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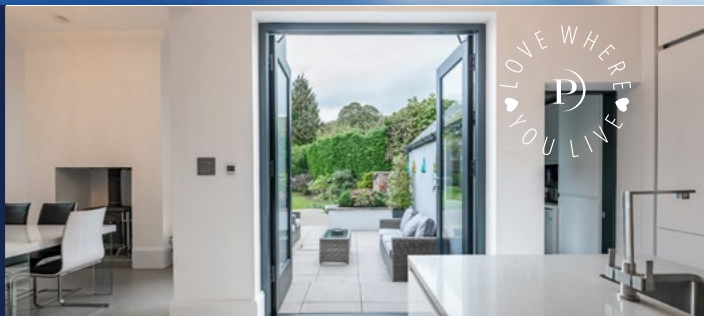
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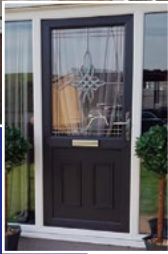


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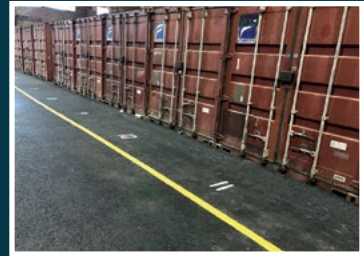
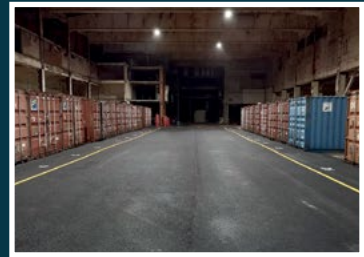
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Dear Readers,



Everything happens in a blur at this time of year, don't you find? First there's Halloween, swiftly followed by Bonfire Night and then before you know it, Christmas is here. I often find it difficult to keep up, but I have to admit to really enjoying late autumn as it morphs into winter.

In spite of all the hustle and bustle, I always make a conscious effort to take some time for myself. One of my favourite things to do is light a candle, put on some music, grab a mug of something lovely and get stuck into a jigsaw! Failing that, a bubble bath is always a winner! What do you do when the nights are drawing in?

Although staying home can be lovely and absolutely necessary at certain points in our life, there's no doubt that there's loads going on all over the place at this time of year. This fact is reflected in our events section and local community stories about all the comings and goings in our area. We've put together a lovely article this month, detailing the local Christmas Markets that are happening, so do go along and support local businesses and crafts people when you're doing your Christmas shopping.

We are also really excited to announce our Festive Christmas Competition, which is bigger and better than ever this year. You can take part and win some amazing prizes all aboard the Focus Polar Express. Take a look at all the details for that on Page 28.

Enjoy the read and remember to take some time for yourself during this busy time!

Hannah

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Clever Sarah!

Abergavenny Scouts

Since Lockdown ended the waiting list for the Group here in Abergavenny has grown exponentially! The Group is going from strength to strength. Just last month out Scouts won the District navigation competition.

We now find ourselves in a good position to opening new sections to accommodate all the youngsters waiting to join and give them all a fair chance of having the Scouting Experience and gaining Skills for Life.

We are proud to say that in November we shall be opening our new Beaver Section and if your 6-8 year old is on our waiting list you should be

hearing from us soon. What a great life long Christmas present?

We need a couple more leaders and we shall be able to do the same for the Cubs section so if you are wondering what to give this Christmas please think about giving your time and volunteering with us. We think you will enjoy being part of our team, learning new skills and watching the next generation grow.

For more information please contact Sarah on agslsh@outlook.com.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas!

Sarah Hoddy



Food has the ability to cross all borders and The World Bistro is a simple way of bringing people and places together.

Our communities are awash with interesting people and life stories and this gentle gathering of generations and cultures over food is a way to make connections and strengthen community ties.

Over the years, through sharing their dishes and time, ordinary 'home-cooks' have taken us with them on a culinary journey through Eastern and Central Europe, Asia, the Mediterranean, and this month we will be returning to AFRICA. Where next?

The kitchen is the heart of a home and at the Community Centre we are always looking out for people and ways to share local skills and knowhow. If you are curious about your involvement in a future World Bistro or something else please don't hesitate to get in touch. We'd love to hear from you.

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THE World

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Abergavenny
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Enjoy a free pint with Foxwhelp Morris!



Morris dancing is fun, friendly and fantastic for your physical and mental health and well-being. Foxwhelp Morris, started in 1998, is Abergavenny's local morris side. We perform traditional Morris dances with sticks, hankies, bells, music and a very friendly Morris dog!

Although we practice in Herefordshire, we dance out around a wider area, including Abergavenny. We perform throughout summer at pubs, festivals, and fetes, and in winter at wassails.

Foxwhelp Morris' approach is based around the fun and enjoyment of dance, music and song, and merrymaking outside pubs on a warm summer evening, encouraging people to join in and have a go.

Foxwhelp Morris is currently recruiting for new dancers, both women and men. We have a

special introductory session for newcomers on Tuesday November 8 at the Red Lion pub in Bredwardine, Herefordshire (HR3 6BU) at 7.30pm. We will be offering a free pint to all newcomers!

No experience is necessary and everyone is very welcome to come along and have a try. We are a friendly, welcoming bunch, and it is always lovely to see new faces.

If you have ever wanted to Morris dance, or simply want to try a new way to keep fit and healthy, then come along!

If you are not able to make it to Bredwardine, but are interested, then come along to a practice at Moccas Village Hall in Herefordshire (HR2 9LQ) on Tuesday evenings between 7.30pm and 9pm (afterwards we go for a drink together at The Red Lion). We already have members in and around Abergavenny, so

lifts to and from practice should be available.

You can follow Foxwhelp Morris on Facebook or Instagram. To contact Foxwhelp Morris please ring or email Jed on 07549 096291 or baggie@foxwhelpmorris.com

Simon Bilsbrough



Benthyg-y-Fenni (Library of Things Abergavenny)

An exciting project to reduce waste, encourage re-use and save money has now opened in Abergavenny.

Thanks to funding from Welsh Government and working in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council, we have launched Benthyg-y-Fenni, your local "Library of Things" (Benthyg is the Welsh word for to lend or to borrow).

The aim of Benthyg-y-Fenni is to allow people to:

- borrow things they need but don't own, at low cost, saving money and space in their homes
- donate DIY items which are needed, contributing to national waste reduction targets
- meet to share knowledge and skills with each other, increasing community resilience

We aim to make it as easy to borrow

small DIY tools for those home jobs, as it is to take a book out of the library. All items will be offered out for loan at very reasonable rates and for a rental period of up to a week.

By logging into the Benthyg website, you will be able to browse online and choose what items to borrow – ranging from wheelbarrows to tents, from party crockery to pressure washers, drills, angle grinders and much more. You will be able to pick the item up from a portacabin situated in the grounds of the Abergavenny Community Centre. The website address is: monmouthshire.benthyg.cymru

A local group has been set up to get Benthyg-y-Fenni going, and we are now busy taking delivery of the items which will be loaned out, getting the venue ready with shelving and taking pictures of the



loan items and putting them on the website.

There are lots of opportunities to get involved and help out and volunteers will get all the training that they will need. In particular, we are looking for people who have the following skills:

- IT
- Communications/social media
- Repair skills
- Administration

If you would like to get involved, please contact Benthyg-y-Fenni at the following email: benthygabergavenny@gmail.com

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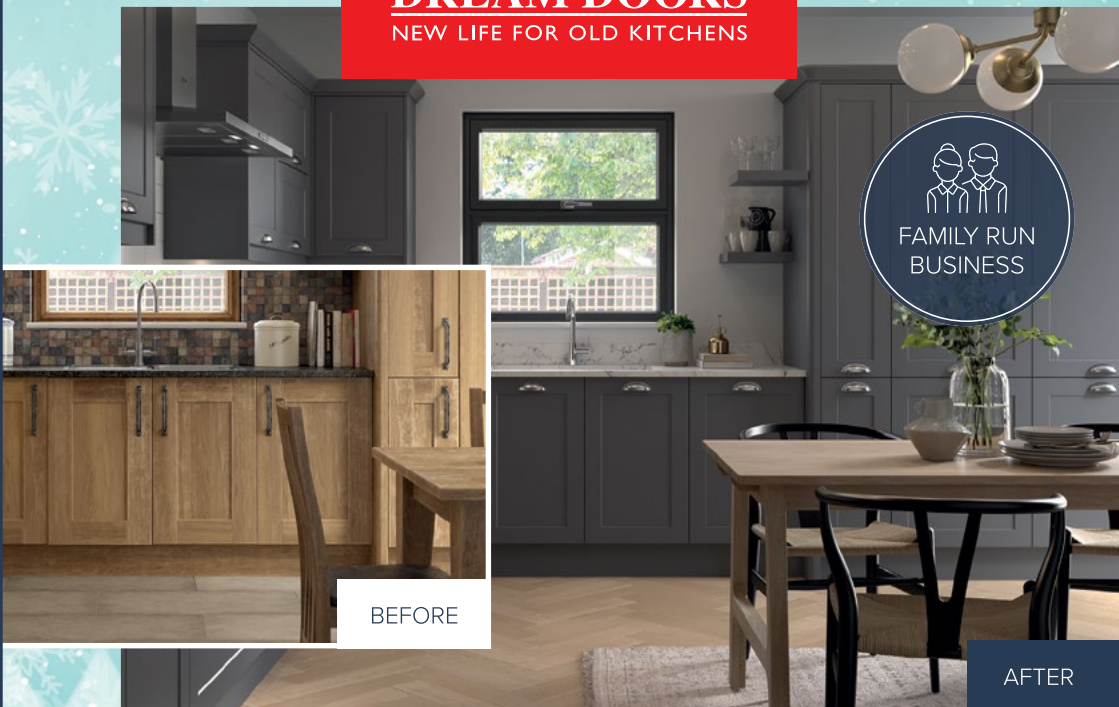


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As a company, we take our responsibilities to protect the environment seriously. This is why we have been developing plans to protect the quality of the water in the river Usk. Our research, with Natural Resources Wales, shows that our assets (i.e. our treatment works, Combined Storm Overflows or CSOs) are responsible for 21%-23% of the phosphates in the river Usk, with CSOs only responsible for 1%. The remainder, is caused by other factors such as rural land use and animal faeces, urban surface water drainage, misconnected drains, as well as private septic tanks.

Our assets play a key role in protecting the local community from flooding and we cannot simply remove CSOs as this would cause significant disruption. However, we understand that this is an important matter for local residents and we are committed to playing our part to reducing our impact on the river Usk.

To find out more about what we're doing to help improve river water quality, visit dwrcymru.com/riverwaterquality



Fel cwmni, rydym yn cymryd ein cyfrifoldebau i ddiogelu'r amgylchedd o ddifri. Dyna pam ein bod ni wedi bod yn datblygu cynlluniau i ddiogelu ansawdd y dŵr yn afon Wysg. Mae ein hymchwili gyda Chyfoeth Naturiol Cymru yn dangos taw ein hasedau (h.y. ein gweithfeydd trin a'n Gorlifoedd Storm Cyfun neu CSOs) sy'n gyfrifol am 21%-23% o'r ffosffodau yn afon Wysg, a'r Gorlifoedd Storm Cyfun sy'n gyfrifol am gwrta 1% ohonynt. Ffactorau eraill, fel defnydd tir gwledig ac ysgarthion anifeiliaid, draenio dŵr wyneb trefol, draeniau sydd wedi'u cam-gysylltu, yn ogystal â thanciau septig preifat, sydd i gyfrif am y gweddill.

Mae ein hasedau'n chwarae rhan allweddol wrth amddiffyn y gymuned leol rhag llifogydd ac ni allwn gael gwared ar y CSOs am y byddai hynny'n drafferthus dros ben i bawb. Fodd bynnag, rydym ni'n deall bod hwn yn fater pwysig i drigolion lleol, ac rydym ni wedi ymrwymo i chwarae ein rhan i leihau ein heffaith ar afon Wysg.

I ddarganfod mwy am yr hyn rydym yn ei wneud i helpu gwella ansawdd dŵr afonydd, ewch i dwrcymru.com/riverwaterquality



Longtown Mountain Rescue



The last month has been a little quieter than on average for this time of year, people have still been getting out but it seems preparing well for the conditions and environment.

We were put on stand by to assist with a fallen climber in the St Arvans area, however the Fire and Rescue Service plus one of our sister teams were able to deal with it. This month our training has been focused on search theory, something that is a mix of science, maths and the dark arts. Searching techniques is something we practice quite a lot, but what we have been looking at is how best

to accurately measure the extent of an area we have searched.

This is not as easy as one would expect. It is not as simple as recording a GPS track of a group's route through an area. We also have to consider the weather, the terrain, our searchers' visible range when out, plus much more. Our search managers compile this information to deduce the 'coverage' we have achieved. For example, three searchers in a flat field with 6 inch grass on a sunny day will have a much higher 'coverage' than the same three searchers on a rocky uphill area in torrential rain with their hoods up, fighting through 5 foot bracken!

Though it might not be super exciting training, it is crucially important. How well an area has been covered so far in a search, influences future decisions on that same search.

We will cover some of this in future articles. If you would like to hear two of our most experienced team members talk about this and other stories from their time in the team, they have recently recorded a podcast with TrekkIt, one of our biggest supporters. You can find it by going to where you listen to your podcasts, searching for 'TrekkIt', and it is episode 3.

Dan Mazhindu

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[f](https://www.facebook.com/GilwernVictorianChristmasMarket) GilwernVictorianChristmasMarket

A Truly Victorian Christmas



On Saturday 3 December in Gilwern, you may think you've travelled back in time! People in Victorian dress, market stalls, Santa's Grotto, a Coconut Shy—and the cold weather of the season.

These features, cobbled together with mulled wine, a tea room, with quaint tea sets and gorgeous homemade cakes, busking music in good Victorian tradition, and everywhere decorated with bunting and sparkly lights, creating a unique atmosphere for the Gilwern Victorian Christmas festival. In the Marquee Market, you'll find stalls selling a host of unique items—come prepared to buy all the presents you need from local traders and some charities working in Africa.

"This event started in 2005 as a festival of songs and food to celebrate the onset of the Christmas season, hosted by Hope Church in the village," explains Pastor Jim Cave. It has become an event for the calendar, attracting folk from the village and surrounding communities. "This year, Trusts, local businesses like Beacons Telecom, the Community Council and Gilwern Roots, have all generously donated time and money to

support the day and the crowds will turn out in their hordes, but Hope Church Pastor, Hayley Edwards, says, "It's also amazing to see the tireless effort exerted by the church and community groups working together for the good of the community."

A visit to Santa's Grotto is a must at any Christmas festival, Victorian or not. No doubt, Santa and his team will be kept busy by children of all sizes, as this year there will be a special Christmas gift given to every child. And a photo taken with Santa and your family can record a special memory. Children—and adults—will also enjoy the face-painting, the coconut shy, the repair café and so on. Joy can be generated by simple gifts, of course, not just the hi-tech gadgets of our society! Take time at the large-scale Nativity model and even buy a wood-crafted set for your home, as a reminder of the reason for the season—a birthday party fit for a King!

Paul Lindoewood

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Ho-Ho-Hop on Board

for free weekend bus travel on the approach to Christmas



It's the most wonderful time of the year... to catch a bus! Monmouthshire shoppers and commuters are being encouraged to use public transport to help the county address the climate emergency. As an extra incentive and in time for Christmas, Monmouthshire County Council has confirmed that all weekend bus journeys within the county will be free to all users every weekend in December.

Passengers will be able to use this free offer, funded by Welsh Government, for any journey that has a start point and end point within Monmouthshire. It's hoped this will encourage Christmas shoppers and commuters to use

the bus to do a spot of Christmas shopping, visiting friends and relatives, or simply getting to work. It's also a great way to travel to get to a train station for trips further afield.

Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment, said: "We're so pleased to have secured Welsh Government funding to help encourage residents to use the county's buses more. Every weekend in December on the approach to Christmas you'll be able to hop on to any service for a journey between two locations in Monmouthshire and not have



Cllr. Catrin Maby

"Monmouthshire County Council have introduced electric buses into the fleet on some routes in the county, and we're working to

to pay. So why not have a day trip for a spot of Christmas shopping, or go car-free on your journey to and from work?

build upon this. If you're able to, I would encourage everyone to take advantage of this fantastic scheme, which starts on Saturday 3rd December and runs until the end of December. It's the perfect excuse to leave the car at home."

The free weekend bus travel comes in addition to free parking in council owned car parks every weekend in December, which has run for the previous two years to help support local businesses and encourage more people to shop within Monmouthshire. It is being offered again this year from Saturday 3rd December for those who are not able to travel by bus. Council car parks in the scheme are in Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth (there are already free car parks in other locations in the county's other towns).

To find out about Monmouthshire's bus services visit www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/buses-trains/bus-timetables-2/. A list of the council-owned car park can be found at www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/car-parks/

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EVENTS

5TH NOVEMBER

ABERGAVENTNY ROUND TABLE FIREWORK EXTRAVAGANZA



Music, food & drink, light up toys, funfair for children.

Tickets are available from www.abergavennyroundtable.co.uk Adults £8. Children 2yrs and above £5. Gates open 5pm, fireworks begin 7pm sharp.

THERE IS NO PARKING FOR THIS EVENT. Town car parks are free to use after 6pm and are a short walk from Belgrave Park. No pets, assistance dogs only. Alcohol, weapons, drugs, fireworks or sparklers are not permitted in the park. Anyone found to be in possession of these will be removed from the event.

9TH NOVEMBER

ABERGAVENTNY LIDO – WHAT NEXT?

Public meeting to discuss the outcomes of the feasibility study and next steps. This is an opportunity to hear about progress to date and help make the dream a reality. Free entry to anyone who is interested. 7pm-9pm
The Kings Arms, Abergavenny

11TH NOVEMBER

Llanfoist Village Hall Film Night: THE OUTFIT(15)

Doors open 7pm, Film starts 7.30pm, Bar available. Tickets £5 on the door. Cash only.

12TH NOVEMBER

Pandy and Monnowside Ploughing Society Presents: MONMOUTH MALE VOICE CHOIR



7:30pm, Pandy Village Hall, Abergavenny
Tickets £10 available from Hazel 01873890160 or Ann 01873890591

16TH NOVEMBER

Abergavenny Film Society Screening: BACURAU (18)



Dystopian Brazilian thriller. The film centres on Bacurau, a small town in the nearin Brazil. The death of its matriarch

prompts her granddaughter to return to the town where strange occurrences are disturbing the locals. Be prepared for twists and turns. *Two Screenings: 4.30pm, 7.30pm, Melville Centre, Abergavenny*

16TH NOVEMBER

Book-ish Event JEREMY BOWEN: THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST



An evening with Jeremy Bowen, discussing the release of his book. 7.30pm, Manor Hotel, Crickhowell
Tickets www.book-ish.co.uk/events

19TH NOVEMBER

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON IN ABERGAVENTNY

20TH NOVEMBER

ABERGAVENTNY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AUTUMN CONCERT

Holst – *A Somerset Rhapsody*
Vaughan Williams – *The Lark Ascending*. Violin: Gillian Bradley
Iestyn Harding – *Song at the Year's Turning*. Vaughan Williams – *Symphony No 5*
2.30pm, Our Lady & St Michael's Church, Abergavenny
For tickets call Simon Large: 07982 975459

info@abergavennysymph.org.uk
<https://abergavennysymph.org.uk>

20TH NOVEMBER

ABERGAVENTNY AND CRICKHOWELL FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SCREENING: THE OIL MACHINE

The film explores our complex relationship with the oil industry, set against the backdrop of the ongoing fight for North Sea reserves. 3pm Abergavenny Community Centre, Abergavenny

22ND NOVEMBER

Book-ish Event: ROBIN INCE

Join Robin Ince as he discusses his book, *Biblio Maniac*
7:30pm, Melville Centre, Abergavenny
Tickets www.book-ish.co.uk/events

23RD NOVEMBER

Abergavenny Local History Society Talk: MERTHYR IN 10 OBJECTS



Talk by Benjamin Price
7.30pm, Melville Theatre
See Page 41 for more info

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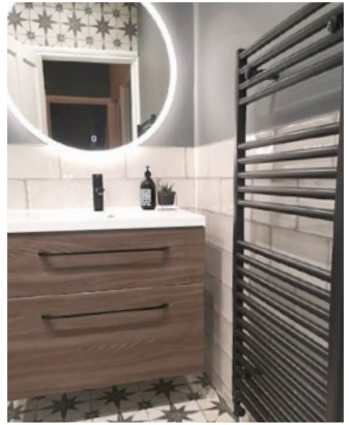
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23RD NOVEMBER**Book-ish Event:
KATE MOSSE**

Join Kate Moss as she discusses her latest release: *Warrior Queens & Revolutionaries*
7.30pm, St Edmunds Church, Crickhowell. Tickets www.book-ish.co.uk/events

24TH NOVEMBER**Book-ish Event:
MANNI COE & REUBEN COE**

Join Manni and Reuben Coe discussing their book: *brother. do.you.love.me*
Book-ish Loft 7.30pm
Tickets www.book-ish.co.uk/events

26TH NOVEMBER**CRICKHOWELL CHORAL SOCIETY'S
'TOWARD THE LIGHT'**

A Ralph Vaughan Williams 150th Anniversary Concert featuring his Five Mystical Songs and other works with soloist Tomos Jones, organist Stephen Power, and the Chamber Orchestra led by Adrian Cook.
7.30pm, St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell
Tickets: £15 (free for pupils and students) available on the door, from Webbs of Crickhowell, or call 01873 810209

30TH NOVEMBER**Abergavenny Film Society Screening:
OUR MEMORY BELONGS TO US**

Three Syrian activists from different backgrounds are reunited on a Parisian stage. The film director to whom they entrusted

their footage when they finally fled the civil war confronts them with their recordings and we share their memories as it plays.
Two Screenings: 4.30pm and 7.30pm. Melville Centre, Penypound, Abergavenny

3RD DECEMBER**Hope Church presents:
VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS
MARKET AND MUSIC**

Step back in time and enjoy a festive market with a Victorian twist. Enjoy market stalls, Santa's Grotto, mulled wine, a tearoom, homemade cakes and plenty more for the whole family to enjoy.
Free Entry 3pm-6pm, Gilwern Community Centre

4TH DECEMBER**MONMOUTH CONCERT ORCHESTRA
CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

Come and join us to hear music by Leroy Anderson, Waldteufel and Vaughan Williams. Join in with the Christmas carols and favourite Christmas songs. 4pm, St Mary's Priory Church, Monmouth.
Tickets cost £8 for adults (under 16s free) and will be available on the door.

6TH DECEMBER**Sight Cymru
CHRISTMAS QUIZ**

Fabulous prizes, Festive atmosphere, support a great cause.
7.30pm, Kings Arms Abergavenny.
£10 per team. To enter a team, contact esther.weller@sightcymru.org.uk or 01495 763650

8TH DECEMBER**THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS**

A floral demonstration by International demonstrator Emily Broomhead. 7pm-9pm, Priory Centre, Abergavenny
Tickets available from Janet Davies
Tel: 01873 852112

SEND US YOUR EVENTS

Go to <https://thefocus.wales/calendar/>

A Note about Events

All the events listed are correct at the time of publishing. We strongly recommend double checking dates and times prior to attending an event to ensure these have not changed. Focus Magazines accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions

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Christmas Markets

27TH NOVEMBER **Llanover Christmas Cracker**

30 craft stalls, Santa's Grotto, Mulled wine, Raffle, Christmas light switch on 4pm. Abergavenny brass band.
10.30am – 3.30pm, Llanover Village Hall, Tre Elidyr

1ST & 8TH DECEMBER **Abergavenny Garden Centre Christmas Market**

Come and soak up the festive spirit. Enjoy browsing the over 30 craft stalls of Christmas gift ideas and treats. Refuel and refresh at our food and drink vans too! See page 10 for more info. *3pm-8pm*

1ST DECEMBER **Christmas Fair Crickhowell**

5pm-8pm, The CRIC Centre and Clarence Hall, Crickhowell

3RD DECEMBER **Hope Church presents: Victorian Christmas Market and Music**

Step back in time and enjoy a festive market with a Victorian twist. Enjoy market stalls, Santa's Grotto, mulled wine, a tearoom, homemade cakes and plenty more for the whole family to enjoy. Free Entry
3pm-6pm, Gilwern Community Centre

3RD DECEMBER **Goytre Wharf Christmas Craft Fair**

Over 70 craft stalls of all handmade food and crafts! Hot and cold food available from Penelope's Cafe
Santa's grotto, Live music by x-factor's Russell Jones
10.30am – 3.30pm

3RD & 4TH DECEMBER **Usk Christmas Festival**

Craft stalls, Food & Drink, Children's Entertainment
10am-4pm

10TH DECEMBER **Abergavenny Outdoor Christmas Market**

Stalls, Music, independent businesses *10am-5pm, St Johns Square and Nevill St, Abergavenny*

10TH DECEMBER **Cross Ash Christmas Shopping & Santa's Grotto**

Many stalls offering fantastic produce and products from local businesses. Enjoy the tastes and music of Christmas. Father Christmas will be available to meet and greet children by prior appointment, for a photo and gift. *10am-5pm, Cross Ash Village Hall*

11TH DECEMBER **Cardiac Christmas Market**

Join us for the festivities at our Cardiac Christmas Market, with gorgeous gift ideas from local makers, fun kids' creative activities, cake-making contest, scrummy refreshments, prizes galore and plenty of Christmas spirit for all ages. Free entry!

2pm-5pm, Llanfoist Village Hall, NP7 9LP

17TH DECEMBER **Abergavenny Christmas Market**

A festive treat for all ages! Amazing food, 20 stalls, a wide selection of music and even a visit from Santa himself! All proceeds from the charity raffle held on the day will be going to Velindre Hospital.

10am-3pm, St John's Ambulance Hall, Abergavenny



November is not too late...

November is a month for lots of celebrations over the world. For example, in America it's a time to give thanks, share food with family and friends and sit watching sports in front of the TV.

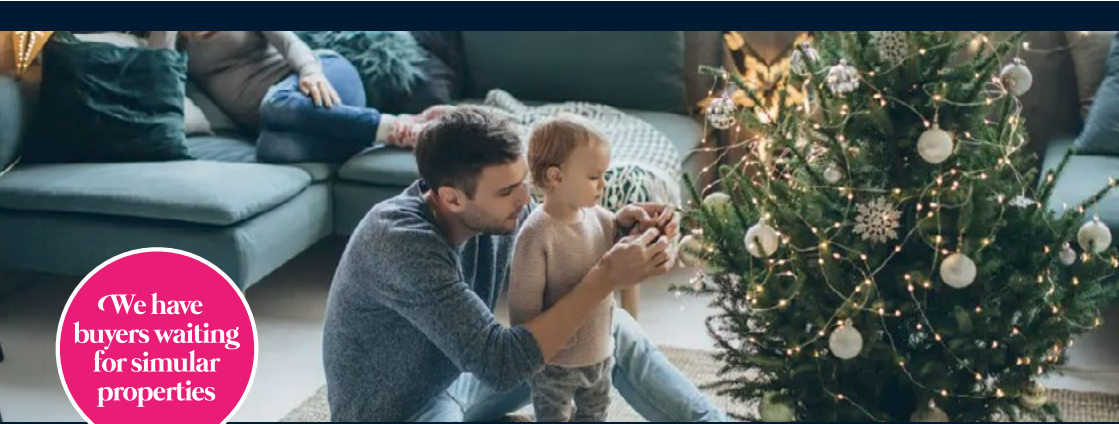
After the final firework has left the sky on November 5th, our minds look towards the festive period. A period very much like Thanksgiving, where we spend time in our homes with friends and family. We take the time to prepare the to accept visitors, presenting it in its best light.

The thought of spending another Christmas in your current house may make you feel warm and grateful inside.

Or it may suddenly feel like a task that you would rather not repeat again this year. If it's the latter, it may be the right time for you to put your property on the market.

You still have time to sell and complete before Christmas and spend your festive period in a property that makes you want to host Christmas dinner this year. If you think now is the time to get moving, speak to us on the phone or in branch to make a plan. We can tailor your house move to you. Targeting homes that are not yet on the market in an area that you would like to move. Or starting a soft launch for your property or promoting it to encourage a swift sale.

Make November the month you celebrate moving.



We have buyers waiting for similar properties



Recently sold

Introducing to
the market ...

Llanvihangel Crucorney, Abergavenny

Guide Price - £625,000



Detached

4



2

- ★ Detached
- ★ Period Features with cottage Charm
- ★ Wood Fire set in inglenook
- ★ Enclosed Garden overlooking countryside
- ★ Set in 1/3 of an acre
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Llanteems Cottage is an impressive individually designed four bedroom period cottage set in 1/3 of an acre. Located in the popular village of Llanvihangel Crucorney, near Abergavenny, this delightful home benefits from detached garage/workshop, delightful gardens.

Located in the heart of this historic village community, the property is within walking distance of the village church, local shop, petrol station and The Skirrid Mountain Inn which claims to be the oldest pub in Wales. The surrounding countryside of the Brecon Beacons National Park is renowned for its outstanding natural beauty and outdoor pursuits.

Ideally positioned for would-be purchasers who need road links to Hereford and the A40 dual carriageway being approximately 4 miles away at Abergavenny and which in turn leads to the M50/M5 and M4 motorways. Abergavenny has a mainline railway station, general hospital, excellent shopping facilities and well-regarded schools.

To view or for more information call 01873 856388



What Jo says,

This property has character features that wouldn't be amiss on the pages of 'Country Living'

Jo Francis,
Abergavenny
Branch
Manager



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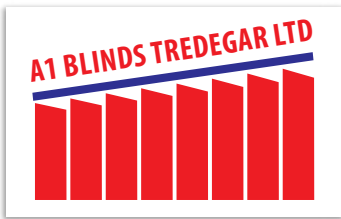
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Handcrafted at the Garolla head office in Yorkshire, every roller garage door is put through rigorous quality control checks before being fitted by a skilful professional. Utilising over 20-years of manufacturing experience, these doors are of the highest standard and come fully guaranteed for complete peace of mind.

Made from strong aluminium a Garolla roller garage door is easy to use and saves valuable space within your garage. The door neatly tucks away, allowing you to use every inch of your garage as there are no large swinging doors to worry about. Once installed, these roller garage doors are operated using a wireless remote control so you can access your garage from the comfort of your car.

Thanks to Garolla's transparent costs it's never been easier to price up a new home improvement project. Available to view on the company's website the price includes measuring, fitting and VAT. Your local installer will even dispose of your old door completely free of charge.

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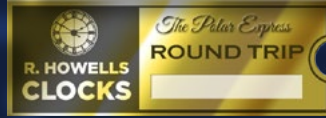
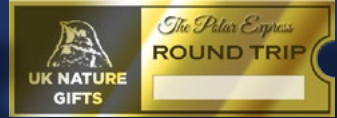
CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

We are so excited to welcome you to our Christmas competition on board The Focus Polar Express. It's your opportunity to get involved in our annual festive competition for a chance to win some lovely prizes. This year, you can also take part by donating to Wales Air Ambulance. For the cost of a virtual hot chocolate on board the Polar Express, you will be funding their important and vital work of delivering lifesaving, advanced medical care to people across Wales whenever and wherever they need it.

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR THE HIDDEN GOLDEN TICKET!

In December's magazines, we will be hiding ONE very special Golden Polar Express Ticket in ONE copy of our magazine. The lucky finder of the Golden Ticket will automatically win a beautiful Christmas Hamper, so be sure to read your magazine from cover to cover next month and check and see if there's a golden ticket hidden inside! We've printed an example of this ticket below, so you know what you are looking for!





Each week in December (up until December 21st) in the lead up to Christmas, check our website and match the Polar Express tickets, like the ones above, that we'll print in the December edition, to the magical word that is punched into the ticket when it is revealed on our site. When you know what the magical word is, simply fill it in on the corresponding ticket in the magazine. By 21st December you will have completed all of our Polar Express tickets, each one with their own unique magical word.

To enter the competition all you need to do is take a photo of your completed tickets and send the photo to us for your chance to win £200 in cash in time for Christmas. Full instructions can be found in the Polar Express section of our website www.thefocus.wales

MINI COMPETITIONS

As well as all the excitement of Polar Express and Golden tickets, we'll also be running lots of fun mini competitions on our website such as word searches and colouring challenges with lots of prizes, so be sure to keep visiting www.thefocus.wales to make sure you don't miss out!

CHARITY DONATIONS

As with all of our Christmas competitions, we cherish the chance to be able to support local charitable causes. This year we have decided to support Wales Air Ambulance

To make a donation, simply visit www.thefocus.wales/polarexpress and buy a Polar Express Hot Chocolate for just £2.50. This money will form your donation to Wales Air Ambulance. Focus Magazines will be donating a portion of proceeds from this competition to this deserving cause also. *Full terms and conditions can be viewed on our website.*

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Fake it, till you wake it



“There’ll always appear to be someone better.

You know there’ll always appear to be someone worse.”

~ Howard Jones, ‘Equality’ (*Human’s Lib*, 1984)

I’ve been listening to the album those lyrics are taken from for nigh on 40 years, but it was only recently that it made sense to write them on a post-it note and tack it to the bottom of my computer screen.

It was near the beginning of my journey as a wellbeing coach and trainer, and even though I’d been getting fantastic results with individuals and groups alike, I couldn’t shake the notion that I was a bit of a fraud: unqualified; making it up as I went along; soon to be found out... and possibly even stopped.

This feeling is so common in us humans that in 1978 it

was given a label—“Imposter Syndrome”—and in 2005, its very own Wikipedia page. I’m willing to bet that you’ve experienced it too: that debilitating sense that what people see and associate with your achievements is just a façade, and at any moment someone’s going to see through it and discover that the “real you” is pretty clueless; deserving of zero credit for any of your successes in life, all of which have actually just been a series of flukes!

The reason this is all ringing true for you is because it *is* true! Except... for one crucial detail: that inadequate “real you” you’re trying to hide from the world is no more real than the façade you’re using to hide it. Neither of

them are deserving of *any* credit because they’re both completely made up! They’re thoughts, being believed, and nothing more.

On the post-it note tacked to my display, the word I’ve underlined in those lyrics is “appear”, for what this statement is pointing to is the nature of experience itself; the immensely powerful principle of thought, that can create *anything*—even an identity—and then pass it off as gospel.

For as long as we believe our selves to be *any* of these illusory thought-creations, we *will* feel an imposter. Because they will shape-shift before our very eyes: fix one inadequacy and another will arise in its place. It’s a game of ego whack-a-mole and it can’t be won.

When it no longer makes sense to continue ‘faking it’ in order to protect what we have now seen to be just another façade, not only does it free up huge amounts of time and energy, but it wakes us up to who we *really* are, beneath all of our busy-minded, human insecurities: creativity, authenticity, wisdom, oneness manifest – a unique expression of life-energy itself.

Imposter syndrome is a gift. It’s an invitation, from life, to turn away from everything you’re not, and embrace the perfection of who you are.



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If you feel imposter syndrome strongly, and would like some support in tackling that, let me know at <https://gilescroft.com/contact> and I’ll point you to some helpful resources.



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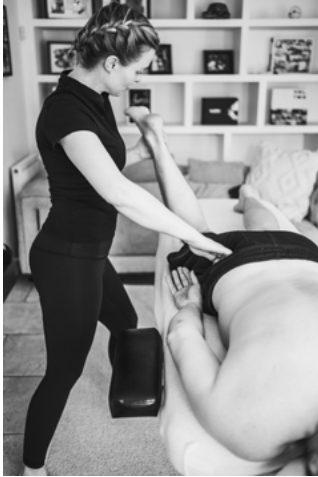
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The space between two bones influences the range of motion (ROM) of a joint. The length of a muscle crossing a joint is what allows a joint to move through the available joint ROM. To build a body for the long haul it is important to understand how the body works in the first place.

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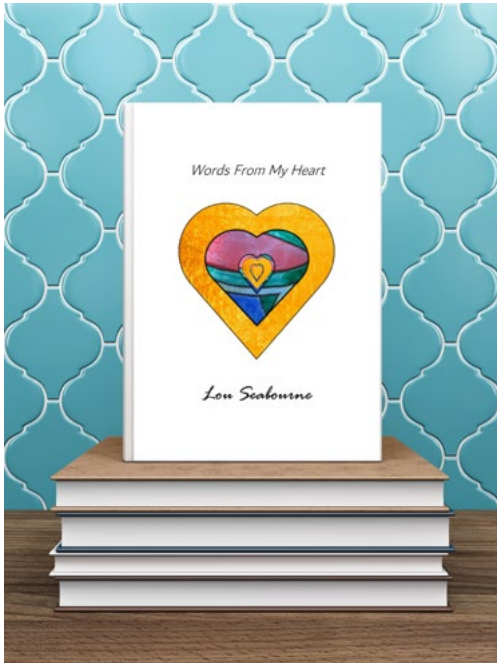
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Words From My Heart



creativity within me. During that time, I also started creating digital art. Some of which are also included in this book. I have also since turned them into framed prints which will soon be available to buy on my website soon to go live.

That collection of articles formed the basis for 'Words from My Heart' which I have expanded upon as I evolved throughout the course of its creation. Sharing my unique perspectives and insights in each chapter, including personal transformation, emotions, imperfection, relationships, bereavement and loss. Then seemingly out of nowhere, inspirational reflections started coming to me. Usually when I was in the shower or out walking in nature, which now accompany the digital artwork. Offering a powerful message which will resonate in different ways for each of you.

The process of writing this book has certainly expanded me creatively, emotionally and spiritually. It is reflected in every word I have written and every image I have created here. This is a book that you will be able to return to again and again, for a fresh insight each time you revisit a chapter or inspirational reflection.

Words From My Heart could be loosely described as autobiographical in parts, as I share my own challenges and past experiences to illustrate some of my insights and perspectives. Giving this book credibility as a valuable and supportive resource for personal growth and transformation.

It is my heartfelt intention for this book to empower and touch the hearts and minds of many. In both subtle and profound ways.

Lou Seabourne

To buy a copy (£12.99 with free postage) Please email me at lou.seabourne@yahoo.com

In March 2020, I began writing a wellbeing column entitled 'Uplifting Stories' for a newspaper group in South Wales and Borders. Drawing upon both my life and professional experiences, I offered my own perspectives with the intention to uplift, inspire and support emotional well-being.

Not only relevant to what was happening in the wider collective at that time, at the height of the COVID pandemic. But for all aspects of the readers' lives. Writing those articles uncovered a deep well of

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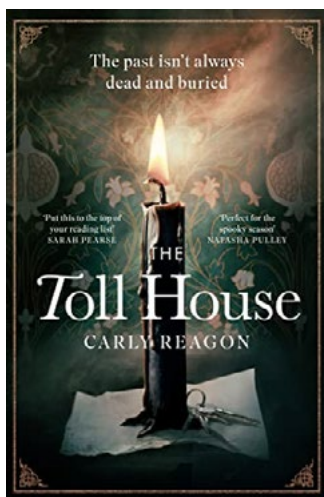
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Books

A dose of seasonal literary goodness is what's needed as the nights draw in. Settle down with these fabulous picks from the Booksellers at Book-ish in Crickhowell.



The Toll House

Carly Reagon

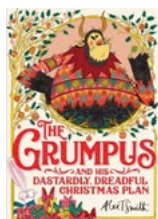
£14.99

The past isn't always dead and buried. A house with history. That's how the estate agent described the old toll house on the edge of the town. For Kelda it's the perfect rural home for her young son Dylan after a difficult few years. This bravura piece of ghostly brilliance wears its gothic trappings with disquieting style.

The Grumpus

Alex T Smith

£12.99



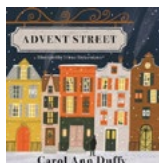
The Grumpus is a heartwarming story that celebrates the true meaning of Christmas, accompanied by irresistible colour artwork

to make it the perfect story for all the family to enjoy together.

Advent Street

Carol Ann Duffy

£7.99



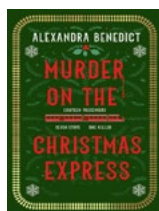
In this enchantingly illustrated Christmas poem, Carol Ann Duffy invites readers

to open the windows on Advent Street. In each one is a gift. You may find yourself back-straight watching a ballerina, poised to begin, or catch your lips moving in time with a festive song that drifts out into the night. Whatever the surprise, when the curtains draw back and the lights sharpen, Duffy's beguiling words, paired with captivating illustrations from Yelena Bryksenkova, call you inside to feel the warmth.

Murder On The Christmas Express

Alexandra Benedict

£14.99



With a nod to the conventions of the Golden Age of Crime, Benedict's page-turning festive whodunit finds 18 passengers

stranded on a derailed train on Christmas Eve with a killer stalking the carriages.

We Disagree about this Tree

Ross Collins

£12.99



Bear and Mouse have finally overcome their differences and are living together in

perfect harmony... until it's time to decorate the Christmas tree! Bear wants dazzling lights, while Mouse prefers gigantic baubles...

Hare House

Sally Hinchcliffe

£8.99



Splendidly sinister and shrouded in forbidding atmosphere, Hinchcliffe's assured second novel is a slice of wintry folk horror featuring

witchcraft, curses and incipient madness.

Santa, Maybe

Mary Jayne Baker

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It's going to be a holly jolly Christmas... Toy Store owner Elodie Martin is not one to get into the festive spirit but nothing gets her fired up more than

the chance to get one over on her nemesis, Callum Ashley - the frosty, infuriatingly handsome owner of the local department store.

Get in the Christmas spirit with this charming and funny festive rom-com.

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Merthyr BC

Images courtesy of Cyfarthfa Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Merthyr Tydfil



Before the Crawshays helped to create the biggest town in Wales, Merthyr Tydfil was a farming community whose future lay in its hidden mineral wealth. Helen Morgan from Abergavenny Local History Society reports

The first tribes probably began arriving here thousands of years ago. From Neolithic tools and Bronze Age burial cairns to the remains of Roman roads, the history of Merthyr can be found in the landscape.

The Bronze Age dagger from Cefn Cilsanws is the earliest metal artefact discovered in the Merthyr Valley. It was found in 1908 alongside human remains — clearly an important person to have been buried in such a prominent position. The dagger itself was never used as a tool, is dated at about 1600 BC and presumed to be a status item.

Moreover, it is unusual for this area, being an artefact more commonly found in Wessex. That person's descendants became known as the Silures who built Iron Age hillforts and put up a strong fight against Roman invaders in the first century. So much so that

the Romans built an auxiliary fortress at Penydarren overlooking the Taff where they discarded plenty of pottery for posterity to find.

The Romans also left their language, much of which was absorbed into the Welsh vocabulary, and they introduced Christianity to Wales. Metal, however, is key to Merthyr's story. Before the invention of the coke-fuelled furnace that would transform Britain in the 18th and 19th centuries, several tons of timber were needed every day to fuel a single blast furnace.



In the 16th century a fuel shortage in south-east England led to Parliament banning new iron furnaces there. This resulted in several ironmasters

heading to the upper Taff valley, attracted by its ancient forests, iron ore and fast flowing rivers. Several charcoal-fuelled furnaces were established here at this time at Troedyrhiw, Pentrebach, Heolgerrig and Pontygwaith (later Edwardsville). It is claimed that the furnace at Pontygwaith was started in 1583 by Anthony Morley, a Sussex Ironmaster, and taken over by the Lewis family.

During the Civil War it produced arms for the Royalists and was partially destroyed by the Roundheads. As well as a watercolour painting of the works, painted from memory, slag, musket balls and iron waste remain as evidence of its existence.

Benjamin Price's talk on Merthyr in 10 Objects on November 23 in the Melville Theatre starts at 7.30pm and is also available via Zoom to ALHS members. For details on how to join, please visit: www.abergavennylocalhistorysociety.org.uk

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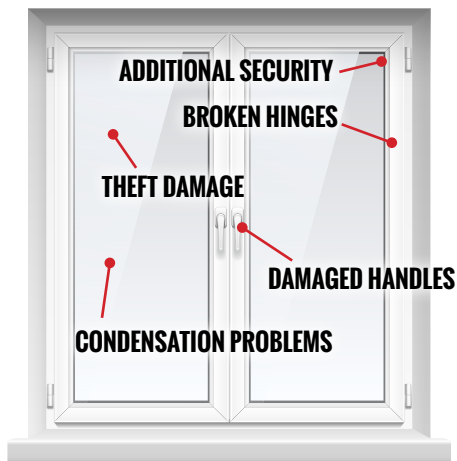
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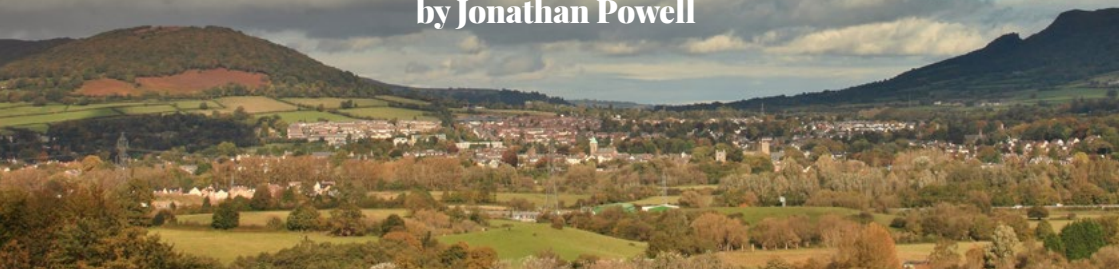


BS EN 1279

With autumn in full swing, November looks likely to offer a rambling mix of weather as we edge closer to the end of the year. Early morning mist and fog patches are to be expected accompanied by heavy dew, but with temperatures seemingly holding up by both day and night, the risk from any frost or a frost of any concern to gardeners, is very low. As autumn colours abound with shadows continuing to lengthen, we will still have some gloriously sunny days with blue skies and out of any wind, even a little warmth in the sunshine, but any fine weather is likely to be tempered by the running threat from Atlantic low pressure systems. The rain, at times, accompanied by lively winds, may give cause for concern with regard to flooding with the possibility of seeing a lot of rain falling in a short space of time. Temperatures look extremely unlikely to permit any early snowfall. On the average to below the average for rainfall, with temperatures on or above the average.

Weather Outlook

by Jonathan Powell



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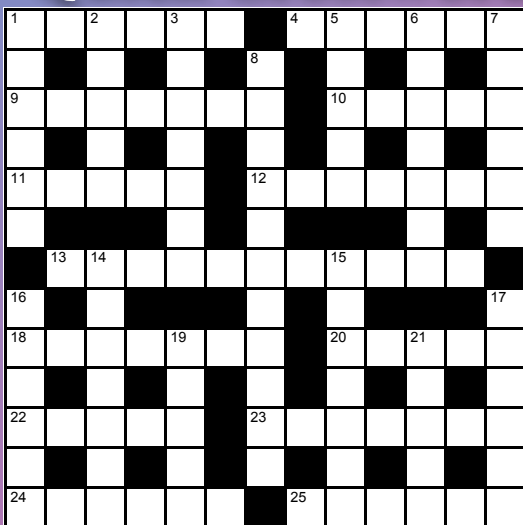
Quick Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Ten years (6)
- 4 Pictures (6)
- 9 Level high land (7)
- 10 Tag (5)
- 11 Poem (5)
- 12 Selections (7)
- 13 Demolition (11)
- 18 Pharmacist (7)
- 20 Perfect (5)
- 22 Spoils (5)
- 23 Against (7)
- 24 Scale (6)
- 25 Grown ups (6)

DOWN

- 1 Leave (6)
- 2 Absurd (5)
- 3 Lowest (7)
- 5 Greeting (5)
- 6 Used for smoking (7)
- 7 Spatter (6)
- 8 Commas, colons. (11)
- 14 Dusk (7)
- 15 Stumbled (7)
- 16 Afraid (6)
- 17 Play equipment (6)
- 19 Edition (5)
- 21 Artists frame (5)





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