BUT marks are deducted for any unsightly areas.

Last year Shirenewton scored well, but lost the award to Llanfair Discoed, Do you think we can do better than that this year? Of course we can. It will mean everyone in the village helping, not only with their own gardens, plant pots and hanging baskets, but also by being aware of their surroundings and taking care of the public parts of the village - the entrances to the village, weeding and clearing verges and footpaths and picking up litter near your home. Two planters have been replaced and three new ones bought by the Community Council this year. They have been planted up and if you are able to water them through the summer, that help would be very welcome. If you can help in any way please let me know, offers will be gratefully received.

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

Hilary Counsell

Clerk to Shirenewton Community Council

Tel: 01291 421307

Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com

Premier League
Primary Stars

POETRY STAR



We are delighted to announce that out of 25,000 entrants from primary schools across England and Wales the Regional Winner for Wales in the Premier League writing competition, for the second year running, is a pupil at Shirenewton Primary! Huge congratulations to Katie in Year 1.

WILDLIFE WIZARDS



So incredibly proud of our "Wildlife Wizards" Kate, Josh, Eloise and Rose who have made it through to the finals of the Wildlife Quiz after beating Haberdashers Monmouth School for Girls and Monmouth School for Boys in the second round. They are looking forward to spending a day at Magor Marsh in a couple of weeks competing in the final.

ESTYN INSPECTION

We are thrilled to read that Estyn recognised our excellent 'wellbeing & attitudes to learning', excellent 'teaching & learning experiences' AND excellent 'leadership & management' in our recently published inspection report. The full report is available on the Estyn website. A fantastic testament to the hard work of our whole school community!

EASTER FUN



"Diolch" to the Easter Bunny and PTA for organising the end of term egg rolling competition!

GROW A POUND



Some children used £1 (in the recent Community Ambassadors "Grow a Pound" competition) and grew it into a massive £176.35! They designed a wide range of innovative projects including making bird feeders, toffee apples, cakes, knitted bracelets, pom poms, recycled key rings, car washing, recipe booklets, gift tags, photo frames, making 3D puzzles, popcorn, decorating eggs and chocolate brownies ... to name but a few!

CAERWENT CC COMPETITION

Amazon vouchers worth £120 in total were presented to 15 winners of the Caerwent Community Council competition in assembly this week. The theme was "Recycling in Wales" and involved a range of activities including poetry, posters, graphs of collected plastic types, inventions using recycled containers and designing recycling robots. A huge thank you to Caerwent Community Council for promoting and funding prizes for these exciting learning projects.

SHIRENEWTON W.I.

NEWPORT WOMEN'S AID TALK



This Mosaic was created by women and children who receive support from Newport Women's Aid.

At our April meeting we welcomed Suzanne and Pamela from Newport Women's Aid, who gave us a most thought provoking talk on their valuable work. Suzanne provided us with some shocking statistics about the levels of domestic abuse. She explained that one in four women will experience some form of domestic abuse in their lives. Suzanne made us aware of some of the signs that someone was suffering from abuse. She clarified that men are also victims of domestic abuse.

Women's Aid has two refuges in the Newport area, housing up to 10 families who have usually had to leave their homes at very short notice as a result of domestic abuse, taking few if any possessions with them. Suzanne pointed out that there were four times this number of dog's homes in the same area.

Pamela explained that Women's Aid also supports women and their families by running programmes, courses and counselling services to provide women with strategies to deal with domestic abuse and help them build healthy relationships. This support for women and their families is vital to help to break the cycle of domestic abuse in families and help women who have not left their abusive home. It is extremely difficult for women, in these situations, to leave their homes, local friends and extended family networks and often having to take children out of their schools. On average a woman will leave an abusive home seven times before she is able to leave for good.

Women's Aid welcomes donations to help provide for the women and families. Donations of women's and children's toiletries, good quality baby equipment, clothes and household furniture can be used by women and families, especially when they leave the refuges to set up new homes. If you are able to help please contact Newport Women's Aid 56, Stow Hill, Newport – 01633 840258. .

Jackie Broughton

Everyone is welcome at our meetings. For more details please contact Diane Ashton Smith (01291 628838) or Jane Butterworth (01291 641704).

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1090167

Our speaker for our April meeting was Peter Bonvoisen who gave a talk entitled 'The Court House, Llanfair Discoed'. A very local history topic, everyone knew the house but knew very little regarding the history.

Our visit to the Holy Cross Church at Kilgwrrwg was held on a glorious Spring afternoon, we met near the church and Naylor Firth gave a talk on the history of the building, as we walked up to the church across the field. One of our members, Anne Cook, very kindly provided refreshments, and a very pleasant afternoon was had in Kilgwrrwg.

The walls around Quaker Burial ground have now been restored and hopefully last at least another few hundred years. We have records of burials there in 1677, research has shown that the Quakers met in the burial ground long before the Meeting House was built.

Why not come along to our Archive Meetings to check out the research that has been done on this subject and many others.

Dates for your Diary:

Friday, 7th June

Visit to the Caerwent Base
Access to the Roman site,
Dinham, Little Dinham & Kilpale.
An over view of the military use of the base.
We will need to know numbers before hand
for security reasons.

Monday, 10th June

Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall,
2.00 pm – 5.00pm

Tuesday, 25th June

A visit to the Veddw Garden
Kind permission of Anne Wareham

Everyone welcome, checkout our website for contact details

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

www.shirenewtonchurch.com
www.shirenewtonshop.com



It's 10:30pm, I've just walked the best part of 17 miles and subsequently had the best part of a bottle and half of red – much deserved. However, Terry has a deadline and I have a column to file. Why did I remember about the column? Well it's all to do with why I walked the best part of 17 miles and everyone else did the expected 14 miles.

We were up at the Malvern Walking Festival and had signed up for a 14 mile walk. Up in the hills the sun turned to rain, the packaway macs came out and my phone was transferred from my semi waterproof trousers into the waterproof pocket of the packaway jacket. So far all good. About a mile and half later I realised that the phone was no longer in said pocket. In fact said pocket had a large hole in it and the phone had obviously slipped out. I doubled back. The phone was no where to be found. The rest of the group had stopped for a (pre-planned) coffee at the Brewers arms. Having given up my futile hunt I aimed for the Brewers arms. I was misdirected. That was $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile out of the way. I missed them by 10 minutes. Anyway to cut a long story short, thanks to the guide would went above and beyond, I eventually caught up with the group and everyone was concerned. More than one person said: my phone contains my whole life.

I was sanguine! I knew (i) the phone was backed up, (ii) I was (as previously discussed in these pages) using Lookout and therefore, as soon as I got home, I could remotely wipe the data, (iii) it was insured (in fact, this was the least interesting), and (iv) I had something to write about for the Parish Mag. It was at this point I realised that the deadline was this evening!

So, with respect to the phone (not the deadline), I had peace of mind. I could get a new phone and restore it to the moment it was lost and all would be good. There may be an argument with the insurance company but the data was more valuable than the phone. Except it wasn't lost. A nice young man found it, was intelligent enough to text Kha Koon's phone which had been repeatedly dialling it and we picked it up at the end of the walk. Smiles all round.

What is the point of this story? Two things: firstly, you got a column because of it, and secondly and most importantly, I know it WAS BACKED UP and that I COULD REMOTELY WIPE IT TO ENSURE DATA SECURITY. Yes, I do take my own advice and, people, I type these columns to pass on that advice so you too can benefit if your phone is lost or stolen and, you too, can have peace of mind!

Moving on. Confused about 5G and the Huawei issue? Why not read this excellent piece for my favourite tech journal, The Register: https://www.theregister.co.uk/2019/04/25/5g_lies/. There is a lot of well-presented information in this article. I'm going to leave you with a single quote from the article: "And please, for the love of God, don't buy a new phone just because it's branded "5G" or "5GE" or "5G\$\$." And don't pay more for a 5G service from your mobile operator. Phones and services are going to be far ahead of any 5G realities. Just keep doing what you do and in five years – if you live in a big city – you'll find that you can watch videos on your upgraded phone much faster."

Don't forget people that the shopping portal (www.shirenewtonshop.com) has more than enough travel links for your summer holiday. Flights, hire cars, hotels, etc. Please use it to book your summer holidays!

Safe browsing drc Webmaster

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Shirenewton Babies and Toddler Group

Thursdays 1.30 – 3p.m. (term time only)

Shirenewton Recreation Hall



**Great toys, good company – everyone welcome
(please bring your Carers too!)
Contact Jackie Broughton (01291 641797)
for further**

GARDENING CORNER

I just knew that when we had the first swarm of bees on the 30th April that it was going to be one of those years! The exceptionally mild weather at the end of last year meant that there were far more bees in the hives than there would normally be at that time of year. I mentioned previously that I was concerned that, given a cold wet winter, then it was likely that the hives would soon run out of food, but the ridiculously warm weather in February and a readily available food supply with snowdrops and early hazel meant that bees could forage and so hives survived and the numbers of bees remained high. The first good 'going through' of the hives confirmed the numbers of bees surviving, and apart from giving them more space by putting extra super frames on, there was little else that I could do. Some beekeepers split their hives early on in the year (known as artificial swarming) and then put them re-unite them later in the year. I've never tried doing this, but that said I simply did not have enough spare hives to do this if I'd wanted to, so it was spare room at the inn and hope that they behaved themselves. Needless to say they didn't and there have been a number of swarms since. I now have some twenty colonies which are far too many, and some of these are in temporary hives (the small boxes that I use to collect swarms in. It seems most beekeepers are in the same boat and so no-one wants any spare swarms, so not sure what we will do at the moment. If there are any budding beekeepers out there, or existing beekeepers that need an extra colony or so, then please let me know.

The cuckoo was late arriving this year. The first distinctive call was heard on Easter Sunday, some two weeks later than normal, but then we didn't hear him again until the early May Bank Holiday. Since then we have heard him occasionally, but there aren't many of them. The house martens arrived as usual and the first arrivals made quick use of the artificial nests we provide. We have eight of these and usually we have at least three – and usually five – extra nests built by the late arrivals. This year there are none which suggests that many of these birds have perished, either as a result of bad weather going or coming back from their wintering grounds or as a result of netters and shooters over the Mediterranean countries and Northern Africa. I struggle to understand why such carnage continues every year, but it is often our farmers who get the blame for the declining bird numbers, when actually we need to look further afield. We have several of our other bird boxes in use this year, mainly by members of the tit family. They are busy rearing their young at present and the parents are doing a very good job at delivering an endless supply of caterpillars, many from the surrounding trees, but also the garden as well. I'm concerned that not many of the young will survive as we have a persistent magpie that just hangs around watching all the time. It just laughs at the cats, and treats me with contempt, but hopefully it will get its comeuppance one day – preferably before the baby birds fledge.

The garden really is in full swing at the moment as it is all steam ahead. We had some timely rain a couple of weeks ago, but we are at the point where a good day of rain would not go amiss. In the vegetable garden the greens are doing very well. I have planted several varieties in one bed of the large tunnel, and we have already picked our first harvest of broccoli heads. So the freezer is filling already with ready meals of broccoli gratin. The benefit of the tunnel is that the doors are fitted with insect netting, so air still flows through, but butterflies and other insect pests can't, so we avoid having to do any spraying with chemicals. I've mentioned previously that I have started using very fine insect mesh over purpose built large cloche frames on the raised bed are of the garden. These have proved so successful at keeping the pests off, that we have invested in some more. The mesh is so fine that it even stops the smallest insects such as carrot root fly and flea beetle from getting in, yet still allows rain, light and air in. The frames and netting aren't cheap, but they do a brilliant job. I've made cheaper alternatives by using blue, underground water piping, cut to length and made into a hoop and re-cycling some old cloche wires. These also work well and help to use up any off-cuts of the netting. I'm still busy sowing seeds in the greenhouse as I try to follow the ethos of 'little and often'. It isn't always easy as you have to remember to keep sowing and sometimes you get germination failures, which puts the whole theory out of the window! Early sown seeds were very patchy at germinating this year, and I had several failures – having to buy fresh seed and starting again. Big Mamma tomatoes (large plum tomatoes used for making sauces), Brussels sprouts and several cauliflowers, were all notable failures first time around, even usual bomb proof species like courgettes have resulted in two out of six seeds germinating. I have had plenty of success though and the raised beds are filling up rapidly. I now have a bit of a conflict on my hands though, as I grow a lot of flowers plants each year and re-pot these on and place them in the tunnels and greenhouses, until either the weather or available space in the garden allows me to plant them outside. I've been so busy with the vegetable and fruit areas, that the flower beds have taken backstage, which means I now need to get



Early French beans, cabbage, cauliflowers and broccoli in the tunnel

Continued on Page 26

Continued from Page 25

them outside to make way for the 'insiders' such as tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers. So I'm having to move them outside to make space, but having to put them where I will soon need the ground for more vegetables, so it is a never ending game of 'musical chairs' at the moment. The forecast for today is for some rain. Hopefully it will be enough to give everything a good wetting, but somehow I think not. It will mean that I'll have no excuse for clearing off the beds that I need to use in the two tunnels, so hopefully I will be able to plant the peppers and cucumbers out later today. I have painted the glass in the large greenhouse with shading paint that cuts out the direct sun, but still allows crops to grow healthily. I keep the large bed here for the 'special' tomatoes and at £6.50 for ten seeds they are very special! However there is a crop of early potatoes in the way at the moment which means I'll have to dig one or two roots up to see if there is enough to make it worthwhile to remove them yet. This reminds me that I have to break up last years' pots of mint which have started to re-shoot and repot the bits for this years' crop. New potatoes without mint, just isn't the same!



Bearded iris in the cottage garden

The flower borders nearest the cottage are starting to look good. The new rose border is just starting to come into flower which is exciting as this will be the first year and we can't wait to see how it pans out. All of the roses are from David Austin and are their special bred 'English shrub roses' which flower throughout the season and have strong scent. These have been inter-planted with hardy geraniums and the whole bed then enclosed with dwarf Munstead lavender bushes. I'm in the middle of building a pergola with a seating area underneath in the middle of the bed. Hopefully I'll get this done before the roses and lavender are in full flower, when the intoxicating scent can be enjoyed at its best. Fingers crossed! Happy gardening until next month.

Steve and Felicity Hunt.

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For the topping

200g dark chocolate
25g unsalted butter
1 tsp golden syrup



Method

- 1 Line a 20cm square/round baking tin with baking parchment.
- 2 Put the 200g of chocolate, syrup and butter in a heat-proof bowl and melt over a pan of simmering water. Or melt in the microwave.
- 3 Continue mixing until all the ingredients are melted. **Cool.**
- 4 Crush the biscuits into small chunks.
- 5 Add the biscuits into the chocolate and mix, making sure all the biscuits are *coated*.
- 6 Put into the prepared tin.

For the Topping

- 1 Gently melt the chocolate, butter and syrup until combined.
- 2 Spread over the biscuit base.
- 3 Decorate if you wish.

Cover with cling film and refrigerate for 1-2 hours or leave overnight before cutting.



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STARGAZING IN JUNE 2019

The Constellation of the Plough lies high in the evening sky to the north-west. The curve of the handle of the Plough points down to a bright red star called Arcturus.

Above and to the left of Arcturus can be seen a semi-circle of stars making up Corona Borealis, the Northern Crown.

The W-shape of Cassiopeia lies in a north-easterly direction. Leo the Lion, its head shaped rather like a reversed question mark, can be seen in the west.

Cygnus the Swan lies in the eastern sky. It is one of the most distinctive constellations, often nicknamed the Northern Cross.



Early in June, in the evening, the bright planet Jupiter lies low in the south-east at dusk whilst the orange-coloured planet Mars is close to the north-western horizon. Towards the end of the month, the slightly yellow planet Saturn appears to the left of Jupiter. The Full Moon is close to Jupiter on 16th June and joins Saturn on the 18th. A very slender crescent Moon is near Mars on the 5th June.

Sometimes it is possible to see satellites in the night sky. The International Space Station (ISS), carrying a crew of astronauts orbits the earth constantly. It is particularly bright since it is about the size of a football field. You can check a satellite is not an aeroplane – planes carry their own lights so provided it's clear it should be possible to follow a plane to the horizon. Satellites can only be seen when they are in sunlight – so they appear and disappear well above the horizon quite abruptly as they leave and enter the Earth's shadow. The time zone used on board the Space Station is GMT. The windows are covered during night hours to give the impression of darkness because the station experiences 16 sunrises and sunsets a day.

On the 21st June the Earth's axis is tilted towards the Sun to its greatest extent giving the longest day or summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere.

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St Thomas a Beckett Church, Shirenewton			
Date	Sunday Service	Readers	Sides Persons
2nd June	Seventh Sunday of Easter	Frances Grey Paul Morcombe	Frances Grey Paul Morcombe
9th June	Pentecost	Mark Broughton Diane Marlow	Mark Broughton Diane Marlow
16th June	Trinity Sunday	Chris Sturke Margaret Sturke	Chris Sturke Margaret Sturke
23rd June	First Sunday after Trinity	John Montague Jane Smith-Haddon	John Montague Jane Smith-Haddon
30th June	Second Sunday of Trinity	Group Service Mathern	In Mathern Church

LOCAL DIARY DATES

June	Event	Location
3rd 7pm	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
7th	Shirenewton Local History Society	Visit Caerwent Base
7th 10 am	Coffee Morning	Tredegar Arms
8th	Shirenewton Fete	Recreation Ground
10th	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation Hall
15th	Shirefest	Huntsman
15th 2—4pm	Cream Tea Afternoon	Church Farm Newchurch
15th 10am	Village Market	Recreation Hall
25th	Shirenewton Local History Society	Visit Veddu Gardens
July	Event	Location
1st 7pm	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
20th	Village Market	Recreation Hall

LOCAL CONTACTS

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

Church of St Thomas à Becket, Shirenewton

Rector	Revd Julian White Jel.white@btinternet.com	01291 622317
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Lay Eucharistic Minister	Gilly Lambert	01291 641 175
Parish Visitor Coordinators	Revd Nansi Davies CBE Diane Marlow	01633 400 519 01291 641 407
Church Wardens – Rector’s – People’s	Sally Saysell Andrew Baker	01291 641 369 01291 641 925
PCC Secretary	Bill Clark	01291 641 783
PCC Treasurer	Graham Lambert	01291 641 175
PCC Members	Aileen Doggett Charles Eickhoff Janet Horton James Leney Jane Smith-Haddon Frances Gray Paul Morcombe Kevin Bounds	01291 641 459 01291 641 716 01291 641 783 01291 641 271 01291 641 525 01291 622 465 01291 641 671 01291 641 818
Gift Aid Secretary	Ruth Savagar	01291 641 411
Organists	Karen Millar Ruth Savagar James Leney	01291 650 521 01291 641 411 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	Terry Walters	01291 641 338
200 Club	Graham Lambert	01291 641 175

Church of St Tewdrics’s Mathern

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Member of Parliament David Davies 020 7219 8360 daviesd@parliament.uk

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Neighbourhood CSO Andrew Jones Andrew.jones@gwent.pnn.police.uk

Other Local Organisations

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Church Fete
Earlswood Hope Mrs Sylvia Jeremiah, Mr Raymond Jeremiah 01291 641726
Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall
Glynis MacDonald 01291 641818
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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
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