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Dear Readers,

Everyone is aware that where our planet is concerned, there are some pretty scary statistics to be aware of, like the twelve million tonnes of plastic in our oceans and the warnings given by experts that urgent and unprecedented changes are needed to address global warming. Without taking action, in as little as twelve year's time, we'll be in catastrophic trouble. It's scary isn't it? But it also feels like a problem that's insurmountable. What can we possibly do that would make any kind of difference?

I was so surprised when I put out a call to readers of the Focus to contact me about stories and news concerning what's being done to protect our environment at a local level. In short, there's a lot going on and a lot that you can do yourself or get involved in within our community. Take a look at our featured articles on the topic to find out more. Perhaps they will inspire you to get involved or take further action if you haven't done so already.

Lots more to enjoy in this month's Focus too - it seems March is a time for Festivals, with the International Women's Festival, Brecon Women's Festival, Crickhowell Walking Festival and, in April, the Abergavenny Writing Festival, all taking place! We really are spoilt for choice with the amount happening in our local area.

Naturally we have all of our regular articles for you to get stuck into as well, so get comfy and enjoy this month's read.

Hannah

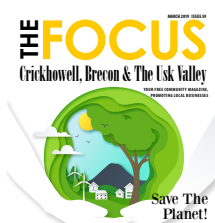
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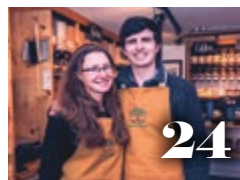
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INTRODUCING 'SIR BINWY'

Pupils from across Monmouthshire took part in a competition to name the council's new fleet of recycling vehicles with imaginative waste related names. Pupils and parents let their imagination run wild. The range of names were varied and the competition was extremely strong. The competition created a stir on the council's social media channels, a number of residents stepped in with their favourite names too.

The overall winner 'Sir Binwy' was the idea Cameron Gilchrist a pupil from Cross Ash Primary School,

Abergavenny. An additional prize was awarded to Trellech Primary School for submitting the most entries. Education and Awareness Officers Sue Parkinson and Paul Qualye visited both schools along with one of the new lorries on Friday 22nd February. Cameron and pupils from Trellech Primary were presented with a bundle of new books for their school library in recognition of their efforts.

Pupils at both schools had the opportunity to explore the lorries, which can collect 2000 bags of waste. It was a fascinating

experience, pupils were eager to ask questions, find out more and learned vital facts about the lorries. Some pupils even got hands on and were keen to press the loading and compression buttons, and were fascinated by the lorries ability to open up and tip out bags of waste and recycling.

The new vehicles will be on the road from Monday 4th March. Look out for the following names:

Sir Binwy, O Bin-Wan-Kanobe, Rhys Seiclo, Binny McBin Face, Taclus Ted, Binnie The Pooh, Bin Terfel, Rob Bin Hood, Binderella, Mission Bin Possible, Bin a Long Day, Bin Around Town, Bin Diesel, Ter-Bin-Ator, Bindiana Jones, Gunge & Roses, Bin and Dunit, Dumpdore, Nick Binit and Jonny Trash.

For more info about collection days please visit: www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste/ or ask the councils chat bot Monty by visiting www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ or messaging the Monmouthshire Face book page.

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MAYOR'S CHARITY EVENTS



Mayor of Abergavenny, Teslin Davies is hosting a number of upcoming events to raise money for her chosen charities: DanceBlast, Rareseed Theatre group and 7Corners.

The first date for your diaries will be a pizza lunch at 1pm on 23rd March at 7Corners in Abergavenny. 7Corners is a drop in centre in the middle of Abergavenny that provides a safe environment where vulnerable young people between the ages of 14 and 18 can find a variety of different kinds of support, including counseling about issues such as career advice, alcohol and drug addiction and homelessness. All proceeds from the pizza lunch will go to 7Corners.

On 31st March, Teslin will be taking part in running the Cardiff Bay 10k to both challenge herself and raise funds to support local young people's charities. She's making good progress with her training and can be seen pounding the roads three times a week at the moment, currently managing four miles. Show your support by visiting her JustGiving page and making a donation: www.justgiving.com and search for Teslin Davies.

On 6th April there will be coffee morning and raffle held at the Community Centre in Park St Abergavenny at 10 am, again to raise funds for the Mayor's chosen charities. And finally, on 26th April

there will be a Gala Charity Ball at the Angel Hotel, with local band 'Feeling It'. Tickets are £50 per person and include a drink on arrival, three courses plus half a bottle of wine per person, coffee and petits fours. Requests for tickets to the town clerk please.

There will be an auction on the night with some wonderful lots including a chef for the evening to cater for 12 people, kindly donated by Sugarloaf Catering, afternoon tea for two in the Angel, a flower arranging workshop from Field Day Flowers for six people, a paint workshop run by Annie Sloane for six people, a cookery lesson at Casa Bianca for six people and some local artists have also donated beautiful works of art. If you would like to make a donation for auction at the charity ball, or the raffle at the community centre please contact Jane Lee at the Town Hall: clerk@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk

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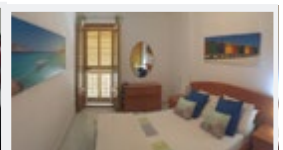
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LIFE AFTER STROKE: ARE YOU LOST FOR WORDS?



Practising speech at The Aphasia Café

Over 795,000 people suffer strokes each year. After a stroke, around one in three survivors have difficulty speaking, writing, typing, reading, planning what to say and understanding. This is a condition called Aphasia, it is caused by damage to the brain during a stroke.

Imagine, you can't take part in a conversation, you can't phone a friend, you can't work again as everything in our world centres around communication, you can't even tell your partner or your kids you love them anymore through using words!

In 2015, my brother Simon, who was 54, had a major stroke, he has a wife and two kids who were 5 and 8 years old at the time. He survived due to wonderful medical care, but

little did we know his and our lives were to change for ever, as he has Aphasia.

The question as Simon improved physically, in my mind, was always, how can we help him improve his speech and how can he find a different and rewarding life despite what has happened?

Enter Nick Cann, a stroke survivor himself. Nick who is an inspiration, had a stroke 6 years ago, he speaks many words now, however, it is still a challenge for him to speak in sentences. Nick's vision is that we should live in a world where everyone with Aphasia gets the support and understanding they need. The more you practise, the more you improve your speech.

Nick took the initiative, having

raised £110,000 with his friends and family, to start Aphasia communication cafes that run in Abergavenny and Chepstow. At the Aphasia cafes we practise communication techniques like speaking, spelling, sentence construction in a very supportive and fun environment.



Nick Cann, founder of Aphasia Group

Do you know anyone who has Aphasia? If so, we would love to come along. Everyone is really friendly and welcoming. Attending the cafes for many has been life changing, not only have their communication skills improved but they have a new network of great friends.



Simon has really benefited from attending

For more information please contact Shan Williams on 07976 576176 or shan.williams@charismaeffect.co.uk

Shan Williams

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GOING TO COURT? HOW CITIZENS ADVICE CAN SUPPORT YOU



It is often a daunting prospect to have to go to court and present your case in person. The withdrawal of legal aid has meant that the option of being represented by a solicitor is no longer available in many cases, particularly family, divorce and small claims proceedings. However, the courts will usually, with the judge's permission, allow assistance from a McKenzie Friend. They will be able to help by attending court with the person involved, taking notes, providing moral support and giving the person added confidence. A McKenzie Friend is familiar with court proceedings but does not have to hold a legal qualification and is not allowed to address the court. Monmouthshire Citizens Advice has designated McKenzie Friends who will, if a client requires assistance, accompany them to a court hearing.

Below is an example of when the Citizens Advice McKenzie Friend was able to successfully assist a client

Sue visited one of the Monmouthshire Citizens Advice offices asking for help in relation to taking court proceedings against a jeweller. She had purchased a ring for £1500 and shortly after purchase a stone fell out of the ring. She took it back to the jeweller who repaired it but the same thing happened a few days later. Sue decided that she would ask for her money back. The jeweller did not accept that the ring was faulty and said that he would send it to a specialist for an opinion. Despite several attempts, the matter was not resolved and Sue concluded that the only course of action open to her was to go to court.

She was assisted by Citizens Advice to make her application. The jeweller responded that he would defend the case. Sue would therefore have to attend the court hearing and present her own case. Even though Citizens Advice was able to provide information about the procedure that would be followed, she was extremely nervous about going to court as she had never been involved in any court proceedings before. She did not feel that she would be able to properly represent herself, particularly as she would be facing the jeweller. Monmouthshire Citizens Advice provided a McKenzie Friend to assist her.

On the day of the hearing the McKenzie Friend met Sue at the courthouse and discussed the case as it would be presented to the court. When the case was called, the District Judge gave permission for the McKenzie Friend to sit with Sue. The judge outlined the way in which the case would be conducted and asked both Sue and the jeweller questions about the case. There were occasions when Sue sought guidance from the McKenzie Friend. At the conclusion the judge found in her favour and she was awarded the full sum of her claim plus the court fee. Sue was very grateful for the support given by the McKenzie Friend and indicated that she would not have been able to cope with the hearing without the assistance given.

For further information and advice drop in to one of our Citizens Advice offices, ring Adviceline 03444 772020, or go on-line at: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales/law-and-courts/legal-system/



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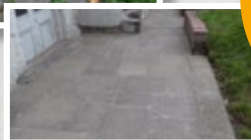


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YOU'RE INVITED TO GILWERN U3A'S OPEN DAY

To celebrate another successful year's events and group activities, Gilwern U3A is holding its first Open Day on Wednesday 20 March at the Community Centre, Lower Common, Gilwern, from 10am. Ideas are always welcomed for new groups, particularly if someone is willing to offer their expertise, so don't be shy, come and talk to us.

One of the larger groups, the Art Group, will be displaying some of their excellent work resulting from tutorials and classwork, including specially commissioned pieces for the World War One commemorations last November.

The Gardening Group have visited some unusual and wonderful gardens during last summer and autumn, and many more visits are planned for 2019, while the Walking Group continues to explore near and far, long and short distances, for all levels of walkers.

Monday afternoons sees square green tables set out in the Community Centre for the Bridge Group – a varied mix of beginners and intermediate players, all enjoying learning and playing this fascinating and addictive game, accompanied by a cup of coffee halfway through.

Family History have made big contributions during 2018 to the WW1 displays in the village, as well as researching their own family histories, and the Theatre-goers have watched ballet, plays and musicals, all within the local vicinity.

The monthly talks have been amazing – ranging from Geoffrey Chaucer to Baden Powell; from the gardens of Ischia to Bletchley Park; and from Otter Encounters of the Third Age Kind to murderous encounters with Jack the Ripper in Victorian Whitechapel. Add to those a Christmas Quiz with a party and music and you realise that U3A has something for everyone, whatever their interests.

Last month's meeting featured the King Mswati III of Eswatini, formerly Swaziland, who has 14, or was it 15, or

even 16 wives – apparently the 'official' total is 14 as two have absconded to South Africa. After hearing and seeing Jenny Bowen's delightful portrayal of its people, the countryside and animals, many were starting to wonder if that might not be their next holiday destination.

The Open Day features an afternoon's talk starting at 2pm on *The Art of the Magician* given by Gerry Walker. Normally there is a £2 charge for non-members for the monthly talks, but not on 20th March – it's FREE, so come along and bring a friend!

The new programme of events starts at 2pm after 2019's AGM on 11th April, when annual subscriptions of £15 per person will become payable. This sum allows involvement in any or all of the Groups, as well as all monthly meetings, so it's remarkable value for money, especially when you realise just what is planned for 2019/20. The monthly meetings are held at The Community Centre, Common Road, Gilwern and start at 2pm. For full details, go to www.gilwernu3a.org.uk.

Kay Blackwell



You are invited to

Gilwern U3A's OPEN DAY

Wednesday 20th March 2019

at The Community Centre, Common Rd, Gilwern
from 10am onwards.

Refreshments available

FREE ENTRY at 2pm to
"The Art of the Magician" by Gerry Walker
(normally £2.00 to non-members).

Open to all retired, semi-retired and those without family commitments.

'YOUR WORDS HAVE POWER'

ABERGAVENNY WRITING FESTIVAL

'Your Words Have Power' is the theme of this year's Abergavenny Writing Festival, to take place 11-13th April. Three days packed with events for aspiring and established writers as well as anyone who might like to express their feelings, passions, and beliefs through words - from letter to novel writing and poetry to blogging.

It all begins on Thursday 11th April with a full day of events at the Kings Arms. There will be five daytime sessions including advice and insights from a publisher and a copyright lawyer, a session on self-publishing, a motivating and practical talk on how to write a novel in a month and a panel debate entitled 'does everyone have a novel

in them?' with panellists including local writers Cath Barton and Jack Strange and chaired by Hannah Hill.

From 6-7pm speechwriter and author Simon Lancaster will talk about his latest book *'You Are Not Human: How Words Kill'*. Then in the early evening a session where writers and illustrators are invited to meet in a fun speed-dating format.

On Friday 12th April there will be talks and workshops on writing for wellbeing, non-fiction writing, letter writing and documentary story-telling. Successful author and journalist Marianne Kavanagh (whose fourth novel has just been published) will share her thoughts on the pleasure of writing.

Clockwise from top left: Marianne Kavanagh, Rufus Mufasa, Woodnote and Skunkadelic, Mari Dunning



The BBC Writersroom will give a talk about writing a TV script. This exclusive session will explore the key elements needed to create a standout TV script; it is aimed at anyone with an interest in screenwriting regardless of experience.

Chester's Wine Merchants will host an event on Saturday 13th April with award-winning Cardiff food bloggers Ed Gilbert and Jane Cook as they share their insights on food blogging; from finding a niche, building an audience, and navigating issues of ethics and transparency, right through to turning a food blog into a full-time career. Lynn Clausen will lead an intergenerational writing session based on memories of the castle at Abergavenny Museum on Saturday morning and there will be a One Day Writers' Retreat at St Mary's Priory.

And lots of activities for young people too, including local writer Sarah KilBride's 'Bookworm Boogie' and a Poetry Slam all on Saturday 13th April at The Chapel in Abergavenny.

The 3 day event will culminate in an evening at The Chapel, featuring readings from exciting Welsh poets Mari Ellis Dunning and Jonathan Edwards. There will be dazzling bilingual poetry and music from Rufus Mufasa and a unique set from Afro Cluster frontman Skunkadelic and Mr Woodnote who freestyles beats and bass lines with the use of his loopstation, saxophones and beatboxing. And an extra performance from the winner of the Christie Residential local talent search.

The event is made possible with the generous support of Christie Residential and Literature Wales as well as Abergavenny Town Council and the Abergavenny Rotary Club.

More information and tickets available at www.abergavennywritingfestival.com



A DIAMOND EXPERIENCE

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Saturday 20th April**

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Saturday 4th May**

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International Women's Fest

While raising awareness for International Women's Day Friday March 8th, CFA, (Cancer Funds Action) are staging events with all monies raised going to Women's Cancers at Velindre.

Our first event was a celebration of women through dance with guest Dilys Price OBE who gave a uplifting and inspiring talk.

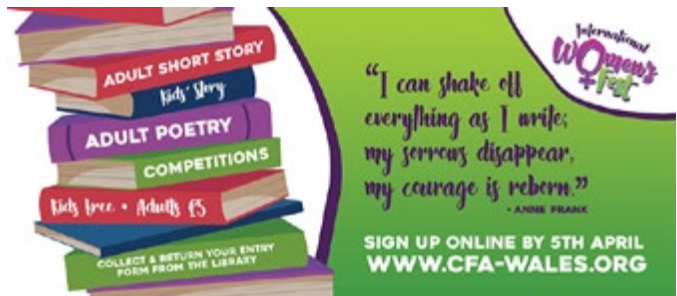
There will be a sponsored walk along the Brecon-Mon Canal on May 19th open to all. Walkers can choose between 14 miles or 4 miles.

Budding writers can enter a short story competition. Open to adults or children. Closing date April 5th. See your local library for details.

We are serving a delicious tea with prosecco and lots of inspirational lady guests. Tickets for this event sell out quickly.

For further details on all these events please go to www.cfa-wales.org or call: 07714294047

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EVENTS CALENDAR

1ST MARCH

Llanfoist Village Hall Film Night: CHRISTOPHER ROBIN

In this very different offering from last year's Goodbye Christopher Robin, Ewan McGregor stars as a middle-aged Christopher Robin, now burdened by a stultifying white-collar job that prevents him from spending quality time with his wife (Hayley Atwell) and daughter (Bronte Carmichael). Winnie the Pooh, Piglet, Eeyore, and Tigger venture from the Hundred Acre Wood into London to turn his life around.

7.30pm, Llanfoist Village Hall, Entry £4

2ND MARCH

HOSPICE OF THE VALLEYS: BIG WELSH WALK

Join the Hospice and Life Size Models in climbing the highest mountain in South Wales. Perfect for friends, families, individuals, teams and colleagues and well behaved dogs welcome *For more information and to register then head over to our website. www.hospiceofthevalleys.org.uk All Day event. Registration £5 or £25 for a team of 8. Tel: 01495 717277*

5TH MARCH

ST DAVID'S DAY CONCERT

A celebration with Blaenavon Male Voice Choir and local performers
7.30pm, Borough Theatre, Abergavenny.
Tickets £8. Box Office 01873 850 805

5TH MARCH

Gwent Wildlife Trust: WILDLIFE OF THE EASTERN BRECON BEACONS

A talk by Jeff Fisher
St Michaels Centre, Penypound.
Admission £3

6TH MARCH

KEEP ABERGAVENNY TIDY INAUGURAL MEETING

7pm, Abergavenny Constitutional Club, Park Rd, Abergavenny.
See Page 39 for more info

7TH MARCH & EVERY THURSDAY

OPEN MIC

8pm, Hen & Chickens, Flannel St, Abergavenny

7TH – 9TH MARCH

Concept Players: MY FAIR LADY

Join Concept Players as they return with this timeless musical classic. Follow the story of cockney Eliza Doolittle as she is transformed by Henry Higgins into a lady. This Lerner and Loewe musical is chock full of unforgettable songs such as *Get Me To The Church On Time, Wouldn't It Be Lovely, With A Little Bit Of Luck, I Could Have Danced All Night* and, of course, *On The Street Where You Live*.
7.30pm, Borough Theatre, Abergavenny.
Tickets £12. Box Office 01873 850 805

9TH MARCH

KEEP ABERGAVENNY TIDY – LITTER PICK

See article on Page 39 for full details

9TH MARCH

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT FINALE

Opening- 10am- Councillor Teslin Davies, Mayor of Abergavenny & Nick Ramsay AM for Monmouthshire. Followed by - Welcome speech by Martha Musonza Holman.
11.45 - Talk by the head of Fairtrade Wales- Aileen Burmeister on 'Women and cocoa'. 12.00 - Cor Elen- vocal group. 2pm - Kathy Batchelor- Flute. 3pm - Film- The story of chocolate- unwrapping the bar. Stalls selling fairly traded produce from - Love Zimbabwe and Traidcraft. Fairtrade tea, coffee and cake. 5pm – Close. The Methodist Church Hall, Castle Street, Abergavenny, NP7 5EE.

9TH-17TH MARCH

CRICKHOWELL WALKING FESTIVAL

Clear away the winter cobwebs and join us for 9 days of wonderful walks and talks during the Crickhowell Walking Festival. Walks for all abilities with experienced Guide plus entertaining and informative evening events. Booklet available from tourist

info centres but all information is also online. To book a walk or evening event, please visit the website: www.crickhowellfestival.com

11TH MARCH

PARKINSONS UK COFFEE MORNING GROUP

Older Peoples' Commissioner for Wales, Kate Hughes, chats about getting help and support for older people. 11am-1pm, Maerdy Park Resource Centre, Hereford Rd, Abergavenny

13TH MARCH

OVER 50'S ACTION GROUP

The benefits of chair yoga accompanied by a demonstration of useful exercises for all ages. Tea/ coffee available, time to chat and a welcoming atmosphere will await you. £2 for session; come and join in! 10am-12 noon, Trinity Hall, Baker St, Abergavenny

16TH MARCH

Priory Sessions: TERRORVISION'S TONY WRIGHT

Terrorvision enjoyed massive chart success throughout the 1990s, scoring 12 top 30 hits. Their enigmatic and energetic front man Tony Wright comes to Abergavenny to entertain with a mixture of those hits and more recent solo material at this intimate acoustic show. Support from Sweet Ignitions and DIGGS. Bare will also include local ales and cider. 7pm, Priory Centre St Mary's, Monk St, Abergavenny. Tickets £12.50 from Music One, Chesters or Christie Residential.

18TH MARCH

VPA: MY STORY OF PONTYPOOL PARK WITH DENNIS TIPPINS

7pm, Mardy Hall, Abergavenny

20TH MARCH

GILWERN U3A OPEN DAY

10am, Community Centre, Lower Common, Gilwern. For more info, see our article on Page 14

22ND MARCH

Book-ish Event: AN AFTERNOON WITH JOHN LEWIS-STEMPEL

Come along and listen to the

wonderful John Lewis-Stempel discuss his new book, *Still Water*. Written in gorgeous prose, *Still Water* tells the seasonal story of the wild animals and plants that live in and around the pond, from the mayfly larvae in the mud to the patrolling bats in the night sky above. Tickets to include tea/coffee on arrival. 1pm, Crickhowell Parish Hall. For tickets visit www.book-ish.co.uk or see advert on Page 55

23RD MARCH

PIZZA LUNCH AT 7CORNERS

Mayor Teslin Davies hosts a Pizza Lunch at 7Corners café, with all proceeds going to the charity. See our article on Page 7 for more info

29TH MARCH

Priory Sessions: MARK MORRISS

The Bluetones were a phenomenon during the Britpop era. Front man Mark Morriss comes to Abergavenny to entertain with a mixture of old hits and new solo material. A night not to be missed, with support from 4Brothers and Joe Kelly.

Doors at 7pm, bar will include local ales and ciders. Tickets £10 online or in person from Music One, Chesters wine merchants and Christie Residential in the town centre.

Priory St Mary's, Monk St, Abergavenny

30TH MARCH

OPEN MIC SESSION AT THE GREAT WESTERN

8.30pm, Great Western Hotel, Station Rd, Abergavenny. Free sausage and chips supper for those attending.

6TH APRIL

COFFEE MORNING & RAFFLE

Hosted by Mayor Teslin Davies, to raise money for the Mayor's chosen charities. 10am, Abergavenny Community Centre. See our article on Page 7 for more info

11TH-13TH APRIL

ABERGAVENNY WRITING FESTIVAL

See article on Page 15 for more info

COMING UP...

3RD-4TH MAY

The Play Group present ALAN AYCKBOURN'S 'TABLE MANNERS'

Melville Centre, Penypound, Abergavenny. Tickets £8 available at www.theplaygroupabergavenny.co.uk

14TH-18TH MAY

AAODS present: OKLAHOMA!

7pm (6pm on Sat), Borough Theatre, Abergavenny. Tickets are £12 (£11 concessions on Tuesday only). Tickets available from the Borough Theatre 01873 850805 www.boroughtheatreabergavenny.co.uk

ORIGINAL LIVE MUSIC IN ABERGAVENNY
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MARCH 15 TONY WRIGHT OF TERRORVISION
PLUS SWEET IGNITIONS & DRUGS

MARCH 29 MARK MORRISS OF THE BLUETONES
PLUS 4 BROTHERS & JOE KELLY

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3pm on the last Sunday of every month

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Abergavenny Community Centre

To keep up to date with all the events in the coming months, don't forget to visit our online events calendar on our website at: www.thefocus.wales

Let us know about community events that you'd like to share with everybody; use the events submission form on our website.

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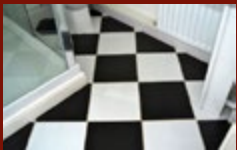


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The Month Ahead: March 2019



March may well see the cold hand of winter reaching out from February with a chilly, icy, and frosty start. However, whilst winter could linger into the early part of the month, the noticeable lighter evenings will make for some comfort as the season of Spring beckons. The cold will eventually relinquish its presence, allowing for a period of wetter, windier, and potentially milder conditions. A changeable mix seems likely to round March off as we head towards April, with the potential for perhaps a changeable, but generally milder month over all. March looks likely to return above the average for precipitation, with the cold snap counterbalanced by milder conditions later, levelling out the month with a seasonal norm for temperature..

Forecast from Jonathan Powell



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A photograph of a man and a woman standing in a shop. The woman, on the left, has long brown hair and wears glasses and a brown apron. The man, on the right, has dark hair and wears a grey sweater and a brown apron. They are both smiling. In the background, there are wooden shelves with various items, including jars and boxes. A sign with the word 'Grains' is visible on the wall.

Natural Weigh is

On a snowy day in March 2018, Natural Weigh opened its doors for the first time as Wales' first zero waste shop. It was scary and exciting in equal measure and we can't really believe it has been a whole year since that first day. But here we are, March 2019, and what a year it has been. We wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on all the amazing things which have happened over the past 12 months and to say a massive thank you to everyone who has been in to see us and shop with us. It is down to all of you that Natural Weigh has been a success and we are overwhelmingly grateful for your support and enthusiasm.

Over the year, we have been graced by visits from several prestigious persons, the most exciting of whom was His Royal Highness Prince Charles! On a sweltering day in June, Prince Charles came to officially open The Corn Exchange. He popped in to our shop, had a go with some of our

gravity dispensers (selecting cannellini beans over chocolate!) and chatted to us about the challenges of reducing plastic in a supply chain which is often varied and diverse. We have also received visits from Kirsty Williams, our very supportive local Assembly Member, Hannah Blythyn, the Welsh Minister for

the Environment, and Simon Thomas, another supportive Assembly Member. Each of these individuals has their own area of influence and we are hopeful they will have continued to spread the positive message we discussed in the shop around encouraging people to choose plastic free options when shopping.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

- >1,200 reusable straws sold
- >1,200 bamboo toothbrushes sold
- >300 reusable water bottles sold
- >50 reusable sanitary pads and >30 menstrual cups sold
- >1,000 plastic bottles of washing up liquid avoided
- >500 plastic bottles of shampoo avoided
- Total of 140 kg of plastic avoided

were shortlisted for the Sustainable Business Award. We also had a trip to the House of Lords as one of 100 small businesses in the UK as part of a campaign to encourage consumers to shop local. This recognition has helped us to maintain our momentum and continue to drive Natural Weigh to do more and keep improving.

When we first opened our doors last year, it was after a huge amount of planning and careful consideration of where we wanted to be based. Some people ask us why we chose Crickhowell but most people who have been to this beautiful bustling town know. On our first anniversary, we want to highlight the wonderful community of people and businesses based in here. Crickhowell attracted our attention because of its fiercely independent high street but also its community of committed individuals working to make positive change. The building we are based in (The Corn Exchange) was destined to be turned into a supermarket but was instead bought by the local community and converted into shops and flats. This is the sort of community which looks after its members. In the months after we opened, many of the other high street traders came into our shop to introduce themselves and offer their support and assistance should we need it. Indeed, on those first few days,

with the snow as deep as it was, we had several offers from people of somewhere to stay if we got stranded. This warmth and support has continued throughout the last year. Thank you Crickhowell for such a warm welcome!

This wonderful local community, of which we very much feel a part, won the Great British High Street award in 2018,, fending off Altrincham, Portadown and Alness to win the title. This is such a deserving reward for a town which is bursting with independent shops and thriving at a time when many high streets seem to be struggling. How lucky we are to be a part of it!

All of these experiences over the last year, would not have been possible without the support of so many people, from our own family and friends, to the wonderful people of Crickhowell and to all our customers both near and far. We were lucky to receive a grant award from UnLtd as one of their selected social businesses. We also got business support from Business Wales. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of the Natural Weigh journey. We will continue to do our best to provide high quality, plastic free food and lifestyle products.

Looking toward the next year, we have some exciting developments. We have recently launched our online shop, offering customers from further a field and those not able to pop into the shop, the chance to buy plastic free food and support our dream. We are also committed to finding new and innovative ways to combat unnecessary packaging within our supply chain and will be exploring this avenue further in the next year. We will continue to respond to customer demand and introduce new and exciting products and to work within the community to encourage and enable others to reduce their reliance on single use plastic.

Year one was fantastic, but here's to an even better second year!

Chloe & Robin Masefield



Through the year, we also did a bit of visiting others. We gave a talk to Transition Cardiff on the concept behind our shop, and went to the IEMA conference to highlight what we have done in Crickhowell and why we did it. In October, we were invited as a speaker to the first Zero Waste Conference which was a huge honour. All of these experiences enabled us to spread the message about Natural Weigh and plastic free shopping and met with very receptive audiences. We even went to a primary school to discuss the problem of plastic with the children. That was almost the most daunting visit!

Towards the end of 2018, we were delighted to be shortlisted for a number of awards and to even win one. Natural Weigh won the One to Watch award at the Social Business Wales awards and we

THE HANNAH MLATEM WIG BOUTIQUE



The Hannah Mlatem wig boutique has opened its doors in Gilwern.

Hannah, who is trained in all aspects of wigs, hair pieces and customised orders, has been approached to supply wigs for patients through the NHS.

"Not many people realise this service is available for them on prescription," she said.

Patients undergoing chemotherapy or who are diagnosed with alopecia get a referral, which allows them a voucher for a wig.

"I then meet them either here in my discreet wig room at the salon, at their home or at hospital. Whatever is easiest for the patient. We undergo a free consultation, decide on what the patient likes and then a wig is chosen. I offer all styling and cutting and - if the patient decides - a head shave for free. I just want them to feel as comfortable as possible and not as though they're having to go through another ordeal and hospital appointment."

Hannah also has been busy supplying wigs to private clients for their holidays, nights out and fashion shows, as well as those with Lupus and hair loss problems.

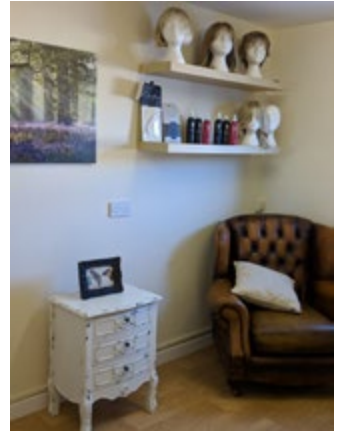
With more than eight years experience, Hannah ensures patients always leave happy and confident that they can continue their everyday lives. Hannah also works with the

Little Princess Trust, as well as the health boards.

"Just giving people that confidence to feel a bit better and carry on living their lives is such a massive help."

To find out more, please visit the Hannah Mlatem Facebook page, email hannah.mlatem@gmail.com or call 01873 832214.

Hannah Mlatem




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Abergavenny officially declared a Plastic Free Town

We are delighted to announce that Abergavenny has been awarded *Plastic Free Community* status by the marine conservation charity, Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) joining a network of towns and villages across the UK who are leading the way on tackling throwaway plastic.

Rachel Yates, SAS Plastic Free Communities Project Officer, said: "It's great to see the work that Plastic Free Abergavenny has done to reduce the use of avoidable plastics, raise awareness and encourage people to refill and reuse."

The Plastic Free Abergavenny (PFA) campaign was launched in January 2018 to take urgent action to combat the rising tide of single-use plastic waste.

Members of Plastic Free Abergavenny, Left to Right: Mary-Ann Swanson, Lynette Green and Diana Wallace

The response from schools, youth groups, local businesses and community organisations in the town has been incredibly positive and encouraging. It seems everyone is searching for ways to lessen their impact when it comes to single-use plastic.

Local schoolchildren and the local Cub Scouts group have been keen to take up the plastic free challenge and become Plastic Free Champions. They have taken part in assemblies, workshops and group activities and have given up cling film, plastic bottled water and Christmas glitter.

Thirteen independent cafes in Abergavenny have been awarded Plastic Free Business Champion

SAVE THE PLANET

status. All have removed single-use plastic items from their businesses or replaced them with sustainable alternatives, often at increased cost. Films of some of these dedicated champions can be viewed in the video section of the Plastic Free Abergavenny Face book group.

Over the past year the group has held events to raise awareness and pass on information about reducing the use of single-use plastics and choosing sustainable alternatives. These have included stalls in the centre of town and networking events as well as presentations to business groups.

PFA member, Sue Harrison, said, "We would especially like to thank Abergavenny & Crickhowell Friends of the Earth, Abergavenny Transition Town and Abergavenny Town Council without whose support we could not have achieved our Plastic Free status. We are over the moon at achieving our official status but we know that this is only the beginning and the journey will continue until as a town we have become completely single-use plastic free."

For more information please contact the Plastic Free Abergavenny Team plasticfreeabergavenny@gmail.com www.abergavennytransition.org/plastic-free-abergavenny

f Plastic Free Abergavenny

Sue Harrison



David Simmons

White Rose Cottage
Twyn-wenallt, Gilwern
Abergavenny, Monmouthshire
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Evergreen Blinds are at the forefront of design innovation, recently becoming suppliers of the groundbreaking Greenscreen Sea-Tex: blinds made from fabric sourced from ocean plastic!

We're surrounded by plastic. Just think about every piece we touch in a single day: shopping bags, food containers, straws, water bottles – the list is endless.

Plastic pollution is a growing and worrying problem. In the first decade of this century, we produced more plastic than all the plastic ever produced in history up to the year 2000. And unfortunately, every year, millions of tons of that mass produced plastic ends up in the world's oceans. In fact, it is estimated

that we have six times more plastic than plankton in our oceans!

Most of us know very little about the devastation that occurs under the surface of the water. The durable nature of plastic can take hundreds of years to degrade. Take a plastic cup, for example, which takes 50 years to biodegrade, and a plastic fishing net that takes a staggering 600 years.

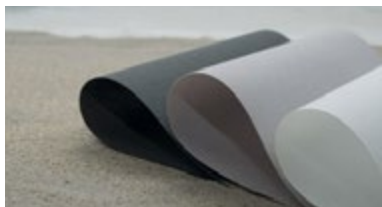
The problem with plastic pollution doesn't just hurt marine species, it's also harmful to us humans. As plastic debris floats in the seawater, it absorbs dangerous pollutants. These chemicals are highly toxic and have a wide range of chronic effects, including endocrine disruption and cancer-causing mutations. When animals eat plastic pieces, the toxins are absorbed into their body and passed up the food chain. Up to 1 in 3 fish caught for human consumption now contain plastic so this problem affects everyone.

In an attempt to make a difference to the growing problem of plastic

infiltrating our oceans, Style Studio has introduced Greenscreen Sea-Tex. This fabric has been developed using recycled shoreline plastic, which has been recovered from beaches, remote coastlines and inland waterways. The plastic is processed, and spun into Bionic yarn to be used within the woven structure of the Sea-Tex fabric. Sea-Tex is a semi-transparent roller screen fabric with Flame Retardant features and is available in 5 neutral shades! Turning ocean plastic into fabric is both inspiring and environmentally friendly. Isn't it time to live smarter?

Evergreen Blinds are thrilled to be able to source and supply these premium blinds. Contact them today for further information. 01873 811113

Ken Barwise



Thrombosis & General Research Fund

Nevill Hall Hospital

The Thrombosis & General Research fund was started in 1968 to provide urgently needed funds to Dr Aneurin Hughes and his far reaching research into heart disease.

Four decades on, the Fund has raised several million pounds for Nevill Hall Hospital, providing funds for research and coming to the aid of a number of projects

Funds were raised for all of the gym equipment at the **Cardiac Rehabilitation Unit** where recovering heart attack patients undergo a programme of exercise and education to help them towards healthier living.

Transport Incubator gives the warmth, oxygen and continuous monitoring needed by sick babies who have to be transported between delivery and the Neonatal units or to other hospitals.

And maybe its greatest achievement, the purchase of the hospital's first **MRI Scanner**

If you can help contribute to the fund through donations and bequests or you'd like to volunteer to help organise fund raising events then please contact us

Mrs. S. Woodhouse
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Leading Ladies

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The Abergavenny sky is cloudless; the dragon's breath fog has cleared and the verdigris market hall spire is bathed in sunshine. The local coffee bar is bustling – baristas are doing their thing with steam, locals are shrugging off their coats in readiness to catch up with friends over coffee and there's a soothing hum of conversation about the place.

I'm here to chat to Heather Cook, owner of Parrys Abergavenny and more recently the Parrys branch in Monmouth. For Heather and her business partner, Vivienne Reece, March is an important month of the year, and this year for several reasons. First it marks the fifth year since they expanded and moved into their beautiful offices and sales suite in

Nevill Street, Abergavenny, and is also the second anniversary of their purchase of Parrys in Monmouth. March 8th also happens to be International Women's Day, so what better way to recognise and celebrate female achievement than to shine a spotlight on these two leading female entrepreneurs in the local Estate Agent industry.

"You know, this business is actually all about people," says Heather, sipping her cappuccino. She's been in the Estate Agency business since the eighties and has more accreditations than you can shake a stick at, (most recently she and Vivienne undertook training to qualify as Associates of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors). Even so I narrow my eyes. People? Not property? I ask her to expand.

"There's nothing quite like taking somebody to see a house and matching them with the right property. It's that feeling of being able to help somebody achieve their dream and I get a tremendous sense of satisfaction from that, no matter whether that's in a house worth £50,000 or £500,000."

In an era when so many of us research and shortlist houses online, Heather points out that the human aspect of getting to know clients and having that initial conversation to understand their needs is one of the most important parts of her job.

"My role is to encourage people to see a variety of properties during their search so that they can identify, through viewings, what their needs actually are in reality."

According to Heather many people discount properties out of hand from what they see online. "It's tough to persuade somebody to go against their instinct and view something that they've already taken off their shortlist, but I've sold properties to people that they'd previously dismissed and said they absolutely didn't want to view. You'd be surprised. I always encourage people who are looking for a home to come and chat to us, even if they're doing their own research online as well."

It's clear as I'm chatting to Heather, that this industry and everything that goes with it is her passion, despite falling into it rather than consciously choosing it as a career path, and I wonder what it must be like, as a female being at the cutting edge of an industry that has traditionally been dominated by males.

"Yes, it can be tough," answers Heather quite matter-of-factly, when I ask her about sexism. "It's not so prevalent these days, but there have been times, even quite recently, when I've showed up at a property and the owners have expected a man instead of me. But nowadays there are more and more female estate

agents in senior roles, which can only be a good thing."

Clearly a lot goes on in the everyday life of running a successful and bustling Estate Agents such as Parrys as well as Fine & Country for which they hold the licence in the Abergavenny, Crickhowell and Monmouth areas. Heather explains that there's always a lot to respond to such as ever changing legislation, GDPR compliance, moving with the market and keeping up with technology to name just a few of the challenges, so she is thankful that she and Vivienne have one another.

"We've worked together since 2006 and became business partners in 2013, we make a great team," says Heather. "I also think the fact that we both live locally and are involved in our community gives us an edge."

In fact, Parrys has regularly sponsored events such as the Abergavenny Food Festival as well as supporting local schools, sports clubs and taking part in larger events to support homeless charities and the Fine & Country Foundation. Heather, Vivienne and the team have taken part in a sleepout supporting the Cardiff based homeless charity, Llamau and one of the team from the Monmouth office - Katie Garn - took part in a trek to Nepal last summer with the Fine & Country Foundation, rebuilding houses devastated in the earthquake. And to top it off, the team have taken part in the annual Monmouth Raft Race the past two years, and came first in the Ladies and Small Business category on their very first attempt – this really brought out their competitive spirit! So, clearly, people and community are exceptionally important to Heather and her team.

At this point in our conversation, as we're reaching the bottom of our coffee cups, I'm keen to get a bit more inside information about the selling of homes. Is it true, for instance, that people make a decision about buying a home within the first

ten seconds? Heather's blue eyes are alight with humour.

"Yes! It's well known that this industry is driven by emotion, but I'm always amazed that somebody will spend more time choosing a dress for £50 than they would choosing a home worth £500,000."

So how can a seller possibly compete with this initial yes/no gut response on first entering a home, I wonder. What can they do to grab a buyer's attention?

"De-clutter, obviously," says Heather. "But more than that. People buying homes want a space with lots of light, and you can achieve that by removing any big, dark pieces of furniture. If you've got a big piece of furniture in your hallway, move it. It will make your home feel small if your viewers have to negotiate their way around it."

Heather is a mine of information and I could go on picking her brain all day, but there's business to be done and I can't keep her holed up in this café for hours. As we're shrugging our coats back on and clearing the table of smartphones, papers and general business clutter, I want to know one more thing; if she could choose a perfect home, what would that be?

Heather pauses, thinks for a moment, sits back and smiles. "Somewhere with a big dressing room and a separate area for shoes," she says, "And outside, a lake and a big summer house where I can do my pilates and have my own space to just be me."

Sounds perfect.

Parrys Estate Agents is located at 21 Nevill Street, Abergavenny and, 2 Agincourt Square, Monmouth. Call them or drop in to chat to them about all your property needs from buying to selling to lettings and rentals. You will always be welcome.

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Is it Still Worth Investing in Solar PV?



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Not so long ago the 'Feed-in Tariff' (the money Solar PV owners are paid for being a mini power station) was remarkably generous at over 40p per unit (kWh) on the meter. Since those heady days in 2012 the payment level has dropped significantly and will be phased out by April 2019 – so is solar still worth it?

Solar now costs much less

Crucially, while the Feed in Tariff (FIT) rate has fallen, the cost of installing solar panels has also dropped. A 12 panel PV system that might have cost £12,000 in 2011 can now be fully installed for between £3500 and £4500, this is primarily due to the dramatic reduction in material costs. This means that while the return is more modest the initial outlay is considerably less – PV can still give a great return on investment but with less upfront cost than ever before. According to EST the average size of home installations has increased to 3.5kWh (14 panels) simply because it is more affordable.

Electricity costs more

The rising cost of electricity is, increasingly, the reason to invest in solar PV rather than any grants or tariff. Having PV means a reduced electricity bill and with the application of smart switching, or battery back-up, PV can also lead to a cut in water heating and lighting costs respectively. Local installers Green Park Power report that they typically still achieve a 10%, or better, return on investment for their customers.

Solar panels can increase the value of your home

The energy generated will increase in value as the cost of energy rises making Solar a great investment for a predictable income for many years to come. Furthermore, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has conducted research into the importance of energy efficiency and its influence on property prices. The report from June 2013 concluded that energy saving measures boost house prices by up to 14%, solar panels,

could increase property values by on average £16,000. It was found that by improving a home's Energy Rating from band G to E – or from a D to a B – property prices rose significantly.

Take care to choose the right installer

Homeowners should only deal with MCS accredited installers – they are quality checked each year and must conform to a recognised Consumer Code. It is not enough for the company to be a friend of an accredited installer - you are less protected. Look for the MCS and RECC logos on adverts and paperwork.

Overall there is still a strong case for Solar PV after the end of the Feed in Tariff but if installed now there is a little extra help on offer too. If you should have any questions or comments, please email Green Park Power on info@greenparkpower.co.uk or call on 01873 269031 to book a free no obligation survey.

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A small group of volunteers has got together to reform KAT and an appeal has gone out for more people to join in and tackle the growing problem of litter, starting with a litter pick on March 9.

To prepare for that, KAT's inaugural meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 6, at the

Abergavenny Constitutional (Con) Club, Park Road, at 7pm, and an open invitation has been issued to anyone interested in attending.

The KAT initiative is backed by Keep Wales Tidy and local councils. Some

residents have already signed up as litter champions for KWT, and other litter-picks are run by Friends' groups representing Abergavenny's green spaces.

But the new group hopes that many more volunteers will step forward to look after their own patch, perhaps their street – or a section of it – while others help to clean up their own favourite place.

After registering with KAT, volunteers will be

covered by insurance and provided with an anti-litter kit which they will also be able to use in their own time.

The first litter pick will be on Saturday, March 9 when an information stall will be set up between 10am and 2pm at High Cross (Red Square) in the town centre. The litter pick squad will start off from there at 12 noon. The area selected will probably be Mill Street / Swan Meadow. The session will finish at 2pm - before the rugby begins!

Future litter picks are likely to coincide with campaigns run by Keep Wales Tidy such as *Spring Clean Cymru* 2019 between March 22 and April 23.

For more information about KAT email keepabergavennytidy@gmail.com or check out the Facebook page on www.facebook.com/AberLitter/

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extinction rebellion

Extinction Rebellion Abergavenny brings climate action home

My sister, who lives in California, USA, phoned me last summer. "I've got two bags packed" she said, "One of clothes and the other an emergency supply of food and water." She told me that wildfires were getting closer to her home. If she received the call to evacuate, she would have to make a getaway. The previous summer she had endured thick smoke from the fires. Every summer, the fires were burning bigger and closer. We were both frightened.

The climate change threat grows daily and it's not only wildfires. Sea levels are rising, warming and

acidifying, glaciers and permafrost melting. Weather patterns are becoming more chaotic.

As an individual I felt helpless. I had been lobbying politicians and going on climate change marches for years but the government was not listening.

When I was invited to a meeting about Extinction Rebellion (XR), I knew I had to be part of this movement. Here, at last, were other people as concerned as I was, and they were prepared to take action to challenge the Government's complacency about Climate Change.

Extinction Rebellion is a movement coordinating a nonviolent uprising

against the inaction by the British government on the climate crisis. In its first national action, thousands converged on central London and blocked five major bridges across the Thames in the UK's biggest act of civil disobedience in decades. For two weeks, protestors disrupted the city.

Local XR groups organised peaceful Rebellion Days across the UK to pressurise their councils to achieve carbon neutrality by 2025. Abergavenny's XR group held its own Rebellion Day on 22nd December 2018 as a funeral procession to mourn species already lost by human activity. We called on Monmouthshire County Council to pass a Climate Emergency Motion that many councils have already adopted.

Luckily the wildfires missed my sister's house last summer, but the climate chaos intensifies.

To find out more about XR, its vision and mission, please visit XR's website: www.rebellion.earth. If you want to find out about the local group visit Extinction Rebellion Abergavenny Affinity Group's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ExtinctionRebellion

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Solar Medical & Chemical run regular promotions and you can make huge savings compared with other suppliers, so it is well worth paying them a visit to fully appreciate their vast range of over 4,000 products. You will be glad you did!

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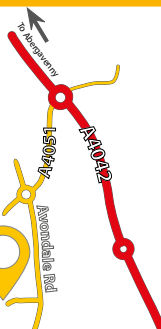
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PHOTOGRAPHY IN FOCUS THE CAMERA



LIFESTYLE & CULTURE

This month I'm going to take a change of tack and start looking at the technical side of photography rather than the finished piece or cognitive reasoning behind it. The one thing that every photo has in common is a camera, and one thing that I'm asked frequently is what camera I use. My stock reply to this is usually rather glib: "whichever one I happen to have in my hand". At the end of the day a camera is just a box with a lens on it through which light passes and renders an image on a sensor or film. However, not all boxes are created equal.

These days we all carry a camera with us daily. Smartphone cameras have improved dramatically, but take away the ubiquitous filters and they are ultimately just a very limited tool for taking snapshots. Having a 'real' camera won't make you a good photographer, but it will certainly go some way towards helping you be the best photographer you can possibly be, and it will help you understand the process of creating a photo; controlling light, freezing action or accentuating movement, isolating

a subject by using a very shallow depth of field, or having everything from foreground to horizon in pin sharp focus. If you want to take your photography to a different level, I would definitely recommend investing in a camera rather than a phone.

I use a variety of types and styles of camera, depending on what genre I'm shooting. For street work or documentary photography I want to be as inconspicuous as possible. Nothing puts people on edge more than someone carrying a large camera with a huge lens, (apart from one of those photographer's waistcoats with 50 pockets. Fashion suicide too). With this in mind I use mirrorless digital cameras or a style of camera called a rangefinder if shooting film. These fit easily in the hand, can be easily hidden, and combined with a wide angle lens make working close in to the subject easy. They are also very quiet and don't give you away like a single lens reflex (SLR) camera does with its distinctive mirror sound.

For projects where I don't need to be more subtle, I will use an SLR camera, again either digital or

film. These are significantly more substantial, take a variety of lenses, and are incredibly versatile, and suit working with a tripod well.

At the end of the day when choosing a camera there are many things to take into consideration; budget, ease of use, fixed lens, interchangeable lens, flash, digital, film, new, secondhand. The list goes on and on, and a good local camera shop will let you try out a range. Personally I think the future of digital photography is very much going down the mirrorless route, as shown in the picture of my Fuji, but film is having a massive renaissance, and having switched to digital around fifteen years ago I now shoot around 60-70% film again.

The most important thing is to get out and shoot, whichever camera or medium you use. Actually, scrap that. The most important thing is don't wear one of those waistcoats!

More of my work can be seen on Instagram @nedsoldman or at www.davidcollyer.wordpress.com Facebook David.collyer/9212 I can be contacted at davidcollyerodp@gmail.com for prints or commissions

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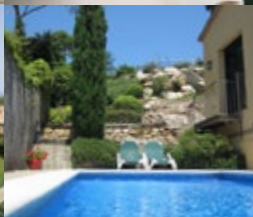
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LIFESTYLE & CULTURE

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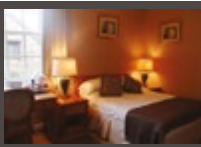
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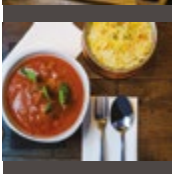
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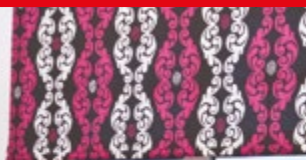
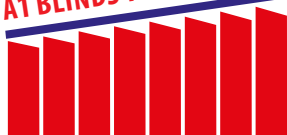


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Tales from the Towpath

In the 18th century, South Wales was endowed with coal, iron ore, limestone and water, the essential ingredients that gave birth to the industrial revolution. What it lacked was the means of transporting heavy goods to cities within Britain and to coastal ports for shipping across the world. Helen Morgan from Abergavenny Local History Society reports.

The answer was to build canals and narrow boats. Nearly half a century after the Bridgewater canal linking Lancashire collieries and Manchester replaced packhorses with horse-drawn barges, the Brecknock & Abergavenny canal was open for business.

In its heyday, tram roads from the quarries, ironworks, and coal mines near the heads of the Eastern valleys joined the canal at Talybont, Llangattock, Gilwern, Govilon and Llanfoist. Today these wharves are havens of tranquility but a century ago they rang to the sounds of tram wheels, horses and men at work. More than 30,000 tons of coal and coke, 30,000 tons of iron and 12,000 tons of lime and limestone were transported by barge annually in the 1820s. Most went south to Newport, but some headed north to Brecon, a thriving market town trading agricultural lime from nearby Watton, timber, barrels of beer, livestock and

crops. Brecon was also a rail head for trams and (from 1863) steam trains to Hay-on-Wye and the Midlands.

Benjamin Hall's wharf at Talybont, where the Brynore tram road from Trefil quarries and collieries in the Rhymney area meets the canal, was used from 1815-1864. Livestock were regularly transported by barge too, as was furniture by people moving house. Today, the five locks at Llangynidr and the aqueducts over the river Clydach at Gilwern and over the Usk at Brynich are still used by leisure craft today.

Llangattock had three wharfs and two sets of lime kilns. The larger kilns and wharf, built in 1815, transported lime down from Llangattock escarpment by tram. The smaller kiln, built in 1830 for the Bailey brothers, remained in operation until the 1920s. Winding houses whose ruins remain on the hillside controlled the trams descending the steep inclines



The Canal bridge at Talybont

between quarries and main tram road.

Indeed, lime kilns and trams were a common sight. In Llanfoist, however, only the wharf manager's cottage, Thomas Hill's warehouse and the name Kiln Road, are reminders of how industrial, noisy and dirty was this small village once.

Phil Hughes's talk on the Abergavenny & Brecknock canal on March 13 in King Henry VIII school hall starts at 7.30pm. Non-members may join on the night.
abergavennylocalhistorysociety.org.uk

Helen Morgan

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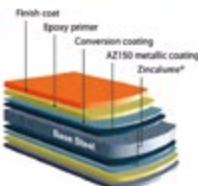
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In April's Focus, we'll be encouraging our readers to try something new. That might involve taking a course to learn a new skill or hobby or trying something different such as volunteering, befriending or discovering a therapy you haven't tried before. We are looking for articles and adverts on this theme and we're interested in hearing from you if you have something to contribute or advertise.

We'll also be celebrating Easter and the arrival of Spring!

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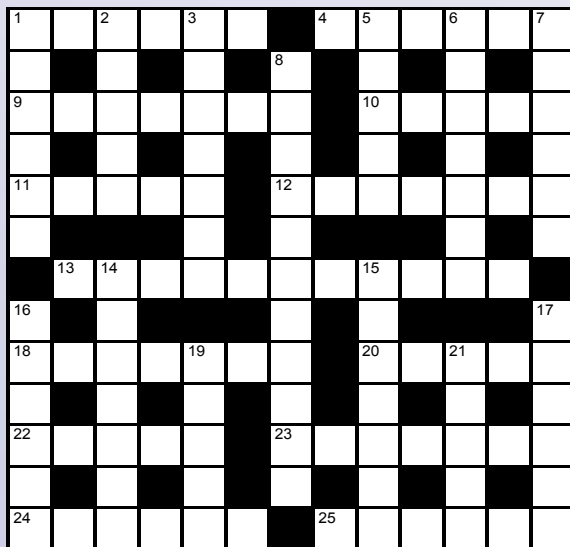
ACROSS

- 1 Unkempt (6)
- 4 Bogs (6)
- 9 Get better (7)
- 10 Command (5)
- 11 Not dirty (5)
- 12 Rational (7)
- 13 Honourable (11)
- 18 Consistent (7)
- 20 Hoard (5)
- 22 Blockade (5)
- 23 Impartial (7)
- 24 Tasks (6)
- 25 Remained (6)

DOWN

- 1 Swap (6)
- 2 Type of fruit (5)
- 3 Adult (5-2)
- 5 Incorrect (5)
- 6 Relating to healing (7)
- 7 Saunter (6)
- 8 Substitute (11)
- 14 Apparent (7)
- 15 Reckon (7)
- 16 Cared for (6)
- 17 Shouted (6)
- 19 Overweight (5)
- 21 Transport (5)

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