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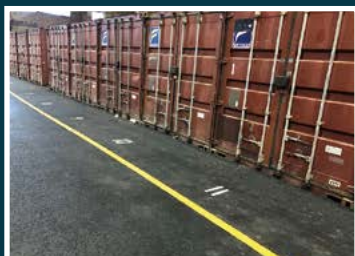
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## Dear Readers,

I always think July is a funny time of the year. For lots of us with children, it's a fullstop at the end of the academic year heralding the beginning of school summer holidays. For others, it's a chance to get away to foreign countries for a holiday or stay at home to (hopefully) enjoy some British sunshine.

One of my Dad's favourite sayings on the Summer Solstice is "The nights are drawing in," accompanied with an ironic sucking in of air through his teeth. While it's a complete exaggeration, it does remind me that summer is fleeting and that we need to make the most of it while it's here because, before long, those nights will draw in. Then I'll start talking to you about Christmas and I'll be REALLY unpopular!

Anyway, in the tumultuous world we are currently living in, we thought it would be a happy and positive thing to remind you of everything the season has to offer, so we've put together a little feature all about ways to enjoy the summer months. I really hope you'll enjoy it and it will inspire some joyful and carefree days for you and your family to relish. After all, that's what life is all about, isn't it?

Hannah



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# 17-18 SEP 22

# ABERGAVENNY FOOD FESTIVAL GŴYL FWYD Y FENNI

This year's star line-up is a gift for anyone buying a Stroller Ticket.\*

The flat price of £12 delivers equal rewards either day.

Chef Dems, Cooking with Fire, Talks and Debates - it's all happening on public stages in market venues and outdoors.

Advance booking only. Limited numbers. No walk-up on the day

\*Free tickets for children under 16 if accompanied by an adult



GUESTS INCLUDE:

THOMASINA MIERS, SANTOSH SHAH, KATE HUMBLE,  
CYRUS TODIWALA, MATT TEBBUTT AND FELICITY CLOAKE

[www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com](http://www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com)

This year's Festival offers an amazing day out on a £12 Stroller Ticket – an unrivalled shopping experience, terrific food and produce, inspirational guests, and a great atmosphere. Under 16s get in for free (if with an adult).

#### Festival Stroller Experience

The markets comprise 150 exhibitors across six venues with live events in the mix. Here's a brief snapshot.

The historic **Market Hall** is the go-to place for live cooking dems from the likes of Thomasina Miers, Matt Tebbutt and Santosh Shah. Here you'll also find smoked fish, Wales' oldest Caerphilly cheese, craft gin, brownies, garden seeds and much more. Be wowed by the legendary AFF hung decorations by Bettina Reeves and team.

Head out to **Upper Brewery Yard** for wine, beer, spices, all things garlic and Welsh homewares. Down a few steps and you have the Street Food Market with hot food to go – from Venezuelan arepas and fresh fish 'n' chips to Spanish paella and Tibetan dumplings. Plus craft beers and free entertainment.

**Tiverton Market** is the largest market, now running into Horsingtons Yard – a hub for gifts and gourmet ingredients (like seaweed rum, ferments, edible flowers and craft hot chocolate). It's also the new home of the Cheese and Drinks area where you can sample and pair with various beverages.

**The Priory Courtyard** is all about Fish 'n' Fizz – bringing coast to town – like freshly shucked oysters, sustainably caught seafood, and soft-shell crab rolls. The Priory Souk is where you'll discover the best new and small-scale food producers in Wales and the UK, including doughnuts, artisan baking kits, cold brew coffee and beautiful handmade chefs' knives. Find your new favourite!

## JOIN THE BRIGHTEST LIGHTS OF THE FOOD WORLD

Abergavenny Food Festival - 17 & 18 September

The **Castle** area is a beautiful retreat (away from the market bustle) featuring the Bloreng Bar and family-friendly areas for play and picnics. Delicious catering on offer, such as modern Indian, charcoal grilled kebab and pizza. Browse traditional iron and copper cookware, and hand-forged fire pits from Firepits UK.

Enjoy the sizzle and spark of the cooking over fire dems (line-up includes Cyrus Todiwala, Hangfire Girls and Chris Roberts) and debates and talks in the tents. Get your children signed up to CookSchool where they can enjoy making their own food.

*Abergavenny Food Festival*



**Cooking over Fire**

© Tim Woodier Photography

*All tickets are being sold in advance.*

Buy online at [www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com](http://www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com) or in person from E H Accountancy, 1 Horsingtons Yard, Abergavenny NP7 5PN, 09:30 to 14:00, Mon - Fri. No walk-up on the day. Stroller tickets will be posted out along with a free magazine/guide in early September.

# Abergavenny Pride 2022

SIARAD CYMRAEG

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**T**his year Abergavenny Pride is putting on our second annual event at St.Mary's Priory on July 16th. Everyone is welcome and you won't want to miss a jam packed day and evening full of fun in the heart of Abergavenny.

Having a two year break has given the Abergavenny Pride committee plenty of time to plan new ideas to bring you a bigger and better Pride for 2022 with both a daytime and evening event. The free daytime event will run from 12-6pm with live music, poetry, stalls, accessible circus activities and a children's soft play area provided by Marlow's Place. With food available from the amazing Origin Pizza truck with vegetarian and vegan options available. Please feel free to bring your own chair & picnic.

This year the Tithe Barn will host our new Think.Space area. Where

you can take a break with teas, coffee and cake and listen to or join in with talks, discussions and activities all based around mental health, LGBTQIA identity and mindfulness. There will be interactive presentations from Mind Monmouthshire; LGBTQIA members of The Church of Wales; The Future is Us – A Seat at the Table and Stop & Stitch - Stitch Meditation.

During the afternoon, in the hall, there will be a bar, fabulous selection of art & craft stalls and our very own Abergavenny Pride merchandise, T-shirts, tote bags etc. Tote bags are already available from, Georgie Games Boutique Salon, Ambika Social & Little Green Refills. We also have a Go Fund Me page if you would like to support this free event <https://www.gofundme.com/f/abergavenny-pride-2022>

We are super excited to be

having a very special appearance of Robin the rainbow digger with mascot Sally supplied by Griffiths Civil Engineering, who are also sponsoring the evening after party. There will be representatives from FFLAG; Victim Support; Papyrus; Breast Cancer Awareness; Aneurin Bevan Health Board for advice & St John's Ambulance will be in attendance. For those arriving by train Peak Cymru will have a welcoming safe space on platform 2 between 11.30a.m. & 6.30p.m. The reading room will be offered as a safe space for Pride visitors to collect information, meet friends, wait for a train or browse the library (more info at [peakcymru.org](http://peakcymru.org))

A big thank you to SRP Cleaning Services Ltd. for sponsoring the main stage and Abergavenny Round Table for sponsoring the security for the event, ensuring it offers a safe space for all.

Pam Wesson

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# JULY 2022 EVENTS CALENDAR

## NOW UNTIL 16TH JULY OPEN ART EXHIBITION

Mon - Sat 10am-5pm, Oriol CRIC Gallery, Beaufort St,  
Crickhowell

[gallery@visicrickhowell.wales](mailto:gallery@visicrickhowell.wales)

## 2ND JULY SHIRE & MINIATURE HORSE SHOW



Bailey Park, Abergavenny  
[www.swshs.org.uk](http://www.swshs.org.uk)

## 8TH JULY Llanfoist Village Hall Film Night: BELFAST

A young boy and his working-class Belfast family experience the tumultuous late 1960s.  
Doors open 7pm, Films start at 7.30pm; Bar available.  
Tickets £5 for adults or £3 for children, to be bought at the door



## 9TH JULY ABERGAVENTNY CRAFT FAIR

Find fantastic collections of art, crafts and gifts direct from the maker, and support artisans in your local community.  
9am-4pm, Market Hall, Abergavenny

## 9TH JULY MONMOUTHSHIRE CLASSIC & VINTAGE VEHICLE SHOW



Local Welsh Crafts, Traditional Breakfast rolls, Hot dogs, Sweets stall, Ice Cream van and a licensed pub bar all day plus the opportunity to meet with other drivers and enthusiasts and see the cars of your youth, and the car you always wish you had!  
Hogs Head, Llantilio Crossenny, NP7 8TA

## 9TH JULY BRECON SINGERS

Vivaldi, Handel, premier of Gareth Treseder. 7.30pm,  
Brecon Cathedral  
Tickets £15, Under 18 £5 from Ardent Gallery, Brecon Books, from Choir members or on the door  
[www.breconsingers.com](http://www.breconsingers.com)

## 16TH JULY ABERGAVENTNY PRIDE

"This year Abergavenny Pride is putting on our second annual event at St.Mary's Priory on July 16th. Everyone is welcome and you won't want to miss a jam packed day and evening full of fun in the heart of Abergavenny."  
See article on Page 9 for more info

**Castell Roc Music Festival 2022**

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Community"

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07922848765 to book or discuss

...CONTINUED

19TH JULY  
Book-ish Event:  
AN EVENING WITH JESSIE BURTON



Join us for an evening with Jessie Burton to discuss her newest book *The House of Fortune*, a sequel to the million-copy bestseller *The Miniaturist*.

Tickets £20 to include a limited edition of the book.

7.30pm, Manor Hotel, Crickhowell

29TH JULY  
Outdoor Theatre at Abergavenny Castle:  
**MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**



There's plenty to shout about in The Pantaloons' take on Shakespeare's timeless summer comedy of masks, music and mistaken identities!

See Page 14 for more info

Tickets [www.visitmonmouthshire.com/much-ado](http://www.visitmonmouthshire.com/much-ado)

## LOOKING AHEAD

17TH-18TH SEPTEMBER  
ABERGAVENTNY FOOD FESTIVAL

Get your advance tickets now! Visit [www.abergavennyfoodfestival.co.uk](http://www.abergavennyfoodfestival.co.uk) for information.

See article on Page 7



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MonLife Heritage Museums are pleased to welcome back Open Air Theatre at Abergavenny Castle this Summer! We hope you will join us for fun Friday family theatre at the Castle



## OUTDOOR THEATRE AT ABERGAVENNY CASTLE, FRIDAY EVENINGS THIS SUMMER

FRIDAY 29 JULY 7PM

### *Much Ado About Nothing*

by William Shakespeare - With *The Pantaloons*

There's plenty to shout about in The Pantaloons' take on Shakespeare's timeless summer comedy of masks, music and mistaken identities!

The boys are back from war and it's time for celebration, but devious Don John plans to spoil everyone's fun with his perilous plots. Will young lovers Claudio and Hero fall foul of the crafty criminal? Will bickering Benedick and Beatrice ever admit that they actually like each other?

Find out in this fast-paced, physical and funny new production!

Book online at: [www.visitmonmouthshire.com/much-ado](http://www.visitmonmouthshire.com/much-ado)



FRIDAY 12 AUGUST 7PM

### *The War of the Worlds*

based on the novel by HG Wells - With *The Pantaloons*

The hilarious Pantaloons invade the stage in this funny yet faithful new open-air adaptation of HG Wells' sci-fi classic, as they use musical instruments, puppetry and, um, enthusiasm to recreate deadly heat-rays, giant fighting-machines, squidgy tentacled Martians and interplanetary warfare on an epic scale. The chances of success? A million to one...

Book online at: [www.visitmonmouthshire.com/war-of-the-worlds](http://www.visitmonmouthshire.com/war-of-the-worlds)

FRIDAY 19TH AUGUST 5PM

### *Awful Auntie*

based on David Walliams' children's book - With *Heartbreak Productions*

Awful Auntie by David Walliams, adapted for outdoor theatre by Heartbreak Productions, is a truly thrilling tale. Owls, ghosts, chases, escapes, motorcycle rides, and tiddlywinks all fill Stella's days as she evades her menacing Aunt and saves the family home.

Join us at the dedication of the new playground at Saxby Hall Orphanage and hear how it all came about – how Stella Saxby was left an orphan, all alone with her Awful Auntie and how Aunt Alberta and her best friend Wagner, a vicious Bavarian owl, tried everything they could to torment Stella into signing over the deed to Saxby Hall. But Stella, with the help of her friend Soot, fought off Aunt Alberta, saved Saxby Hall, and gifted the beautiful house to be used as an orphanage.

Running time: 2 Hours | Age: 7+

Book online at [www.visitmonmouthshire.com/awful-auntie](http://www.visitmonmouthshire.com/awful-auntie)



All ticket booking is online and you can find information about all the shows and terms and conditions on the Visit Monmouthshire website, by going to: [www.visitmonmouthshire.com/outdoor-theatre](http://www.visitmonmouthshire.com/outdoor-theatre)

Ticket prices for all the shows are: £14.50 adult; £8.50 child (up to 18) £40 family (2+2)

Please bring a picnic and something to sit on and appropriate clothing for the weather.



# HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

SUMMER '22

**At Abergavenny Community Centre**  
Merthyr Road, NP7 5BY  
www.abergavennycc.org

**Cooking for Life** with Elaine Blanchard (8–12 yrs)  
Mon 25, Tues 26 and Wed 27 July. 10am–1pm

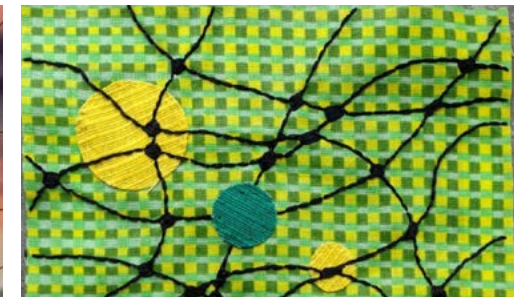
**Outdoor Play sessions** with Jo Dainty from EverydayPLAY  
Mon 15, Tues 16, Wed 17 and Thurs 18 August. 10am–12noon and 1–3pm.

**ART workshops** with Emma Prentice (7–12 yrs)  
Mon 8, Tues 9, Wed 10 and Thurs 11 August. 10am–12noon.

Places are limited  
Donation of £5 per child  
All enquiries: Call **07821 627038** or Email **abercc.activities@gmail.com**

Self confessed Focus lover, Pam Wesson, recently got in touch with some lovely neurographic art, inspired by the images we use for our Moments of Calm pages. We asked Pam to tell us a little more about the technique involved.

## Neurographic Art



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“ You know how much I love my Focus magazine and how I love to ‘Make The Most Of It’ in as many ways as possible. So recently I found it just perfect for practicing my neurographic art, especially on the beautiful backgrounds of the ‘moments of calm’ pages. Thank you for the inspiration.”

Neurographic art or ‘Neurographica’ was designed and formalized in 2014 by Russian psychologist Pavel Piskarev. He defined neurographic art as a creative method for world transformation. Using the

neurographic algorithm – a procedure or formula for solving a problem based on conducting a sequence of specified actions - Piskarev believed that creative processes engage additional neurons making new connections and that those connections create energy. It helps evolve our reality by engaging our emotional and aesthetic intelligence for discovering solutions to a variety of issues you may be working through.

My usual creative medium is in textiles and Stitch Meditation is my go to meditation form as I like ‘active meditation’ where

the hands are occupied but the mind is free to wander, let go of the stresses of the day and become calm. It has been fun exploring a new art/meditation process which sits well with my creative brain. I find it both relaxing and meditative. Of course, I soon started to think, could I incorporate this process into my stitching? The answer is yes I can.

If you would like to know more about the process, with either stitch or ink, I can give you guidance or arrange a taster session if a few people are interested. You can contact me Pam on 07823 517547.

Pam Wesson

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# Befriending Support for Deaf people and people with hearing loss in Wales



**The last two years have been a difficult time for many people, especially deaf people and people with hearing loss.**

Many of us have felt isolated, and in need of a regular catch up to brighten our day.

RNID and the Centre for Sign-Sight-Sound can offer befriending support to people with hearing loss in Wales through the Live Well with Hearing Loss "Time for Me" service.

The service provides regular one on one support through volunteers over ten sessions, either in person, over the phone, over video call or through letters. Volunteers are fully trained in how to communicate with people with hearing loss, and will be matched to service users based on your needs and interests. You do not need to be a hearing aid user to take part.

A lady with hearing loss who recently benefitted from befriending support said: "I look forward to each call from the volunteer. It makes me feel at ease...I thoroughly enjoy it"

The Live Well with Hearing Loss project is funded by the Welsh Government and delivered in partnership by RNID and the Centre of Sign-Sight-Sound. The project can also support people who have been diagnosed with hearing loss in the last 18 months, offering three sessions to help you adapt after your diagnosis and access support and information. In addition, our 'At Home' service can support you to get the most out of assistive equipment that might help you such as listening devices, amplified telephones and doorbells, loop systems and alarm bells.

For more information about any of our free services, or if you would like to get involved in volunteering for the 'Time for Me' Befriending service, please contact us on: [LiveWell.Cymru@rnid.org.uk](mailto:LiveWell.Cymru@rnid.org.uk) or call 0808 8080123 (South, West and Mid Wales).



**LIVE WELL WITH HEARING LOSS TIME FOR ME SERVICE**

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# Longtown Mountain Rescue



**The last month has been busy for the team with a mix of call outs, training and fundraising events.**

Our main training this month has been at Symonds Yat, practicing all things water. Our Level 2 & 3 water specialists refreshed their skills in the water, which included swimming in rapids, self-rescuing, rescuing others, using our water sled in and out of the rapids while trying not to capsize (with different levels of success!), and improving our understand of how to 'read' the water. Our level 1 bank leaders practiced their throwline skills,

how to communicate dangers to the water-based teams and how to manage a party of people in and around the water.

For call outs, we have been all over. Recently we have been involved in a two-day search in Monmouth area, working with the police, and on the second day, with our colleagues from SARA (Severn Search and Rescue Association).

Earlier in the month, we had a male who sustained a lower leg injury near the back of the Grwyne Fawr reservoir, unable to weight bear, we were able

to get our 4x4 most of the way up to him. Then we were able to evacuate him with a mix of stretcher and vehicle.

On a similar theme of lower leg injury, we had a young lady on a school trip badly roll her ankle and unable to continue at the base of Mynydd Llysiau, north of the Hermitage. Medical care was provided, and the young lady evacuated out via stretcher, which took about two hours due to the more remote location.

We have also been called to the Staunton area, in a multi-agency operation, to help a man who had taken a fall in the woods.

We wish all the casualties a full and speedy recovery.

This month we have provided safety cover for events in Hay on Wye, the Llangorse area and for the Abergavenny 3 peaks. In which for the latter, we were out on most of the major summits of the area. Great day had by all; it was lovely to see so many people enjoying the mountains.

Don't forget if you ever need Mountain Rescue - Call 999, ask for the Police, and then Mountain Rescue.

*Dan Mazhindu*



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# 125 Years of Hockey in Abergavenny



**In** 1997 Abergavenny Hockey club celebrated its centenary and now, in 2022, the club once again has an important milestone to celebrate.

Abergavenny Hockey Club was founded on 16th October 1897 and had a membership of 43 men in the first season. Its first President was Dr. F. Erskine Paton who was succeeded by Mr F. Baker-Gabb when Dr Paton left the area.

Mr M.J. Egan (believed to be a reporter for the Abergavenny Mail) wrote at the time 'Abergavenny is the premier hockey town in Wales. In no other town is there such an interest taken in hockey as in this ancient borough. It is not merely a class interest; its supporters are to be found in all grades of social life in the town, and the fame of the club has spread far and wide.'

Hockey was played at the cricket ground in Avenue Road until the early 1970s and then moved to a redgras pitch at King Henry VIII School.

Over the years Abergavenny Hockey Club has produced a significant number of Welsh international players the greatest of whom was Dr. 'Bill' Griffiths who represented Wales on numerous occasions and

played for Great Britain in the 1948 Olympic Games in London winning a Silver Medal.

Abergavenny hosted at least eleven Welsh international matches against England, Ireland and Scotland between 1902 and 1941. One Wales v England match was played at Cwrt-y-Gollen in 1969.

During the period between 1975 and 1989 the club recorded a number of notable successes. In the 1975/76 season the 1st XI were South Wales League Division 1 Champions and winners of the Innsworth Six a Side Tournament. 1989 saw promotion to the Premier Division of the South Wales League.

Coupled with our centenary in 1997 was the construction of the present artificial grass pitch on the King Henry VIII School site. Jenny Stokes, then Chair of the new hockey club formed by the merger of the men's club with Abergavenny Ladies Hockey Club, was largely responsible for the campaign to improve hockey facilities in the town.

Twenty five years on, under the leadership of Chairman Luke Rees, the club celebrated its 125 years on Saturday 11 June 2022 by holding a hockey event for both junior and

senior players during the morning and early afternoon.

In the evening a 125 Dinner was held at The Kings Arms Hotel in Abergavenny with over 50 club members and guests attending. The evening began with the Chairman reading a letter of congratulations from the Mayor of Abergavenny, Tony Konieczny, and was followed by an address by the Club President ,Trevor Scott.

The event culminated in awards being presented to individual players for the 2021/22 season. Captain's Player, Players' Player and Young Player awards went to Kirstie Cashmore, Charlie Haydock, Henriette Banks, Jodie Williams, Rhian Beynon, Joe Sevenoaks, Liam Wade and Nate Corken.

Trevor Scott presented the President's Cup to Chalotte Halsey and Darren Richards for

outstanding service to the club in the 2021/22 season.

Charlotte Halsey was also commended by the Chairman for her work with the club's pool of umpires – Adil Gatrade, Liam Wade, Geraint Davies, Trevor Scott, Nia Johns, Kevin Phillips and Sharon Phillips.

Abergavenny Hockey Club's 125 celebrations were thoroughly enjoyed by all participants.

Because of the new King Henry VIII School build Abergavenny Hockey Club will soon lose its hockey pitch until the new school is completed. Urgent efforts are being made to find alternative facilities for training and matches next season and beyond with support from Hockey Wales and Monmouthshire County Council.

[www.abergavennyhockey.co.uk](http://www.abergavennyhockey.co.uk)

*Trevor Scott*

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# How to Create an Enchanting Outdoor Space

Few of us have the know-how or pockets that are deep enough to create the type of outdoor space that you might see at the Chelsea Flower Show. Don't despair, though – it's still possible to create a magical outdoor space without breaking the bank or being the next Alan Titchmarsh, ensuring that you can enjoy your alfresco area to the max during the warm summer months.

## Add a firepit or chiminea

This will add cosiness to your outdoor space, especially in the evenings when the temperature drops. Firepits are a great focal point for toasting marshmallows and can be picked up relatively cheaply from lots of shops on the high street or online. Remember to always monitor open flames and make sure you have good clearance from trees, bushes and fences.



## Lighting

Add string lights and solar powered lights around trees and shrubs or on walls and fences to create atmosphere. A few well placed citronella candles will not only keep away biting insects, but will add drama and enchantment to your outdoor area. These can be bought for pennies from a wide variety of retailers.



## Add a kitchen appliance!

One for larger gardens and bigger budgets. The addition of a wet bar, sink and even a fridge or grill not only adds a functional perk to your garden but really moves the inside out. By incorporating just one of these elements into your outside space, you can avoid the need to traipse in and out of the house, ensuring that you can spend more time outside, and adds a touch of luxury.



## Colourful Seating Area

Whatever outdoor seating arrangement you have or that you settle on, ensure that it's comfortable so that you can relax enjoyably. Add splashes of colour with brightly printed cushions and throws to give your old outdoor seating a new lease of life. Don't be restricted by formal seating styles either; why not opt for a hammock in a vibrant pattern? Don't forget tables, though. If your outdoor space is small, go for small coffee style nesting tables that can be moved around so that drinks and nibbles can be perched easily.

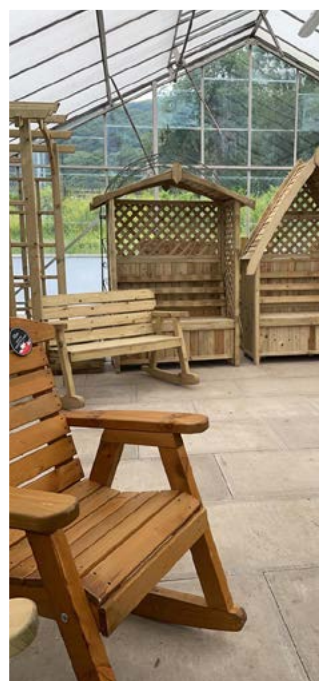


## Install a water feature

Flowing water increases the production of serotonin – the chemical that lifts our mood – which is why installing a water feature in your garden is such a good idea. A water feature needn't be a large pond full of koi carp. These days they come in all manner of shapes and sizes from oak barrels to babbling bowls and mini waterfalls. They can be picked up relatively cheaply and will add a zen-like calming element to your outdoor space.



Explore our wide range of outdoor furniture, fire pits and pizza ovens for the perfect lazy summer evening.



Evesham Gardens, Church Lane, Llanfoist, Abergavenny, NP7 9LF  
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# BBQ with a Difference

Many of us are looking at ways to incorporate more vegetables and plant based options into our diets. What happens, then, when you're confronted by the ultimate meat feast that is the summer barbecue?

Fortunately there are loads of alternative meat products on the market from bangers to burgers and beyond. However, if you're looking to shun the processed stuff and want to incorporate more whole foods into the meal, we have some suggestions for you! Don't forget, you don't have to be vegetarian or vegan to enjoy these suggestions – they're suitable for anyone and everyone who fancy a barbecue with a difference.



## The Mighty Mushroom

Gather large portobello mushrooms and cover with butter (or oil of choice for a vegan option) mixed with crushed garlic cloves and a dash of lemon juice. Sprinkle over any kind of robust herb like oregano, marjoram or thyme and whack onto the grill. Keep turning, keep basting. Once tender, serve on their own or between a split burger bun with toppings of your choice for a flavour sensation. These are extra tasty with a dollop of kimchi!



## Audacious Aubergines



Aubergines and a BBQ grill are a marriage made in heaven. When an aubergine is roasted over flames, it takes on tantalising smoky flavours. The flesh of a roasted aubergine can be used in dips like the middle eastern baba ganoush, which combines the flesh with garlic, tahini and lemon juice and is served with soft and pliable flatbreads. Another way of serving grilled aubergines is with a miso glaze. Halve an aubergine lengthways and score the flesh on the cut halves in a criss-cross pattern. Combine 50 ml of mirin with 1tbsp miso paste, 1tbsp maple syrup, ½ tsp of ground turmeric and a crushed clove of garlic. Brush the skin of the aubergine with olive oil, then the cut halves with the miso paste. Barbecue skin side down for ten mins, then the cut side down for 5 mins. Brush the aubergines with any remaining glaze and serve sprinkled with sliced spring onion, sliced red chilli, some chopped peanut or cashews and coriander.

Alternatively, why not get your hands on a shawarma spice mix? Traditionally shawarma is used as a marinade for lamb or mutton, but it works beautifully with mushrooms. There are lots of recipes online for shawarma marinades or buy a pre-made paste or spice mix from the supermarket. Slather it over the mushrooms and whack it on the grill for a taste of the middle east. Serve with a green salad and bread to mop up the juices!

## Clever Corn

Corn on the cob is not a new idea when it comes to a barbecue, but why not make it the star of the show instead of a coy side dish? Grab four cobs of corn and mash together 60g butter (or vegan alternative) with ½ tsp runny honey (or agave syrup), ½ tsp tomato ketchup, 1 crushed garlic clove and a tablespoon of harissa. Spread the mixture over the corn and wrap each one in foil. Barbecue for 30-35 mins until tender and charred. Delicious!



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**Spring Wrap up**

What a start to the year. We are now halfway through and we've had the pleasure in helping our clients sell their home and start their next chapter.

Working with a varied range of properties from new builds to town houses we have marketed each to their full potential capturing the eye of many house hunters.

*These are just a handful of the properties that we've helped sell so far in 2022*



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Guide Price - £560,000

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The property lies in the small hamlet of Bryngwenin situated approximately 2 miles to the North East of Abergavenny surrounded by the Monmouthshire countryside with a variety of local walks.

*We have buyers waiting for similar properties*



**What Jo says,**  
"This property offers great flexibility for multi-generational living and has an amazing view."

Jo Francis, Abergavenny Branch Manager



Recently sold



# TO TUB OR NOT TO TUB?

Hot tubs became all the rage during lockdown, and their popularity has endured. If you're thinking about taking the plunge, here's an essential guide on what to consider before you buy.

**If** you're thinking of buying a hot tub, one of the first things you'll need to decide on is your budget. Cheaper hot tubs are a good choice, but they're likely to be inflatable rather than being permanent and, often, inflatable tubs are not suitable for year round use. Spending more will mean you're likely to get something more durable with more features. As a general guide, inflatable tubs are priced from £300 to £1500, hard shell tubs will set you back anywhere from £3000 to £10,000, while the typical spend for a wood-fired tub is anywhere from £1500 to £8,000. The price you pay will depend on size and manufacturer.

A huge consideration is not just the initial cost of the tub itself, but the ongoing cost of heating and maintenance. We all know that electricity doesn't come cheaply and as hot tubs by their very nature are, well, hot, you need to think about the cost of electricity to keep it up to temperature, as well as the cost of the water to fill it, especially if you are on metered water.

You'll also need to remember that hot tubs need looking after – you can't just set them up and leave them. You'll need to keep an eye on chemical levels to make sure the water is safe and balanced. You can do this using test strips that will check the chlorine/bromine, pH, alkalinity,

and calcium hardness. Your hot tub manufacturer will provide information on ideal chemistry ranges for your specific tub.

Think about the space you have available to you. Inflatable hot tubs can be taken down and stored, but are still very bulky, so you'll need somewhere to keep it safely so the plastic won't perish. And remember, all tubs will need setting up on a solid, level base – even inflatable versions.



A Lay-Z-Spa inflatable hot tub

Once you decide that a hot tub is definitely for you, there's a mind boggling array of different brands and versions out there to choose from. Lay-Z-Spa hot tubs are a popular brand of inflatable tubs, and come in different shapes and sizes, colours and patterns, that can accommodate between 2-8 people. Prices start from £500.



A Jacuzzi hardshell hot tub

Jacuzzi is a very well known brand of hard shell tubs. You can expect to pay upwards of £4,000 for these.

Skarsgard produces a small range of authentically Swedish wood-fired hot tubs. They range from £3,000 to £5,000. A wood-fired tub will save you on the cost of electricity (most do not have jets), and require fewer chemicals, but you will need a good stock of wood to burn!

If in doubt, you can always think about hiring an inflatable hot tub. Lots of companies hire these out on a weekly basis and will come to your home to set it all up for you. This is a great way to find out whether or not the hot tub life is for you.

ABOVE AND BELOW: Skarsgard wood-fired hot tubs



# Twyn y Gaer Hillfort Walk

A stroll through lanes and fields, a climb up hills with views, and a ramble through pretty woodland. It takes in a nature reserve and an ancient hill fort. It's just over 5 miles long and, while none of it is particularly arduous, you should dress for mud and undergrowth.

## To get there:

Take the Hereford Road (A465) out of Abergavenny. Turn off at Llanvihangel Crucorney and take the first left after the Skirrid Inn. Continue past Stanton. Just after the Queens Head Inn, there is a small car park on the left. There may be a charge for parking here, so bring some coins with you.

*Directions Overleaf...*



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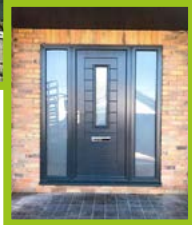
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**1** Leave the car park and walk towards the Inn, turning left just before you reach it. Cross the bridge over the river, (Honddu), then go over the stile on the right.



**2** Following the river at first, walk to a small wooden footbridge and stile, across the next field to a copse of trees with the river passing through it. Follow the line of the river until you reach a wooden footbridge that crosses it.

**3** Cross the bridge, and cross the road beyond it. Continue in a south westerly direction along a lane. Pass through Stanton Manor Farm and continue along the track.

**4** Pass through a metal gate and then go right when the track forks.



Continue uphill along the track

**5** Pass through a metal gate onto the open access land of Bryn Arw.



Follow the path for about half a mile. Pass through a gate and stile and continue down the track.

**6** After 260m Look out for a track on the right that doubles back down the hill. If you get to a farm, you've missed it!

**7** The track will take you past the Coed-y-Cerrig nature reserve, which has a raised wooden boardwalk going through it – maybe worth a look if you've plenty of time.



Continue along the track to the road. Turn left onto it, and walk a short way. Go over the stile on the right and follow the path (difficult to do in places) as it travels uphill through the woods.

**8** Go over the stile and out of the wood at the top of the path. The footpath now passes along the left hand boundary of The Pant (a private property) past a pond which is shaped like a whale if you look carefully (or on Google Maps). Go over a stile and past the houses. Don't exit via the driveway however; cross it and go over the stile on the other side.



**9** Follow the footpath to a junction of farm tracks. Immediately ahead of you is a stile in the hedge, but it's easy to miss it.



Cross this, and continue through New Inn Farm, passing the farm buildings on your left.

**10** Join the metalled road and turn right up the hill. When the track forks, take the right hand route which travels

uphill, and through a small wood. Go past an old caravan (if it's still there) and along the track towards Gaer Farm.

**11** The OS map shows the footpath going straight through the farmhouse buildings, however it has been re-routed; immediately after the gate to Gaer Farm, the footpath goes hard left, up through trees and undergrowth – the path is not really discernable but there is a marker, so keep your eyes peeled. Go left through a metal gate and follow the track round to the left.



**12** When you reach a group of trees and a stone wall on the left, you should be level with the hill fort, so turn right and scramble up the hill to the top and to the trig point, (or if you don't feel like scrambling, follow the path until it meets another that doubles back to the top – 12b). The earthworks of the hill fort are clearly visible and the view from here is great. It's easy to see why you'd want your fort here!



**13** When you've finished admiring the view, leave via the track that leads east. The track meets a boundary wall and bears round to the left. Follow this path until you get to the road/track. Turn right on to it and enjoy an easy stroll for a mile, all the way down the hill and back to the car park.

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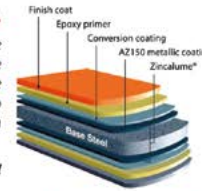
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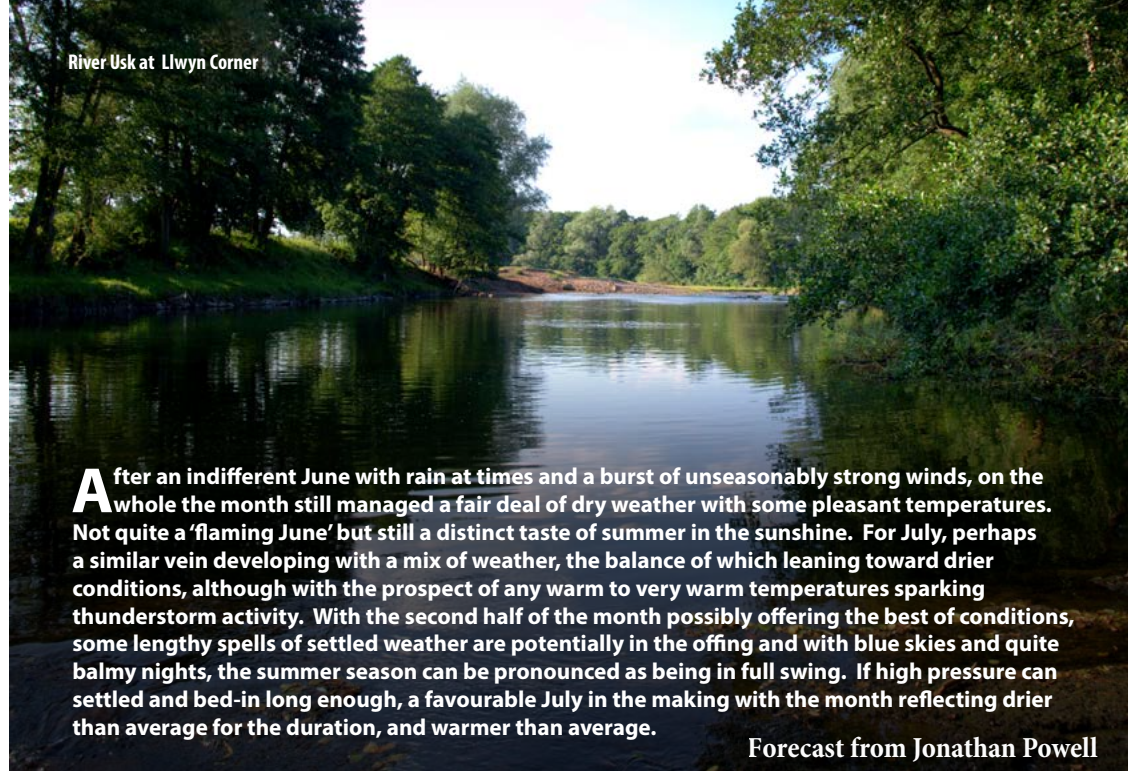
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River Usk at Llwyn Corner



**A**fter an indifferent June with rain at times and a burst of unseasonably strong winds, on the whole the month still managed a fair deal of dry weather with some pleasant temperatures. Not quite a 'flaming June' but still a distinct taste of summer in the sunshine. For July, perhaps a similar vein developing with a mix of weather, the balance of which leaning toward drier conditions, although with the prospect of any warm to very warm temperatures sparking thunderstorm activity. With the second half of the month possibly offering the best of conditions, some lengthy spells of settled weather are potentially in the offing and with blue skies and quite balmy nights, the summer season can be pronounced as being in full swing. If high pressure can settled and bed-in long enough, a favourable July in the making with the month reflecting drier than average for the duration, and warmer than average.


Forecast from Jonathan Powell

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# Secret Picnic Spots

**W**hilst not all of these picnic spots are secret, you may have forgotten one or two of them or perhaps never visited them before. Many readers will be familiar with what is available on our immediate doorstep here in Abergavenny, so we've gone slightly further afield, bringing you a selection of locations you may not have previously discovered. Here's our pick of the crop, so grab your blanket and hamper, your squashed sarnies and biscuits and enjoy some quality time with family and friends immersed in nature, relishing what our natural surroundings have to offer. We've provided the co-ordinates for you to pop into the search box on Google or Bing Maps to make finding them a little easier.

## Twyn y Gaer Hill Fort

Turn to page 36 to see this month's walk. It takes in lots of lovely scenery, but our choice for a picnic spot is up at the ancient hill fort itself where you can take in beautiful views of the surrounding countryside. Combine your picnic with this walk to get your steps in, or bypass the majority of it by parking on the lane at the coordinates below, follow the path uphill to the gate, go through the gate and turn immediately left, following the path up to the hill fort.

Coordinates: 51.8938, -3.0224



## Caerleon Amphitheatre

These impressive remains, were built to serve the Roman legionary fortress of Isca in the first century and could hold 6,000 spectators at a time. Seat yourself up on the terraces or down in the grassy arena itself and marvel at the centuries of history that this space has been witness to. A lovely place for a picnic, and dog friendly too, as long as you keep your canine friend on a lead.

Coordinates: 51.6080, -2.9567



## Black Rock Picnic Site - Severn Estuary

If panoramic views are what you are after, then head to Black Rock Picnic site where you can enjoy spectacular views of the estuary and both Severn Bridge crossings. Black Rock has been a crossing point between England and Wales for centuries; Roman coins found in the mud along the foreshore were probably thrown into the water as an offering to the gods for a safe passage. Look out for Meadow Brown butterflies and knapweed with their purple flower heads, which are much loved by insects. Car parking facilities available.

Coordinates: 51.5896, -2.7047



## Tregate Bridge - River Monnow

This is a quiet and wooded stretch of the Monnow and has a path leading down from the bridge to shingle and pebble beaches, islands and deep pools. There are plenty of spots to spread out a rug, and you can safely dip your feet in the more shallow pools without the fear of rushing water (perfect for small people). There's also plenty of shade thanks to overhanging trees on the riverbank. Lots of wildlife to spot here from damselflies to dippers and even the odd brown trout if you're lucky! Park by the bridge and follow the river a short way downstream.

Coordinates: 51.8516, -2.7607



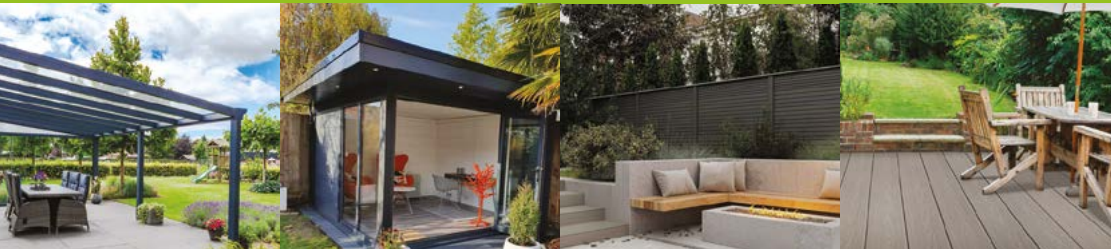
Tregate Bridge: Photo by Kenaz24photography



## Blaen y Glyn Isaf

This spot is located at the bridge over Caerfanell, next to the Natural Resources Wales Car Park (free parking) beyond Talybont Reservoir, and is a wonderful location if you want to enjoy the sound of the water as it trips over stones and rushes past boulders. This location is popular with walkers and visitors, but has lots more to do if you're looking at combining a picnic with a walk. Head to the top car park if you want a steep descent through the woods, (you'll find picnic tables here) - but remember, you'll need strong legs to go back up to your car afterwards!

Coordinates: 51.8441, -3.3612



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# GREENSPACE LIVING



**G**reenspace Living was created by brothers-in-law David and Matthew. The ethos of the company is to provide outdoor living solutions for customers to extend their inside space to the outside. An innovative range of composite timber garden rooms, aluminium verandas and composite decking and fencing has proved very popular with their customers.

The pair discovered the benefits of the composite timber garden rooms and decided to make this the construction method of choice. Composite timber garden rooms are highly insulated, zero maintenance, robust and require no internal decoration so you can use your room as soon as it has been erected. The rooms are available in a choice of four colours with authentic timber grain.

To continue with the ethos of the company Greenspace living has added stylish aluminium verandas into their range of products. These

verandas allow you to extend the use of your patio or decking over the spring and summer providing that extra space to relax or entertain undercover whilst enjoying the feeling of being outside but without the risk of the weather spoiling it.

Complementing the composite timber rooms Greenspace Living also install composite decking and fencing which is maintenance free and available in several colours and finishes.

"As a small family run business Matt and I pride ourselves on finding that perfect solution for

your outdoor space, our customers are at the heart of everything we do. Designing and installing their dream space to allow them to work from home, have home gym, hobby room or a veranda to spend lazy summer evenings under gives us great satisfaction." David commented.

Greenspace Living are happy to offer advice and guidance, more information can be found on Greenspace Living's website [www.greenspaceliving.co.uk](http://www.greenspaceliving.co.uk) and can be contacted by email at [wearegreenspace@gmail.com](mailto:wearegreenspace@gmail.com) or 07854 795225.







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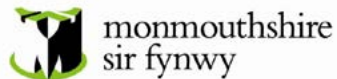
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# Fitting in

"Look for simplicity. Simplicity always holds the key you're looking for. And that key... it opens the door to wisdom."

~ Sydney Banks



I recently returned from a conference, where a talk I heard unlocked in me a deeper understanding of the notion of 'fitting in' that might ease your mind, too.

The conference was exploring the insights of Sydney Banks, an ordinary man by all accounts (he hailed from Scotland; was a welder by trade) who, in the 1970's, had a spontaneous, profound awakening to the nature of the human condition. Such was the magnitude of his realisations that 50 years later, practitioners like me are helping others to have an easier experience of life by sharing this simple, powerful understanding, any way they can.

A bit like we do here, each month.

The conference speaker's inspirational story related his refusal to be 'put in a box' against the background of a lifetime's feeling like he never really fit in. Black, brought up in the projects of Birmingham Alabama, reluctant gang member, subsequently a serving military man, his background could not have been more different from mine, and yet I couldn't help but resonate with his 'outsider' story.

After a brief flash of guilt—what possible claim could a white, middle class, male make, to feeling like an outsider?!—I allowed my thoughts to play over my past anyway and

was surprised to uncover that same feeling of 'not fitting in'.

Never part of an 'in' crowd as a youth; not taking the recognised path to higher education; feeling like a misfit at medical school; and never like a proper surgeon, because I wasn't willing to sacrifice my outside interests, I left... drifting from one occupation to another, never feeling truly at home in any.

Back in the room I realised that even here, surrounded by my colleagues and friends who shared this same, all-encompassing understanding, I still had experienced suspicions of my 'other-ness'—I was rubbish at small talk, I didn't share the understanding correctly, I'd never be truly accepted into the community...

And then, looking around me in a mild, cold sweat, it hit me. We all feel like this. Without exception.

If we'd paused proceedings right there and then and asked "Who sometimes feels like they don't fit in?" every single hand in that auditorium would have gone up. Because each and every one of us—regardless of background, skin colour, education, religion, position or prosperity—has moments when we're terrorised by our own thinking.

Thought, by its very nature, temporarily creates the impression of separateness, one of the symptoms of which is to feel like we

don't fit in. Ironically, beautifully, this very fact unites us all in our shared humanity! At this simple level, none of us is an outsider. We are all exactly the same.

This stark realisation dissolved the insecure thoughts I'd been feeling and dropped me straight back into the here and now, with the speaker, my fellow humans and feelings of oneness, community, and love; all the symptoms of a tranquil mind.

So next time you feel like you don't fit in, see that for what it is: a passing thought, that has only as much power as you are willing to give it. Why not turn your attention from it, and instead allow yourself to experience life just as it is, now, where we are all united in our shared divinity; that place we call 'home'.

Which is the very essence of Sydney Banks' insights that I had come to the conference to explore.



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The arrival of Wimbledon fortnight heralds the strawberry season. These delicious berries have a long association with Wimbledon and are served to thousands of visitors during the tournament. With this in mind I decided to bring a little bit of Wimbledon to your home with this delicious vanilla crème strawberry tart recipe. What better way to enjoy the great British summer – rain or shine!

The following recipe can be used to make individual tarts or one large one. This recipe will make 12 individual tarts.



## Wimbledon Strawberry Tarts

### Ingredients:

**For the Sweet Shortcrust Pastry** (you can cheat by buying readymade sweet shortcrust)

- 115g plain flour
- 30g unsalted butter (cubed)
- 25g lard (cubed)
- 25g icing sugar
- 1 egg yolk

**For the Vanilla crème**

- 1 large egg yolk (beaten)
- 37g caster sugar
- ½ tbsp cornflour
- 125 ml milk
- 18g butter (room temp)
- ¼ tsp vanilla bean paste (or seeds from half a vanilla bean pod)
- 50ml double cream

**For the topping**

- 1 punnet of strawberries
- 2tbsp strawberry jam

Start by making your pastry and rest it in the fridge for at least 30 mins:

In a bowl add flour, butter and lard and rub into the flour with your fingertips until mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Gently combine with icing sugar.

Add the beaten egg and combine (best with your hands) until the mixture comes together in a smooth ball – you may need to add a drop of water. Once the mixture has come together, give it a gentle knead on a lightly floured board and then wrap in clingfilm and leave to rest in the fridge for at least 30 mins.

Now make the Vanilla crème by mixing together the egg yolk, sugar, cornflour and vanilla bean paste in a small bowl.

Heat the milk in a small saucepan until it just starts to boil, and pour onto the egg yolk mixture, whisking all the time to keep it smooth. Pour the mixture back into the saucepan and cook over a low heat until the custard comes to the boil and thickens. Take off the heat and add the butter until it melts.

Pour into a bowl and cover the surface with clingfilm to prevent a skin forming. Cool and put in the fridge until cold.

Heat your oven to 170F, or 150 Fan or Gas 3.

Roll out pastry and line your tin/tins. You will need to blind bake the pastry by placing some greaseproof or parchment paper inside the pastry case and adding either ceramic baking beans or, as I do, some dried uncooked lentils or macaroni. Baking beans weigh the pastry down to prevent it rising in the oven. Bake like this for 10 minutes, remove the paper and beans and bake for a further 5-10 mins until the pastry is lightly browned and crisp. Leave to cool and gently remove from the tin/tins.

Back to the vanilla crème. Whisk the double cream until it holds soft peaks and then fold gently into the cold custard.

Fill your tart or tarts with the crème and decorate with the strawberries.

Finish off by gently heating the strawberry jam. Brush on to the top of the strawberries to form a glaze.

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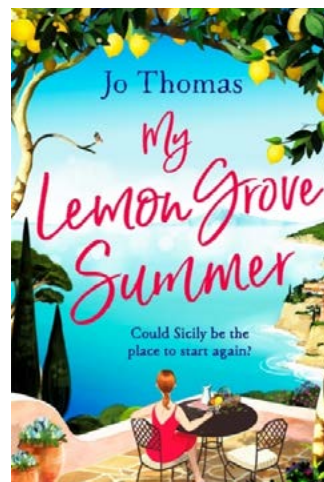
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**My Lemon Grove Summer**  
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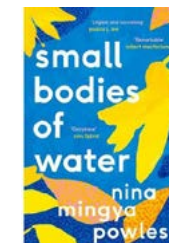
Could the lemon groves of Sicily be the perfect place to start over? The irresistible new novel from Jo Thomas will transport you to the island of mountains and sparkling blue seas. When life hands you lemons ... is it ever too late for a second chance?

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Centred on an eminently credible love triangle and the emotional fallout of a chance affair over the course of half a century, Heller's mesmerising novel fizzes with sexual tension and the devastating tragedies that can unwittingly be set in motion.

**Small Bodies of Water**  
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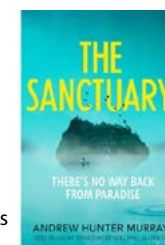
There, the local swimming pool became her first body of water. Through her life there have been others that have meant different things, but have still been, in their own way, home: from the wild coastline of New Zealand to a pond in northwest London.

**The Odyssey**  
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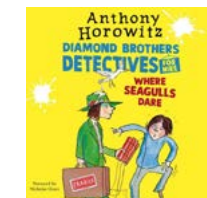
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## Anyone for tennis?

*A hundred years ago tennis was gaining in popularity but the town's tennis players lacked a home of their own. Helen Morgan from Abergavenny Local History Society reports.*

Matches were played at Triley Court, Pantygelli, in the 1880s when Thomas Phillips Price, a mine owner and MP for North Monmouthshire lived there. Tennis was also played at Abergavenny Castle as early as 1886. In 1910, the press reported

"newly-formed Abergavenny A.A.A. Tennis Club" beating Blaina on the Penypound ground on Saturday 29th July. It was not, however, where the tennis club is today — at that time this was a market garden belonging to The Beeches at no 54.



The tennis club in the report were teachers who joined Abergavenny Cricket Club as tennis members. Their first match would have been at the cricket ground accessed from Penypound rather than the Avenue that was still in development. Tennis continued 1914-18, but of the 16 male members only four had not gone to war. After the Armistice, it took until the following summer for life to begin to return to normality. Serious cricket resumed and tennis matches were played on the cricket club's courts — on days that they did not clash with a cricket fixture. By now more than 80 tennis players had joined despite the parlous condition of the courts. The main gripe, however, was that they could not play inter-club matches at home on Saturdays unless the cricketers were playing away. The tennis players "detached" themselves and although they did not have much money approached the owner of The Beeches with a view to buying the field below his garden. Initially he refused but after several large whiskies he mellowed and agreed to accept a £25 deposit "with the stipulation that the ground cannot be built upon or disposed of without the sanction of the owner of The Beeches." Shortly afterwards he died resulting in several years' delay during which time the club managed to borrow £200 to buy the freehold of what is now 40 Penypound. Meanwhile courts were springing up all over Britain. In 1922, the Wimbledon championships moved to Church Road, and the Dayton steel tennis racket made its first appearance. Finally, on 15th October 1923 the purchase was complete and Abergavenny Tennis Club was formally established. A century later the club has more than 300 members spanning a wide range of ages and abilities.

History lectures will resume on September 14th. For details visit [www.abergavennylocalhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.abergavennylocalhistorysociety.org.uk)

Helen Morgan

Moment of Calm.

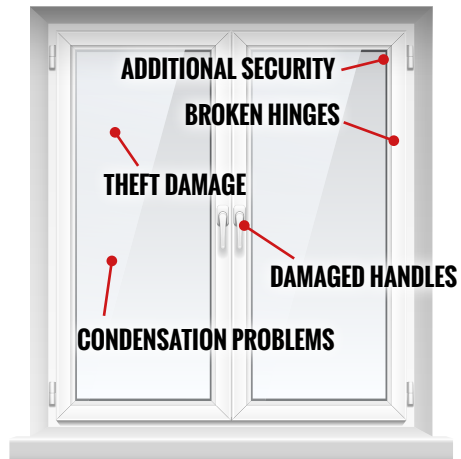
## Settle

Summer can be a busy time. It's also a time of comparison; seeing friends and family jet off to sunnier climes can trigger our fear of missing out. Let go of those feelings and settle into this moment. Take in your surroundings, breathe deeply and appreciate that you are where you are, and all is well.

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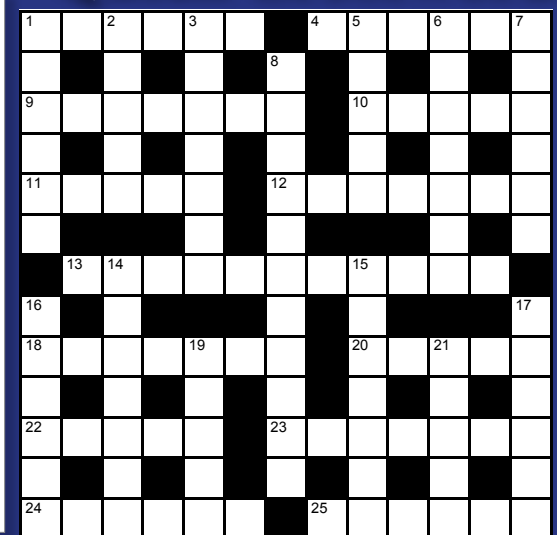
## Quick Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Automats (6)
- 4 Racket sport (6)
- 9 Female grandparent (7)
- 10 Two times (5)
- 11 Recorded sound (5)
- 12 Defrosting (7)
- 13 Not needed (11)
- 18 Spun by spiders (7)
- 20 Afterwards (5)
- 22 Monarch (5)
- 23 Copy (7)
- 24 Long for (6)
- 25 Concurred (6)

### DOWN

- 1 Disorganised (6)
- 2 Insipid (5)
- 3 Immature frog (7)
- 5 Additional (5)
- 6 Louder (7)
- 7 Toboggan (6)
- 8 Alliance (11)
- 14 Takes small bites (7)
- 15 Working out (7)
- 16 Frightened (6)
- 17 Buddy (6)
- 19 Mistake (5)
- 21 Torment (5)



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