

Shirenewton Parish

Magazine



September 2023

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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 Remembrance Sunday and 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.

SHIRENEWTON FOOD BANK

Thank you everybody who has contributed and continues to contribute to the Church Food Bank. Due to the cost of living crisis, referrals to use the food banks have hugely increased but sadly donations have declined. I guess as time goes on, we just forget. So, thank you to everyone who supports the food bank schemes, whether it is via the supermarkets or via donations in the box in our church porch. I usually ask when I go down to the Bridge Street Food Bank what is needed. Tinned meat and fish, tinned fruit and vegetables, instant potato and custard, pot noodles, soups and mugshots, and toiletries are always welcome. Glynis MacDonald, The Chantry 641 818.

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FROM THE VICARAGE

(Well, sort of...)

Julian E LI White

Dear People of the Parish,

Boxes

The Vicarage is full of them. The hall, the office, the lounge... you can't move for boxes everywhere.

I am inclined to weave a spiritual strand through this description. You know what I mean...life is full of boxes, things we hang on to or treasure, sometimes carting them around with us as we journey through life, a box for nostalgia, a box for sentimental items, a box of privacy when – in fact – all we really need is a small carrier bag which holds only The Truth. Small wonder that we are 'put into boxes' by those who wish to categorise us.

What am I doing with all these boxes I mentioned at the outset anyway?

The answer, rather like my sermons, is pretty mundane actually. Most contain the items once held in the home of my late mother before it was recently sold. These will shortly be multiplied by cartons of junk and 'must keep' as Sandra and I prepare to retire and relocate.

All of which lets you off lightly as I have little time to sermonize or meander (waffle, to tell the truth) in the pages before you.

Instead, I give magazine space over to articles which should be of more interest.

Spare us a thought as we continue to wade through dust and debris.

With every good wish and blessing.

Julian White

AREA MINISTRY PRAYER GROUP

Following in the footsteps of the former Parish Prayer Group, I warmly commend to you this new development designed to appeal to those who presently reside in the Ministry Area.

This group is managed by David Carne of Pwllmeyric who also serves as Warden of our Severn-Wye Ministry Area.

David is a regular attender at Mounton Church where he has won the hearts of the established congregation. Well, perhaps it owes a great deal to the two pet dogs which accompany him every Sunday. Not only do I commend him on account of his canine company but I am also won over by his love of classic motor vehicles which, for me, indicates a man of taste, style and faith.

The Prayer Group meets weekly on a Thursday at 7.30pm and concludes at 9.00pm.

Presently gathering in one of the Ministry Area churches, it is hoped that as inclement weather sets in meetings can be held in more domestic comfort. Would you be willing to host a meeting on a Thursday evening?

Dates and venue of August & September meetings:

07th September: St. Mary's, Chepstow

14th September: St. Deiniol, Itton

21st September; St. Christopher, Bulwark

28th September: St. Andoenus, Mounton

For more information please contact David Carne on:

01454 617277

Mobile: 07887 853479

E-mail: enquiries@bedlambeds.com



SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Extracts from the minutes of the monthly meeting in July and August 2023.

Planning application considered in July

DM/2023/00789 – The Spout, Shirenewton to Wentwood Mill Road, Earlswood

Proposed outbuilding consisting of car park and office

Following discussion by the council recommendation: Whilst SCC does not make formal objection for want of detail on external finishes, particularly given the proximity of the building to the road, the council requests that, were MCC minded to give consent, the conditions include provision that:-

The new building be used only as ancillary to the residential use of the house

The roofing and exterior finishes match the existing house.

DM/2023/00849 – Springhill, Buckwell Road to Gaerllwyd Baptist Chapel, Earlswood

Erection of Greenhouse in garden

Following discussion by the council – Recommendation :- unanimous no objection

Planning application considered in August

DM/2023/01016 –Former Whitemill Welsh Water Works, Usk Road, Shirenewton

Proposed part conversion and part redevelopment of buildings to create 3 no. dwelling houses (use class C3) with associated parking and landscaping.

Following discussion by the council the recommendation is:-

SCC strongly objects to this application. The existing buildings are an intrusion into the Wye Valley ANOB and as they are clearly no longer in use and, having no architectural merit, should be demolished and the land restored to its original woodland state. SCC requests a copy of the planning consent or certificate authorising the original construction to ascertain what conditions were imposed.

Were MCC nevertheless to contemplate the grant of planning consent SCC further objects for want of:

1 compliance with planning policies LC4 and H4 and particularly H4 e) and g).

2 an assessment for alternative business use and justification for residential use.

3 supporting documents including Design Statement and Reports on biodiversity and traffic impact.

4 detail on building dimensions, plot layouts, services, external colour finishes, thermal efficiency and heating, construction of roadway access, traffic safety.

5 the lack of outbuildings particularly garaging and household storage.

6 the lack of design reflecting Monmouthshire residential characteristics.

The Community Council have approved the following applications for Grants to Local Organisations

The Council have approved local donations to the value of £1570 (one thousand, five hundred and seventy pounds) and agreed payments would be made in September.

The Council also agreed £100 funding for Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice having considered the data provided on local people who have been helped. (*see table on next page*).

Update on Recreation Ground Play area New Equipment

The new trampoline is now in situ in the playground and that the old climbing frame has now been removed.

Church Clock Maintenance

Since the clock maintenance there has been resident feedback observing that the clock has stopped at 1.30pm on all four clock faces. The company has been contacted to initiate a return visit and chased on 28th April 2023.

A visit took place during week of 22nd May but unfortunately the clock has again stopped. The bellringers were able to remove debris from the mechanism and the clock is now operational once again. Glynis MacDonald contacted Gillett's on 24/07 and the Council followed up with a phone call. It is cheapest if we wait until October for company to be in area servicing other Welsh clocks so that we can share the call out charge. We have been placed on the schedule and they will be in touch with a date. Glynis has been informed.

Organisation	Amount requested	Project total	Project details	Amount granted
Shirenewton local history society	£250	£500	Purchase of gazebo and office promotional equipment	£250
Shirenewton Church	£1000	£3000	Maintenance of churchyard and grounds	£1000
Shirenewton Church	£80	£80	Purchase of Christmas Tree and carols around tree	£80
Shirenewton Recreation Association	£300	£280	Survey costs (£280) and website set up (costs for website unknown as still in development)	£140 – being 50% of cost of survey
SHamble	£100	£271	50 posters and laminating pouches £30 plus x 250 maps £70	£100
Citizens Advice (Monmouthshire)			Continued provision of citizens advice services within the local area	£100
Total	£1,730	£4,131		£1670

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT July 2023

Public Services Scrutiny Committee - 19th of June 2023

The above committee considered various reports including one on the short and long-term problems with public transport in Monmouthshire, which may be of interest. The committee reports for this committee can be found at the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=260&MIId=5561>

County Council on the 22nd of June 2023

The reports to County Council included the report from the Chief Officer for Children and Young People (CYP), as well as a motion from the Conservative Group Leader against the introduction of a tourism tax in Monmouthshire, which was not approved by the Labour administration.

The Chief Officer for CYP following a question I asked, indicated that when free school meals were universal it was still important for schools to encourage those families where pupils were eligible previously for free school meals to make it clear to the schools because this will impact the pupil development grant payments from Welsh Government and hence school budgets. The reports for this County Council meeting can be found at the following link including a question on Chepstow traffic at the end of June/beginning of July as a result of the Chepstow racecourse events:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=143&MIId=5216>

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT August 2023

People Scrutiny Committee on the 19th of July 2023:

The People Committee considered the report on 5 potential sites in Monmouthshire out of shortlist of 9 sites for Gypsy and Traveller Sites and heard from a number of members of the public. The Committee considered the sites for various reasons were unsuitable and made the recommendation to Cabinet explore other options

The reports on the home to school transport policy 2024/25 and the report on respite provision for Adults has been postponed until the 10th of August 2023 at 10am. The link for the People Committee meeting on the 19th of July can be found here:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=304&MIId=5690>

County Council on the 20th of July 2023:

The County Council approved a report on a local access forum, a constitution amendment to ensure gifts, or hospitality above a threshold of £25 are registered by councillors in line with other Local Authorities. The Council approved a motion on improving Magor station, with various questions from councillors including one from myself on the draft home to school transport policy for 2024/25 and one on Caldicot school. The link for the meeting can be found here:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CI=143&MI=5217>

Cabinet on the 26th of July 2023

The Cabinet considered various reports including the gypsy and traveller report considered by the People Scrutiny Committee on the 19th of July. The Cabinet member verbally indicated that the 17 short listed sites would not be reconsidered as agreed the various reasons for their rejection. The sites at Mitchell Troy and Manson Heights were deemed to be unsuitable and would not go out for consultation but the Magor and Undy site would be further investigated. The report was to be deferred until September with a call for sites and a re-examination of the candidate sites. There would then be a public consultation on any sites which were being put forward in the 6th of September Cabinet meeting. The Cabinet Member comment and the deferral of this report until the September meeting with the decision paperwork and verbal comments can be found, approximately one hour into the meeting, which can be watched on you tube at the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CI=144&MI=5222>

Date of the next meeting – Monday 4th September 2023 at 7.00pm and can be attended in person at the public meeting in Shirenewton Recreation Hall or remotely via Microsoft Teams (a link will be provided on emailing the Clerk).

Find more information in a draft copy of 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 E-mail: shirenewtoncc@gmail.com

Message from Shirenewton Community Council

Due to a change in circumstances, we are re-advertising for the position of Clerk of the Community Council.

The Clerk is employed for a total of 15 hours per week. There is a requirement to attend a Monday evening meeting every month and to ensure the local noticeboards alert the public to the agenda of this monthly meeting. Otherwise, a reasonable amount of the work per week can be undertaken at home on a flexible basis.

The information pack and application form can be downloaded from our website.

For more information about the Community Council please see our website: - www.shirenewtoncc.org.uk

CLlr Philip Butterworth (Chair)

Email: - philip.b@shirenewtoncc.org.uk or Tel : 01291 641704



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Gardening Corner

It really has been the story of one extreme to the other. The challenges of really dry conditions seem to be a distant memory. Nature supposedly always balances out in the end but, stating the obvious, we have never really experienced the extremes of this year. You won't need me to tell you that in July we received over twice our normal rainfall. And this pattern seems to have continued into August. Problems in the garden have now swung from it simply being too dry, into a daily battle against pests and diseases. Being on higher ground, and with a free draining soil (shaley sandstone), the soil actually isn't that wet, but the lush foliage encouraged into growth by the warmth and new found moisture, is resulting in an explosion of slugs and snails, as well as moulds, and mildew. I'm guessing that potato blight is just around the corner. Which reminds me that I must check on the 'Blight' website, as this gives farmers and growers a heads up on where blight has reached and when you might expect it in the coming days and weeks. Handy because it means you can cut all of the top growth off your potatoes before the disease strikes and ruins the crop. The website gives farmers advanced warning so that they can spray crops to prevent the disease hitting, a luxury that amateur gardeners no longer have, as the 'old' and traditional Bordeaux mixture containing sulphur, which was used for so many years was banned some time ago. I never really understood why, as it was accepted as an organic spray, but yet another one that has gone. We spray as little as possible here, and thus far, despite all the challenges, I haven't had the sprayer out once this year for flowers or vegetables. Unfortunately, the roses have now suffered as a result, as black spot has affected a lot of the leaves, which have yellowed and fallen to the ground. These will need to be removed at pruning time, as the disease lays dormant, and soon re-infects new leaves next year if left. Apparently when it rains, it splashes the spores up onto the leaves and off it goes again. The one spray I have used is glyphosate, which as you may know is a weedkiller. It is the only really affective spray for deep rooting, spreading weeds such as bindweed, blackberries and couch. I did get a shock earlier this year though when I went to the farmers supplies to get a five-litre pot of concentrate. This usually lasts me well over a year, sometimes two, but I like to keep a stock. The rules have now changed, in that, unless you have a farm holding number, you can no longer buy five litres in one go. As well as that, the price has gone through the roof. I used to buy it for a little under £40 – but it is now £125! I can't help thinking that someone is profiteering somewhere along the line. As an amateur grower, you are only allowed to buy the spray in a litre bottle, you can buy more than one bottle at a time. I didn't ask if you could buy five, simply because the cost would have been well over £200!

So you won't need me to tell you that growing conditions have been terrible this year. Fortunately, we have the tunnels and greenhouses to protect crops from the worst of the weather, but things have still been a challenge, and crops haven't done that well. This applies to both flowers and vegetables; nothing has been straight forward this year. Regular readers will know that all of our vegetable and cut flower beds are 'raised', as the garden is on a side slope. These beds are either 10 or 15 feet long and all are approximately 5 feet wide. It makes it so much easier to grow things. We found a supplier of large, metal framed cloches that stand about four feet high, and they come exactly the right length for the beds. They are sold with clear, plastic covers, a bit like a mini tunnel, but we



Five varieties of vegetables class – first prize and a cup!

Have bought them without these covers and instead cover them with extremely fine insect proof mesh. These have proved fantastic in keeping butterflies, moths and various root fly out, and means that you can grow and harvest crops such as calabrese, cauliflowers, cabbages and Brussels sprouts, without the normal problems of caterpillars eating everything. They also ensure grub free root crops such as carrots, parsnips and celeriac, which all get damaged by carrot root fly. There was once a very good chemical called bromophos, which you could sprinkle on open grown crops, but this was removed from the market years ago under EU rules, although commercial growers are still allowed to use it or it's modern equivalent. This year though, we have lost several crops due to a grey aphid infestation, or as now, many have been damaged by huge numbers of slugs and snails.

When I say slugs, this year they are absolutely enormous. So big that any natural enemy such as ground beetles, frogs, toads and even a hedgehog – if there is one around, would find it impossible to tackle them. I have never seen them so big. I do have a way of dealing with them when I do find them, but by then the damage has been done.

So this year is proving very hard. As I write this, Chepstow show has passed, and Usk show is not too many weeks away. I didn't think that I would have much to enter in the horticultural section, but I did manage to find enough in the end, although certainly not for every class going. We had been treated to tickets for the Taunton Flower show the week before. It is a show we had always wanted to go to, but never quite made it. It was very nice too, but you could tell that all of the exhibitors had similar issues. The standard was high as expected, but nothing was perfect by any means. Chepstow show was much the same and I expect Usk will be very similar. I'm very pleased with how things went in the end and we won a number of trophies. It was nice to see that the numbers entering the various classes was higher than last year, although actual exhibit numbers were about the same, so think everyone had struggled. On our way to set up, it was raining and we thought that yet again, the show would be ruined by the weather. In the end, the numbers of visitors looked to be well up on recent years, which is great, and the actual numbers of stalls, and variety, also seemed to be well up too – so all in all it proved to be a very good day, with visitors staying about and enjoying the various main ring events.

The bees have continued to be 'challenging' as they started robbing (stealing honey) from one or two of the hives. There isn't a lot you can do to stop this annoying habit, and I don't think anyone knows why they do it. I had a couple of hives where the queen had died or I failed to collect her with the swarm. I've never not failed to collect the queen, and in the event that you do, the bees usually head back to where they came from. I have collected some honey and have some more to gather in if it is still suitable. Unfortunately, the honey our bees make is high in glucose, which means the honey soon sets in the jars (or the frames if you don't extract it soon enough). It soon crystallises in the jars, but this is proof of its sugar content and quality. 'Runny' honey is high in fructose, and can stay liquid for a long time, which means the lucky beekeepers have much longer to collect the honey and it is much easier to extract. All down to the food source at the end of the day, and that's something that beekeepers cannot influence unless we move our hives to selected places such as heather honey, where the bees have been moved to moorlands for the summer heather harvest. Unfortunately, a lot of honey that you buy in supermarkets that has an uncertain country of origin, has often been tampered with having been mixed with sugar syrup. It might be cheap, but the quality is extremely poor. Always buy British, and local!

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



Harvest Thanksgiving Service 10:00 Sunday 1st October

Come and join us to celebrate our many blessings from a fruitful year.

At the service we will collect offerings for the **Chepstow Food Bank**.

Suitable donations include:

- Tinned and dried goods
- Feminine hygiene products
- Toiletries
- Food which can be prepared with little energy required

No fresh food or produce please.



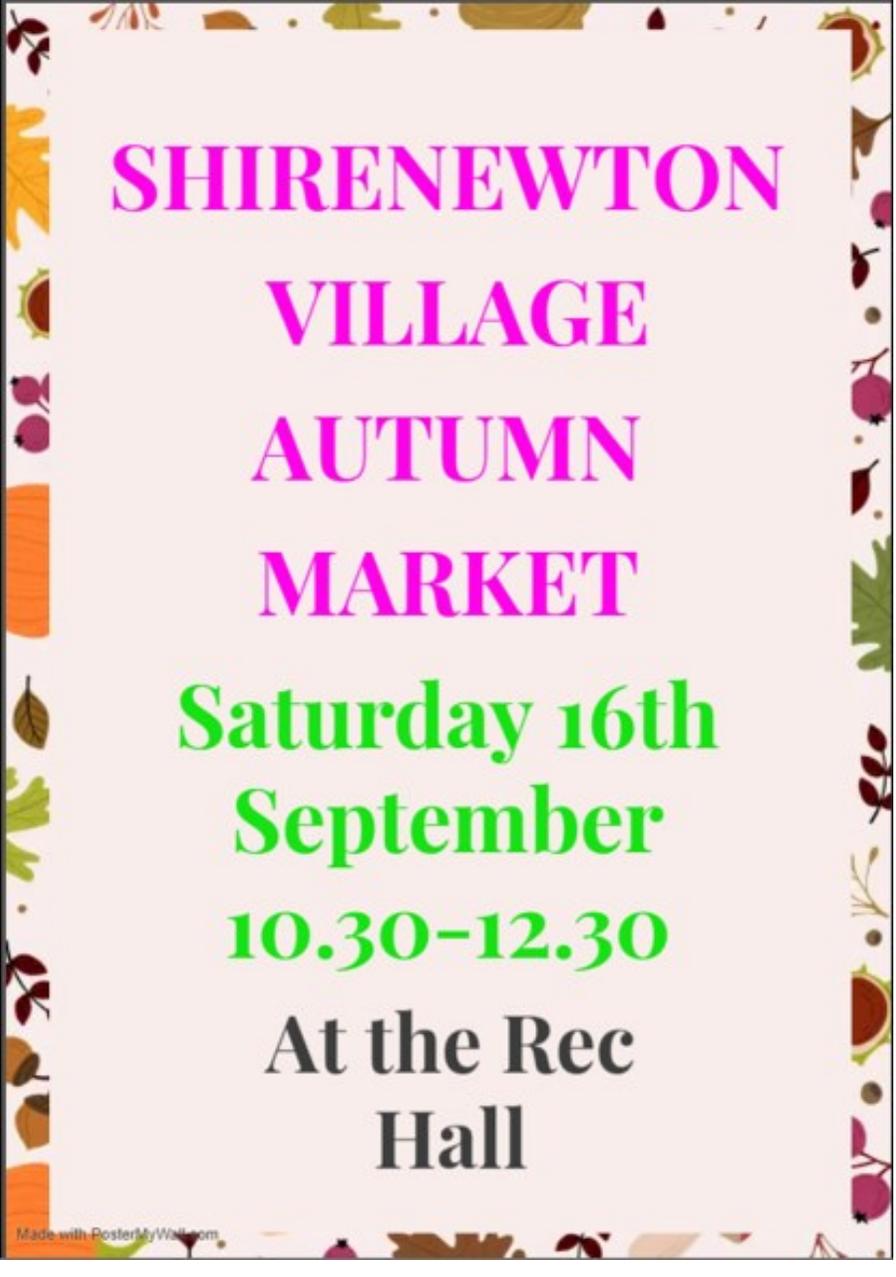
Harvest Lunch 12:00 Sunday 1st October The Saysell Centre (Church Rooms)

Come and join us to celebrate our many blessings from a fruitful year.

This will be a bring and share lunch
Doors open at 12:00, grace at 12:30.

Entrance free, but feel free to bring a donation to
Chepstow Food Bank

Bring along a plate of food to share – sweet or savoury
To avoid waste, bring only enough food to feed your
party – food will be shared on a buffet
Bring your own beverage of choice



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“The Church in Society and Institutional Mistrust”

Rev Philip Averay, Rector of St Mary’s Priory Church and St Christopher’s Church in Chepstow, chose this theme in the third of our St Deiniol Lectures, at Itton’s excellent Village Hall in July.

Philip opened by describing us all in the church - the Christian church as a whole, not only the Anglican Communion - as “prisoners of hope, not optimism” We had in our lifetimes seen enormous changes in society and the church’s roles within it. Moreover we were now in the post-post-modern era, in which there seemed no longer to be any recognised objective truth in life.

Church attendance had declined 15% in the past five years and the 2021 census recorded that for the first time, fewer than 50% (only 46% to be more precise) of the UK population were Christians. Other religious faiths had grown but the largest growth was among the “non-religious”. As church numbers declined so did the impact of its beliefs and of the values it stood for at its best. Some denominations, notably the Pentecostal Church, had grown, but the largest decline between 1980 and 2015 had been in the Catholic and Anglican communions.

Why this decline? Why was the church, like virtually all institutions, suffering from “institutional mistrust”?

Philip sketched church history. For its first 300-400 years it had existed in the Catacombs, But Christians started to have influence; the Emperor Julian observed that they cared for the sick and gave the dead a good burial. Gradually they became part of the Establishment (perhaps not altogether a good thing). Christianity came to be the prevailing religion throughout Europe and Asia Minor. After the churches splintered with the Reformation and later the Enlightenment, in the UK new structures were put in place limiting participation in society. No one could hold high office who was not an Anglican, until 1829 and 1845, when the Emancipation Acts were passed allowing Catholics and Jews respectively to do so.

Through the 20th century the influence and status of the church gradually declined. although it still provided much of the nation’s education, including of its musical education. Coming to the present, the new Welsh curriculum is woven through with religious education, and school assemblies are required to promote Christian values.

But many institutions are questioned and mistrusted now. The two World Wars had a huge impact on religious faith. Here were Christian European countries fighting each other and killing millions. So whose side was God on?

We now live in a pluralist, “pick and mix” world; through the 20th century many people came to the UK from the Commonwealth, and with them came other faiths. There is now a post-modernist understanding that there are many different histories and many different truths. In this setting, and with a concurrent massive increase in individualism and materialism, the church starts to fray at the edge, and to become less important to many people.

Philip said there is a huge gap between Generation Z, the young, and the church. They mistrust other institutions too, and they think that the church does not believe what the church itself teaches. What they want are beauty, a cause, justice, relationships, and authenticity. They admire figures such as Greta Thunberg. They are quite sceptical and are wary of people and organisations that “talk the talk but don’t walk the walk”. And in their eyes the whole church has been sullied by the scandals such as the Madgalene laundries in Ireland and in newer fundamentalist movements such as the Hillsong Church.

Globally however the church is growing. Membership is now about 2 billion and increasing. It is alive and well in many parts of the world. The institutions that are starting to grow again are those which have rediscovered why they were founded in the first place and have changed their past practices and structures. But more established churches such as ours are not “fleet of foot” or adaptable. We need to discover our “why” and learn to express it, and produce places of beauty and verity. The abuse and misuse of relationships of trust has affected the whole church. But the young want to find ways to offer their gifts and to find meaning in life.

Philip paraphrased what the church is for:

- Love God and love your neighbour
- Love one another
- Love your enemy
- Serve rather than be served
- Being a community
- Relationships of genuine vulnerability
- Being of the same mind as Christ
- Emptying ourselves for the sake of others.

Asked during questions whether the young accept the possibility of God, Philip said they understand God in a cosmic sense but not necessarily in an imminent, personal sense. He discussed centring, contemplative prayer, a practice developed by Fr Thomas Keating of the Cistercian Order in Massachusetts, as a tool to develop a personal relationship with God. Our vision has changed and developed: we see God now as needing people to do things through him. The church is not just about people going to services on Sunday; it is about how we treat others daily.

Asked about the new evangelistic megachurches, he said their simple message is that we will go to heaven and this life doesn't matter. Simple messages have big traction, but the megachurches tend to end up with scandals surrounding their leading figures. Living the way of Christ, the way of love is never simple it, is subtle and nuanced and hard to describe in a simple message and can only be understood through its practice in the world.

Asked about the importance of cherishing the church's buildings and traditions, Philip said that if we remain still the world will move on. The church's past roles in health and education have been taken over by others now. But what needs is society now failing to address, and how can we address them? He cited the church's work past and present in the temperance movement and prison reform. One present need is post hospital care. The great reforms of the past helped set us free. Is it so different now?

Society is much more fragmented than in the past, he concluded, but this means that local churches have great opportunities to bring the love of God into those places and people that our society has neglected and marginalised.



SEVERN WYE MINISTRY AREA

Praying Together

JAMES 5:16

"The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results."

2ND AND 4TH MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH
7.30 TO 8.30 PM

PRAYING TOGETHER FOR OUR MINISTRY
AREA AND OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

**St Christopher's Church,
Bulwark, NP16 5AF**

Shirenewton W.I. Cheese and Wine Tasting Evening

Do you know your Pinot Noir from your Shiraz, your Sauvignon from your Chardonnay or indeed your Pepsi Cola from your Coca Cola? These were some of the questions posed on the W.I. cheese and wine tasting evening at our July meeting. It was a light hearted event (not surprising really) of friendly competition led by our President, Diane Ashton Smith. Gill Tayton won the most unusual glass competition with a glass that originated from a Coventry pub and dated back to about 1900.

Shirenewton Summer Garden Party



With a break in the wet weather, the ladies of Shirenewton W.I. were able to enjoy their annual summer garden party, which was held at the home of Karen Campbell. Sixteen ladies were able to attend and it was a great opportunity to sit, relax, enjoy chatting with each other, while enjoying a glass of wine or Pimms and

admire Karen's lovely garden. Each of the members brought a variety of food to the event, which was enjoyed by all. The new Indian Restaurant in the village also provided some samosas and spring rolls, which were very much appreciated. And, as with previous parties, the highlight was the delicious Pavlova made by Clare Lewis. Everyone enjoyed the afternoon and we were so lucky to have a dry day.



Our next meeting will be on Thursday 14th September at 7.15pm at Shirenewton Recreation Hall when there will be a talk by the local coastguard. If you would like to find out more about this talk, and /or Shirenewton W.I, then please contact Jane Butterworth at janeb247@gmail.com or Diane Ashton Smith (01291 628838)

Jackie Broughton



Maritime &
Coastguard
Agency

Nerys's Natty Nosh



As we welcome an Indian Restaurant and Take away into our village, I thought I would share with you some of my Indian recipes.

Lentil Curry serves 4.

Ingredients

- 1 tin organic green lentils
- 1 onion finely chopped.
- 10g root ginger finely chopped.
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 green chilly de-seeded and chopped.
- 1 tin tomatoes
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 2 teaspoons cumin seeds
- ½ teaspoon garam masala
- ¼ teaspoon ground coriander
- Handful chopped coriander leaves.
- Salt to taste

Method

- 1** Fry the chopped onion, ginger, garlic, chillies, and cumin seeds, into a soft consistency.
- 2** Add the remaining ingredients. Boil, reduce heat, then simmer, covered. Cook gently for 10-15 minutes. Season to taste.
- 3** Garnish with the coriander
- 4** Serve with boiled rice or Naan bread.

This is my son-in-Law, Bharat's recipe.

Baingan ka bharta' (aubergine) and '**Mutter Gobi'** (cauliflower and peas).

The baingan ka bharta is my ABSOLUTE FAVOURITE Indian vegetarian dish!! Both these dishes are best eaten with a naan or chapati (flat bread).

Baingan ka bharta

Ingredients -

- 4 large aubergines
- 1 large onion
- 1 tomato
- 1 inch of ginger
- 1 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 4tsp cumin powder
- 2 whole green chillies (4 if you like it spicy)
- Salt and coriander

Method -

1. BBQ the aubergines on a BBQ or directly on the gas hob. You want to burn the skin of the aubergine (this adds the smoky flavour). ***it's important to make sure the skin is charred/burnt all the way around the aubergine***
2. Roast the aubergines in oven for 20mins at 180C or place in an air fryer.
3. Leave the aubergines cool.
4. Once cooled, the skin on the aubergine will easily peel off (if the skin isn't falling off, it means you need to BBQ the skin more next time!). Remove the skin and discard. Mash up the pulp with a potato masher.
5. Finely chop the onion and fry in 1tbsp of oil until slightly coloured
6. Finely chop the chillies, ginger and tomato and add to pan with onions along with the cumin and turmeric. Cook out for 2-3 mins
7. Chop the coriander stalks and add to the pan (keep the leaves for garnish)
8. Add the aubergine pulp and cook out until the aubergine pulp is hot again.
9. Add salt to taste
10. Garnish with coriander leaves



Gobi Mutter

Ingredients -

- 1/2 cauliflower
- frozen peas
- 1 large onion
- 1 tomato
- 1 inch of ginger
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 1/2 tsp coriander powder
- 4tsp garam masala
- 1/4 cup Water
- 2 whole green chillies (4 if you like it spicy)
- Salt
- Coriander

Method -

1. Chop the cauliflower into florets
2. Finely chop the onion and fry in 1tbsp of oil until slightly coloured
3. Finely chop the chillies, ginger, garlic, and tomato and add to pan with onions along with the coriander powder, garam masala and turmeric powder. Cook out for 2-3 mins
4. Chop the coriander stalks and add to the pan (keep the leaves for garnish)
5. Add the cauliflower florets and fry out till the cauliflower is slightly coloured.
6. Add the water and cook out on a low heat for 10 mins
7. Add peas
8. Add salt to taste
9. Garnish with coriander leaves. Enjoy!



Recruitment process for our new cleric

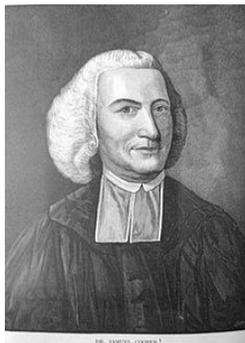
As we all know, Julian will be retiring at the end of the year after more than 40 years in the Diocese of Monmouth, and some 20 years in Mathern. There will be opportunities to give thanks and to celebrate his ministry nearer the time.

Many people have asked about the process and timing for the recruitment of his successor. Rev Philip sees this as an opportunity to stand aside as Ministry Area Leader, so that he can develop his Ministry in a different way while continuing to fully support the Ministry Area and remaining in Chepstow. So we are going to recruit someone who will be our new MA leader, as well as taking over in the four parishes – Mathern, Moun-ton, Shirenewton and St Pierre.

The Diocese is in the process of buying a house, in Pwllmeyric, which will become the new vicarage. We hope to advertise the post in July, and to interview candidates in September, so that the new incumbent can be in post before Christmas – the Diocese has agreed that they will fund an overlap for a couple of months if necessary.

The Ministry Area Council is putting together a package of information about the MA for potential candidates, and also agreeing the qualities and experience we will be looking for.

A shortlist of probably around 3 candidates will be invited to an interview and to meet the other members of the Ministry team, and hopefully some from our congregations. Two representatives from our MA will be on the shortlisting and interview panels, along with the Bishop, Archdeacon (s) and others from the Nominations Board who formally make the appointment.





Shirenewton And Mynydd Bach iLlumination Extravaganza 2023 – the latest

What is this 'ShAMBLE' thing again?

Shirenewton and Mynydd Bach iLlumination Extravaganza (or ShAMBLE to its friends) is an annual event in which the residents of the village are invited to decorate their windows at dusk over one weekend in October, with the aim of creating a spectacular outdoor gallery for everyone to enjoy. 2023 will be its sixth glorious year! **This year's theme is Children's books.**

When is ShAMBLE 2023?

The evenings of 14th & 15th October - starting 6.30pm. **GET IT IN YOUR DIARY!**

How do I take part?

If you'd like to decorate your window, that's great. So that we can include you on our map please follow this link and complete the very simple form: www.shirenewtonshamble.org.uk Please, please, please register by 30th September as this gives us time to get the maps printed. Remember, you don't need to register to walk around the village looking at the windows.

**Will there be a craft afternoon this year?
YES!**

'Craft, cake and conversation' will be on 1st October 2.00-4.00pm at The Rec Hall. We will have art materials available for everyone to have (for a small donation). A nice excuse for a chat & a cuppa!

Opening night refreshments Saturday 14th October 6.30pm

Don't miss the opening night party at the Recreation Hall on Saturday 14th October, where you can collect a map and hi-viz for all the family! AND of course indulge in some lovely home made cakes and a beverage of your choice. We will have a selection of wine, beer and soft drinks available at **last year's prices!** Everyone is welcome.



ShAMBLE windows from previous years



Shirenewton, Mynydd Bach & Earlswood Community



shirenewton_shamble



@ShireShAMBLE



@shirenewtonshamble

FAIRTRADE NEWS August 2023

'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.'

So said Martin Luther King jr at the march on Washington on August 28th 1963. There was a march recently to commemorate the 60 years anniversary of the occasion where he delivered his momentous 'I have a Dream' speech to an audience of 250,000 people. This quote was an inspiration to many including Barack Obama , who had the words woven into a rug placed in the Oval Office. In fact Martin Luther King was speaking from a Christian perspective, but many people have approached it in a non-religious way. Cynics have suggested that, if that's the way the arc's going there is little need for us to help it along. I rather share the opinion of the academic Chris Hayes 'Nothing bends towards justice without us bending it.'

It's a constant struggle, not only to try to further the cause of justice, but even to safeguard freedoms that appeared to be completely secure, even in democracies such as the UK and the USA, let alone in more repressive regimes.

On a less momentous scale :

Saving the Supermarket's Watchdog

Information from Transform Trade (which used to be known as Equal Exchange, the charity arm of Traidcraft the Fairtrade company) explains the fight to save this watchdog known as the Groceries' Code Adjudicator.

'In 2013, on the back of campaigning by Transform Trade and others, the Government set up the Supermarkets watchdog. The role of the watchdog is to ensure supermarkets treat their suppliers fairly. And it works. Since its creation the number of suppliers reporting mistreatment has dropped by over 50%.

You can imagine our shock in September last year when we heard that the government was thinking of scrapping the watchdog.



Transform Trade joined forces with other concerned organisations including Friends of the Earth and Sustain to make sure this vital body remained. We contacted MPs, spoke with farmers and suppliers, had questions asked in Parliament, wrote to journalists and helped local groups respond to the Government's consultation to ensure the consumer voice was heard. These efforts worked. In May the Government confirmed the Supermarkets Watchdog would not be scrapped.'

The passion that drove a quarter of a million people to march to Washington 60 years ago is, fundamentally, a conviction that all people should be treated fairly.

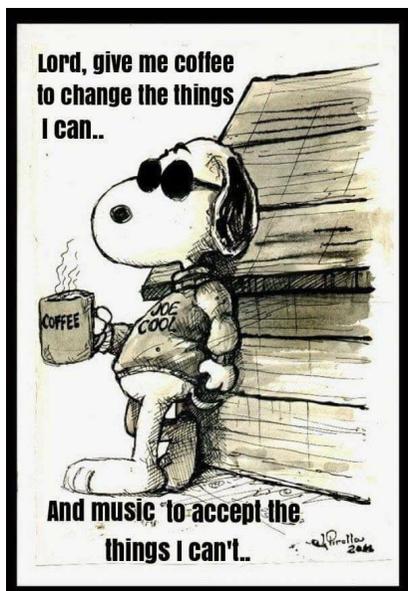
It's still quite a novel idea!

Fairtrade – well 'it does what it says on the tin'!

Ask for FT (and buy it if you can find it!) in supermarkets, Oxfam, coffee shops etc etc

Or go to Ethical Superstore (amongst others)

Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316@gmail.com (I still keep/sell some FT products)



Shirenewton Operatic and Dramatic Society



So What's the Panto This Year?

That's a bit of a secret. But it will be, as it always is, a great community effort. Everyone is welcome. Even if you've not been involved before, even if you don't want to tread the boards, what about prompting, sewing costumes, making props or even writing a script?

Now for all animal lovers, I have to tell you that the front and the back ends of the trusty steed have already been grabbed and I hope that the two actors will be very happy together in their confined costume space. But parking the horse to one side, there are plenty of opportunities for beautiful princesses, handsome princes and dynamic chorus people. There may even be the opportunity for a fairy or two. Talking of which, I am desperate for musicians. I shall be needing Young Actors too. By that I mean children.

Give us a bell if you'd like to join in. No auditions - we'd just be pleased to see you.

Ring Glynis on 641 818 or
glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com

Congratulations to our 200 Club winners in July:

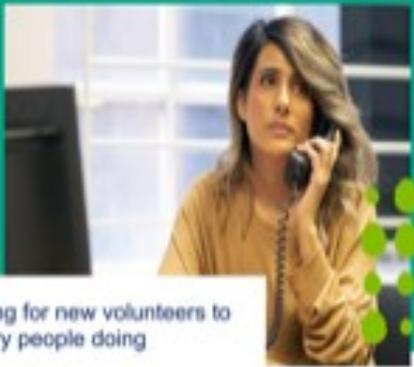
- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Emily Steer | 2. Brian Harper |
| 3. Wendy Eyles | 4. Lisa Valiant |



**Sailing to Spain -
Oh - and walking the Camino de
Santiago**

**Annabel Dance - Lydney Yacht Club
Saturday 2nd September, 7.30pm at St Mary's Priory
Chepstow**

**Tickets £5 available on the door
- refreshments available**



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www.shirenewtonchurch.com

I hope everyone had a good summer break. Welcome back to techie land where the stories never cease to amaze and dazzle.

Firstly, a brief update. Remember that I had got scammed over the purchase of a beach trolley? Well the good news is that I got my money back after raising a dispute with the card provider. Many others have added to TrustPilot reviews of Meteoraire and they ***all*** have had the same experience. There have been many other reported scams originating from Facebook and Instagram ads.

According to the FTC (The United States Federal Trade Commission): "Online shopping topped the list of complaints from consumers who reported a scam to the FTC that originated on social media. Of these consumers, many were responding to an ad they saw on social media and reported that the item they ordered never arrived. Most of those consumers (94 percent) who identified the social media service in their complaint cited Facebook or Instagram as the platform they used."

Meta (owner of Facebook, Instagram, et al) clearly tries to stop fake ads but it seems that scammers find their way around Meta's controls. According to The Guardian newspaper (June 2023): "The social media giant Meta is facing growing pressure from MPs, consumer groups and the UK banking sector over its failure to prevent a "tsunami" of fraud on Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, where Britons are losing "life-changing" sums every day." Read the article here: <https://tinyurl.com/y69bjht2>

So, please be aware, just because the advertisement is on a 'trusted platform' doesn't mean it is safe. Assume it is a scam.

Following up on another theme in my last article, that of AI chatbots. In July the Wall Street Journal reported that: "Google is testing an artificial-intelligence program trained to expertly answer medical questions, racing against rivals including Microsoft, to translate recent AI advances into products that would be used widely by clinicians." It's medical chatbot technology is called Med-PaLM 2, is being trained on questions and answers from medical licensing exams. The complete article is here: <https://tinyurl.com/35m7py92>

So far so good. But, remember that we previously discussed that ChatGPT had made up 'facts'? This is a phenomenon known in the industry as hallucinating. Hallucination can happen all by itself (i.e. ChatGPT simply makes stuff up) but increasingly people are

working out how to make it hallucinate by asking loaded questions. For example, the flyingbisons.com website reports that asking ChatGPT 'Who was the sole survivor of Titanic' initially prompted an incorrect response that Charles Joughin (a British baker) was the sole survivor. The real fact is that over 700 people survived the Titanic (of whom Charles was one) and, when asked for sources for this sole survivor, ChatGPT corrected itself. But the point remains that the question is all important.

There is another weakness which is very interesting. I had lunch with a couple of techies the other day and chat naturally turned to AI. The good and the bad. On the bad side it seems that, technically, it's very easy to add 'prompt-injection attacks' to an AI string. As the hackaday.com website explains: "Prompt injection attacks, as the name suggests, involve maliciously inserting prompts or requests in interactive systems to manipulate or deceive users, potentially leading to unintended actions or disclosure of sensitive information." The website points to a proof of concept demonstration where "hidden prompts for a ChatGPT plugin are hidden in YouTube video transcripts to attempt to get ChatGPT to perform actions outside of those the original user would have asked for."

I won't bore you with the technical details but for those interested here are two articles worth reading: <https://tinyurl.com/37kf9ptk> and the hackaday article here: <https://tinyurl.com/muc2kfwk>

The whole AI field is developing very rapidly and we shall keep an eye on developments and report those of interest.

Finally, I thought I'd report some good news (although it is a bit late). Europe's largest battery energy storage installation has gone live in the UK with the capacity to store up to 196MWh of electricity – enough to power over 300,000 homes for 2 hours. Based on Tesla (yes, the car people) battery technology, for more information search for The Pillswood project. Harmony Energy, the company behind the installation has five other live installations (with Pillswood being by far the largest) and several others being planned. More information from their website here: <https://www.harmonyenergy.co.uk/projects/#Battery>

Safe browsing
David Cornwell
Webmaster



CHEPSTOW CHORAL SOCIETY.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL.

CCS is affiliated to Ty Cerdd – Music Centre Wales and Making Music. Registered Charity no. 1127098

CCS -- ANOTHER SEASON BECKONS!!
CHEPSTOW CHORAL SOCIETY commences its 45th
season this autumn.

We are incredibly proud to still be "in business" post-pandemic and now look ahead, after an amazing return to full singing in 2022/23 season, to another year of three contrasting concerts for Christmas, Spring and Summer.

Wednesday December 13th, Chepstow School Arts Hall, 7.00pm – CHRISTMAS MUSIC and mince pies/wine/soft drinks – choir items, carols, a lovely start to Christmas!

Saturday March 23rd 2024, St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow, 7.30pm – Rossini's "Petite Messe Solennelle", a vibrant work for choir, 4 soloists and 2 pianos, as the principal item in the concert.

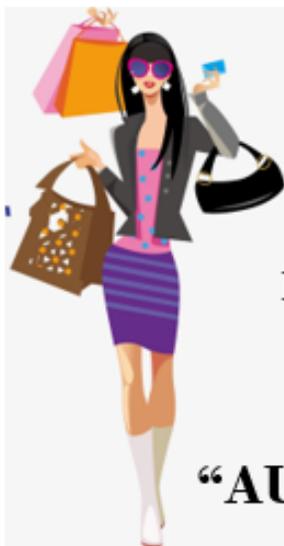
Wednesday July 3rd, Arts Hall, Chepstow School – a Celebration Summer Concert, with a mixed range of vocal items and styles – followed by light refreshments and drinks.

HOWEVER – it is an undeniable fact that Choral Societies cannot function without singers!!! CCS is the only choral group in our area to regularly produce concert programmes with 4-part SATB mixed singing, using professional musicians with full orchestras and young professional singers (the latter often from RWCMD).

If you enjoy singing, COME AND JOIN US!!! (details below).

www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk or tel. 01291 823310 (Marje) or follow us on Facebook & Twitter – @ChepstowChoral

FASHION SHOW



Friday 15th September

HARTS OF MONMOUTH

present

“AUTUMN TRENDS”

ST ARVANS MEMORIAL HALL

7.30PM (doors open 7pm)

Pop up shop in rear hall at close of parade

Tickets £10 to include a glass of wine or a soft drink

In aid of St Arvans Church

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STARGAZING



The seven stars of the Plough can be seen in the northern evening sky whilst the “W” of the constellation Cassiopeia lies to the northeast. The constellation Pegasus includes a large square that lies to the south. How did the ancient Greeks manage to see the shape of a winged horse in a square of not particularly bright stars?! The Summer Triangle made up of the bright stars Deneb, Vega and Altair continues to dominate the night sky to the South. Deneb forms the tail of the constellation Cygnus, the Swan which lies pretty much overhead. Its brightest stars form a cross against the background of the Milky Way, a dense band of faint stars from the north-east to the south-west. The Milky Way can be seen particularly well from a dark sight.

The planet Saturn is slightly yellow in colour and is visible to the south-east in the evening sky. Saturn is just above the Moon on the 26th when the Moon is nearly Full.

As the month progresses the rather brighter planet Jupiter can be seen gaining height in the eastern sky. The gibbous Moon (when the Moon is more than half illuminated) is very close to Jupiter on 4th September. This is best viewed later in the evening when they have moved higher above the horizon. The Autumnal Equinox occurs on the 23rd, when day and night are both 12 hours long. Traditionally farmers working late into the evening to gather their crops are aided by the light of the Harvest Moon – this year this is the Full Moon of 29th September. It’s the closest Full Moon to the Autumnal Equinox.



Clothing Bank at the Rec Hall

Please see the new addition to the Rec Hall – a new clothing bank in aid of Child & Teenage Cancer & Leukaemia Foundation – it's ready to take donations now. The Playgroup has recently had news of one of its children being diagnosed with Leukaemia so this cause is close to their hearts & the clothing bank will help fund this worthy cause.

Please don't leave items/bags if the clothing bank is full – it's going to be emptied weekly – so not long to wait for space to donate!

Thank you for your support.





Do you live in Shirenewton, Mynyddbach, Earlswood or Newchurch?

YOU'RE INVITED

SAVE THE DATE

Shirenewton Community Council has arranged with Gwent Police Cyber Crime Team to hold a Cyber Aware Event on Friday, 29 September, 2023 @ 7pm at the Recreation Hall.

Learn about common online scams and basic cyber security tips to increase your cyber security, with your Cyber CSO from Gwent Police Cyber Crime Team.

The input will run for approximately 1 hour with additional time for questions.

Places will be limited to thirty people you are asked to confirm your place by sending your name/s to the Clerk of the Community Council at shirenewtonCC@gmail.com

– SAVE THE DATE NOW - Do not miss out on this special event for the community.

Meanwhile you can follow the team for further Cyber Aware advice on [Twitter@GPCyberCrime](https://twitter.com/GPCyberCrime)



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SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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It is this time of year when we compile a new programme for the society's new year. It's almost complete and our first meeting of the new year 2023/2024 will be on

Tuesday, 19th September at the Church Room, at 7.30pm, the speaker for the evening will be **Colin Andrews** and the title of his talk will be '**Wye Valley Industries**'. Colin has visited us before and I'm sure this will be an interesting talk. We usually meet on the last Tuesday of the month but unfortunately the Church Room will be having some repair work done at the end of the month, hence, our change of date.

Our meetings are held at the Church Room, unless otherwise stated, we start at 7.30pm and everyone is welcome.

“

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.

ANONYMOUS

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September

Saturday 2nd
7.30 p.m.

Sailing to Spain
St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow

Monday 4th
7.00 p.m.

Shirenewton Community Council meetings
Recreation Hall

Thursday 7th
7.30 p.m.

Ministry Area Prayer Group
St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow

Monday 11th
7.30 p.m.

Ministry Area Praying Together
St Christophers Church, Bulwark

Thursday 14th
7.15 p.m.

W.I. Meeting—Local Coastguard
Recreation Hall

Thursday 14th
7.30 p.m.

Ministry Area Prayer Group
St Deiniol's, Itton

Friday 15th
7.30 p.m.

"Autumn Trends" Fashion Show
St Arvans Memorial Hall

Saturday 16th
10.30-12.30 a.m.

Village Autumn Market
Recreation Hall

Tuesday 19th
7.30 p.m.

Shirenewton History Society
Wye Valley Industries, the Church Room

Thursday 21st
7.30 p.m.

Ministry Area Prayer Group
St Christopher's, Bulwark

Monday 25th
7.30 p.m.

Ministry Area Praying Together
St Christophers Church, Bulwark

Thursday 28th
7.30 p.m.

Ministry Area Prayer Group
St Andoenus, Mounton

Friday 29th
7.00 p.m.

Cyber Award Event
Recreation Hall

October

Sunday 1st
10.00 a.m.

Harvest Festival
St Thomas a Becket Church

Sunday 1st
12.00

Harvest Lunch Bring and Share
Church Room

Saturday 15th
6.00 p.m.

ShAMBLE
Local Area

Sunday 16th
6.30

ShAMBLE
Local area

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Amazon Smile may be gone but you can still support Chepstow and Caldicot Lions with Easyfundraising!

We have some important news regarding the Amazon Smile program. Unfortunately, Amazon has discontinued this program, which means that we can no longer receive donations through it. However, we have some good news too! You can still continue to support Chepstow and Caldicot Lions by signing up for Easyfundraising. By doing this, you can help us raise funds for our community projects and initiatives, without any extra cost to you.

All you have to do is sign up through our Easyfundraising page at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/chepstowandcaldicotlions> and shop online as you normally would. The retailers you shop with will then make a donation to us, at no extra cost to you. It's as simple as that!

So, if you want to continue supporting our cause, please consider signing up for Easyfundraising today. Your support means the world to us, and together we can make a real difference in our community. Thank you!

The graphic features a man with a beard, wearing a light-colored shirt, smiling as he looks at a smartphone. He is also holding a laptop. The background is a light yellow gradient with a large yellow circle behind the man. The text 'easyfundraising turns your online shopping into everyday magic' is written in a dark teal font. A yellow button with the text 'Support us' is positioned above the man. At the bottom, the Easyfundraising logo and the slogan 'You shop, brands donate to us' are displayed on a dark teal background.

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Home Group



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- Shirenewton Sultan (The Square, centre of Shirenewton)
- Earlswood Hall (Erlswood)



(House half way between Blethyn Close and the School in Mynyddbach)
Shirenewton School

LOCAL CONTACTS

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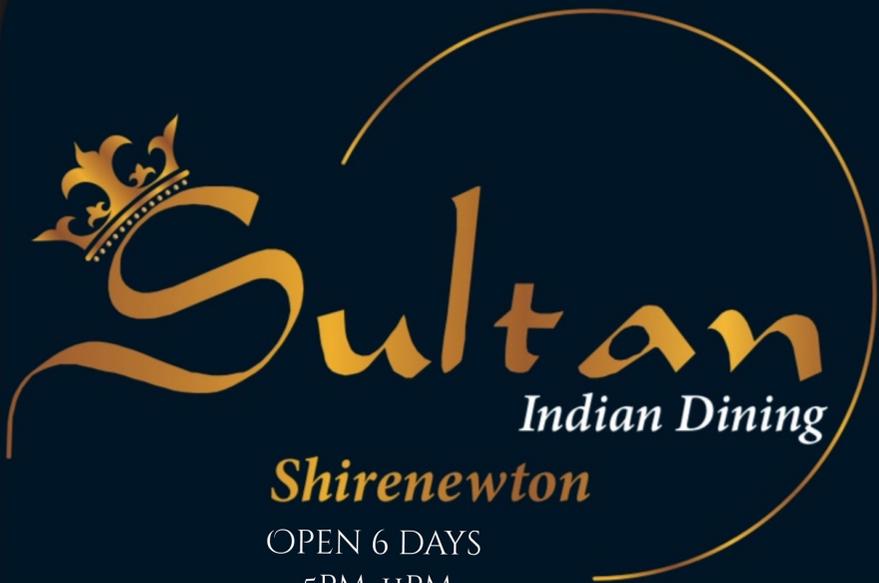
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