

THE ABERGAVENNY FOCUS



SOUTH WALES SHIRE HORSE SOCIETY'S
41ST ANNUAL SHOW
SATURDAY, 6TH JULY AT BAILEY PARK

Photography by Ann Seymour Photography

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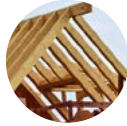


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Dear Readers,



Look, I know we've had some iffy weather this year, but just recently things feel like they're improving on the weather front. As such, we've put together a feature this month, turning our attention to 'Outdoors'. We've got some amazing book suggestions, interior design tips to bring the outside in, gardening tips and how to best prepare for outdoor adventures! We really hope it doesn't jinx things and that we can look forward to getting out and about during June.

Lots going on this month in terms of events, so do check out our events pages as well as the articles associated with some of these events.

Enjoy the read!



Hannah

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Abergavenny Pride, Dance Blast

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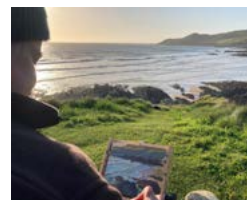
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TWO LOCAL SUCCESS STORIES...



3 CIRCLES CARE IS CELEBRATING 5 YEARS IN JUNE 2024!!

In June 2019 3 Circles Care opened its doors for business. During the last 5 years we have been fortunate enough to build a solid client base and a fabulous team of carers.

As a “thank you” to our hardworking and dedicated staff who have made 3 Circles Care what it is today, we are hosting a small private event at Chesters Wine Bar in Abergavenny on 21 June.

We look forward to seeing them all there to raise a glass to the last 5 years and to the next 5 years!

CONTACT US:

info@3circlescare.co.uk | www.3circlescare.co.uk

Telephone: 01873 269 273



DIAMOND HOME SUPPORT IS CELEBRATING 10 GLORIOUS YEARS IN 2024!!

In March 2014 Diamond Home Support opened its doors for business in Abergavenny. The last 10 years have been a mixture of highs and lows; COVID, in particular, hit us hard. We were unable to trade for the majority of 2020 and into mid-2021. We lost many customers; some of whom never returned as they were wary of having additional people in their homes.

However, we have continued to trade and are slowly rebuilding our client base. None of this would have been possible without the dedication, determination and loyalty of our workers.

As a “thank you” to each one of our hardworking and dedicated Diamonds who have remained loyal and have made the company what it is today, we are hosting a small private event at Chesters Wine Bar in Abergavenny on 21 June alongside our sister company, 3 Circles Care.

We look forward to seeing them all there to raise a glass to the last 10 years and to the next 10 years!

CONTACT US:

heidi@diamondhomesupport.com | www.diamondhomesupport.com

Telephone: 01873 859 289



Bailey Park Bowling Club

Bailey Park Bowling Club is celebrating 100 yrs of bowling in the lovely surroundings of Bailey Park, in the heart of Abergavenny.

The Club was Established on the 15th January 1924 following an advert that was placed in the Abergavenny Chronicle by the Mayor, Councillor J.R.Jacob. At a public meeting it was agreed that a Bowling Club be established and be called Bailey Park Bowling Club with an annual subscription fixed at 2/6 per member.

The bowling green was officially opened on 1st May 1924. The Club has a rich past history of very successful members and in the 60's,70's and 80's Anstey family



represented Wales and appeared on television playing indoor bowls. Lewis Francis represented Wales in the under 18's. More recently in 2022 the Club won the GBL league and came joint top in 2023 losing only on bowls difference.

The council used to care for the green but a few years ago this service was withdrawn and is now the responsibility of the members.

Thanks to Glyn Watkins, Club Chairman and Lewis Francis, Team manager, the green is now looking the best it has looked for sometime and continues to thrive despite many setbacks over the years.

The upkeep of the green is expensive to maintain so if there are any local businesses interested in sponsorship then please get in touch.

The large footfall that uses the park often stops and has a chat and comment on how good the green is looking and that it is now a picturesque addition to Bailey Park.

Bailey Park Bowls Club is only a small Club with just 12 members at the present time but it is a very warm welcoming Club and is always open to those who would be interested in taking up bowling.

For further details please contact Glyn Watkins, 07443016773 / 01873 855729 / glynwatkins@tiscali.co.uk

Glyn Watkins

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Hidden Gems

St Peter's Church, Llanwenarth Citra, Saturday June 8th 10 am - 4:30 pm



This is an Open Churches event to show the church and churchyard as a place of discovery. We are concentrating on the churchyard and the part the church plays in our community life.

St Peter's is situated on Llanwenarth Lane, which used to be the main route to west Wales. The road was later moved to the north of the church, leaving St Peter's in its present peaceful setting.

The churchyard is thus rich in flora and birdlife. A delicate balance is made between preserving this

and allowing access to graves. John Meredith will be available for information on this. The gravestones are a valuable habitat for lichens, which supply food and shelter to a number of invertebrates such as moths.

The gravestones have been researched and mapped by Helena Hunt (see website www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2542345/st.-peter-s-churchyard). Helena has kindly offered to be present to answer any queries.

The gravestones are a fascinating source of stories and history. We have an example of a gravestone made by local stonemason family, the Brutes of Llanbedr (four generations, from 1665 to 1834). It can be seen close to the priest's doorway, and shows the distinctive angel face with the wings turning upwards on each side of plump cheeks.

The lettering is hand carved, and a mistake can be seen where the 'n' in Watkins was missed out. You can just see that it has been inserted above.

The church is open to visitors during the summer months and many write in the visitors' book with their stories and reasons for visiting the church. The entries offer powerful evidence of the glue that holds our communities together.

The church has many interesting treasures including a medieval dole cupboard, which provided for the poor by alms or food (hence the expression 'on the dole'); a Pre-Raphaelite stained glass window showing an angel carrying a portable organ; and our own newly-restored Vowles organ, which will be played at two short recitals during the day.

There will also be tea and cakes available.

Paddy Beynon

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41ST ANNUAL SHOW

SATURDAY 6TH JULY AT BAILEY PARK, ABERGAVENNY

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SOUTH WALES SHIRE HORSE SOCIETY 41st Annual Show



Photography by Ann Seymour Photography



The South Wales Shire Horse Society's Annual Show was first held on the Royal Welsh Showground in 1984, before moving to Bailey Park, Abergavenny in 1985. The Show date is always the first Saturday in July. Since its inception it has gone from strength to strength.

Thanks to the dedicated men and women who love the Shire Horse, we get entries for the show from many parts of England and of course Wales!

The committee do sterling work to promote the show and ensure that all the exhibitors return home with an enjoyable day to reflect on.

Bailey Park as some of you will be aware is a very picturesque site with lots of tall trees to provide shade when needed.

We have certain classes on the day in which other heavy horses can take part, such as Suffolk Punch, Cleveland Bay and Clydesdales. All these breeds are very much at risk as are the Shires.

If you decide to come to our show you will be most welcome. On show day we try to please everyone.

We have classes for Miniature horses, many owners support us each year. Other attractions include pony rides, a Punch and

Judy show and many others, some still to be confirmed at the time of writing.

We have a number of dedicated people with catering stalls and many interesting trade and craft stands.

For the canine lovers there is also a dog show, which is always very popular.

So WELCOME one and all to the South Wales Shire Horse Society at Bailey Park on Saturday 6th July 2024. You will have a wonderful day, there really is something for all the family.

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MAY EVENTS CALENDAR

NOW – 15TH JUNE THE BIG DOODLE

Drop in and doodle at So Artrageous, Lulworth House, Monk St, Abergavenny
Tuesdays to Saturdays 11am-4pm

1ST JUNE USK RIVER FESTIVAL

The very first Usk River Festival! It will be a celebration of the Usk and the communities that live and work alongside this beautiful and endangered river.
10am-3pm. For more info visit savetheriverusk.org or email together@savetheriverusk.org

3RD JUNE Book-ish Event REVEREND RICHARD COLES – MURDER AT THE MONASTERY



7.30pm, Borough Theatre, Abergavenny
Tickets www.book-ish.co.uk/events

4TH JUNE Book-ish Event WILL DEAN – THE CHAMBER

7.30pm, Book-ish Loft, 18 High St, Crickhowell
Tickets www.book-ish.co.uk/events

5TH JUNE Book-ish Event ANNABEL ABBS – SLEEPLESS

7.30pm, Book-ish Loft, 18 High St, Crickhowell
Tickets www.book-ish.co.uk/events

**5TH JUNE
ABERGAVENNY OVER 50S GROUP**
‘Broads on Broadway’ Join us for an informative and entertaining talk from Chris Purkiss about women’s roles, accompanied by music.
2pm, Trinity Church Hall, Baker St, Abergavenny

**6TH JUNE
D-DAY 80 YEARS**
Commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day with a day full of events in Abergavenny
See Page 24-25 for details and programme of events

7TH JUNE QUIZ NIGHT FUNDRAISER FOR ABERGAVENNY PRIDE

Come along for a fun evening and help us raise funds for Abergavenny Pride. It’s £2 per person, you’re welcome to come along on your own and make a team up with others on the night, it’ll be 6 people max per team. 7pm start, there will be a bar and a raffle. Prize for the winning team, so get your best quiz brains together! Hosted by the ever-entertaining Frankie Wesson and Ruby Ravelle.
7pm, Bean & Bread, Abergavenny

8TH JUNE FAMILY POND DIPPING IN CASTLE MEADOWS

A pond dipping event for all the family at The Pond in Castle Meadows, Castle Street,

Abergavenny.
Come and enjoy a family pond dipping experience, learn to identify and record important pond life, and have a go at watercolour painting.
WhatThreeWords loom.munched.dreamers. 2pm, Castle Meadows

8TH JUNE Open Churches Event ST PETER’S CHURCH

See Page 9 for article
10am-4.30pm, St Peter’s Church, Llanwenarth Citra

**8TH JUNE
THE BIG LUNCH**
12.30pm, Abergavenny Community Centre
See page 14 for more info

**9TH JUNE
CANTREF OPEN GARDENS –**
Celebrating its 11th year
11.30am-5.30pm.

**12TH JUNE
GOVILON WI**
This month’s topic is: Vision of Hope
The Vision of Hope Animal Assisted Therapy charity.
7.20pm, Salisbury Community Hall, Merthyr Rd, Govilon
Visitors £2 to include refreshments

**14TH JUNE
Llanfoist Village Hall Film Night
NEXT GOAL WINS (12A)**
The story of the infamously terrible American Samoa soccer team, known for a brutal 2001 FIFA match they lost 31-0.
7.30pm, Llanfoist Village Hall, Church Lane, Llanfoist

**15TH JUNE
ABERGAVENNY ARTS FESTIVAL**
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16TH JUNE EVERYTHING ELVIS AND ELVIS GOSPEL SHOW

See article and adverts on page 19

18TH JUNE STORYTELLING LIVE!

A chance to listen to and tell stories. Traditional myths, legends, folklore tales and more personal stories using the oral tradition of telling tales. Join us as we chat, share tales and discuss the power of this ancient and living tradition at the Melville Centre.

Light refreshments and donation to cover cost of centre.

7pm-8.30pm, Melville Centre, Penypound, Abergavenny

22ND JUNE LLANOVER VILLAGE FETE

A day of fun and delight for the whole family.

Tea & cake tent, Fun dog show, BBQ, Smashing China stand, Raffle, White Elephant

1pm – 5pm, Llanover Village

23RD JUNE Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra GREAT ORCHESTRAL MUSIC FROM OPERAS:

Verdi – Overture to Nabucco
Mascagni – Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana
Lovreglio – La Traviata Fantasy
Bizet – Suite from Carmen
Wagner – Prelude to Act III

Lohengrin
Puccini – Intermezzo from Manon Lescaut
Offenbach – Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld
Borodin – Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor
7.30pm, Our Lady & St Michaels Church, Abergavenny
For tickets and further info visit: <https://abergavennysymph.org.uk/>

29TH JUNE ABERGAVENTNY PRIDE 2024



See Page 17 for details of events

29TH JUNE OPERA GALA NIGHT



A night of operatic hits from Monteverdi to modern times with well-known choruses from Bizet's Carmen, Verdi's La Traviata, Gershwin's Porgy and Bess and Wagner's Flying Dutchman, alongside earlier masterpieces by Handel, Gluck and Purcell. Plus our choral scholars will perform some well-known arias and works for strings and piano. Not to be missed! Tickets are £12 and proceeds will go to charity. www.crickhowellchoralsociety.org for more info.

7pm, Clarence Hall, Beaufort St, Crickhowell

3RD JULY ABERGAVENTNY OVER 50S GROUP 'FINDING FOCUS'

Hannah Hill talks about her journey from working in glamorous five star hotels in Australia to finding a place to call home in Abergavenny.
2pm, Trinity Church Hall, Baker St, Abergavenny

6TH JULY SOUTH WALES SHIRE HORSE SHOW



Bailey Park Abergavenny
See Page 10 & 11

7TH JULY CRICKHOWELL OPEN GARDENS

A variety of gardens around the town will be open to visitors on 7th July. Plant Sales and refreshments will be available. Tickets cost £6 for adults for entry to all gardens and can be purchased on the day at the Market Hall, Crickhowell NP8 1BW from 10am.



SHARE YOUR EVENTS

Go to 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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Abergavenny Pride '24

Get ready to paint the town rainbow – Abergavenny Pride is back on 29th June and you're invited!



Last year's Pride was a huge success with around 1500 people over the day soaking up the sun and the fun on offer at The Priory Centre. This year we have arranged even more entertainment, activities and excitement for the day and evening.

The day starts with a parade through town, starting from outside the Cinema at 11am (get there a bit earlier for warm-up entertainment). Dress up in your most colourful glad rags, prepare your snappiest slogans and your noisiest noise and be ready to celebrate our community as we strut our stuff through the town to Brewery Yard Car Park.

The main event is at The Priory Centre with five hours of family entertainment from noon – some past favourites will be back and some new surprises too.

There will be a huge range of stalls selling lovely things and providing information and support from charities and community organisations, and an array of food and drink choices including yummy vegan options.

Back by popular demand is Out of the Closet – a safe, secure space for you to try out some looks that might be new to you – and if you spot something you really like, take it home!

Meanwhile in the Tithe Barn, Think Space takes a deep dive into our past as renowned historian Norena Shopland will be hosting this year bringing her extensive knowledge of Welsh and queer history. Trans zoologist Kira Hartley will be there too with an unusual look at the natural world.

The evening event this year is something a bit different, we are

running a silent disco with live DJs and three stunning soundtracks to suit every musical taste – from contemporary dance and house to noughties classics and quirky throwbacks to disco classics from days gone by. Tickets are on sale now so grab them before we sell out!

This year marks Abergavenny Pride's fifth birthday and it's come a long way since a group of friends had the initial idea in the bar of the Angel Hotel. We're immensely grateful for the support from local businesses and individuals, financial and otherwise, and there are always opportunities to help – check out www.abergavennypride.co.uk or our socials. And trust us, you won't want to miss what we have planned for 2025...

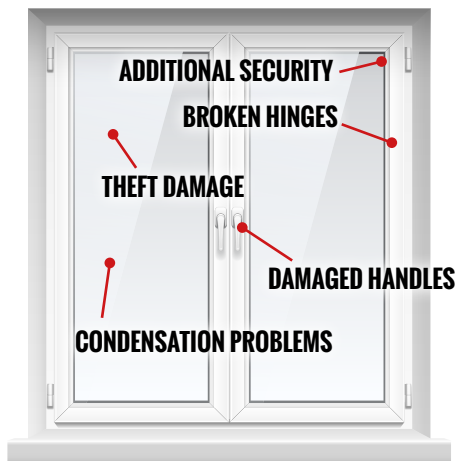
Pride is a day for embracing who you are – so come one, come all and let's celebrate together!



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A Family Fun Day of Everything Elvis

Hannah's Music in Chepstow is always looking to bring something new and fun to Chepstow and, well..., she is really excited to be able to pull this one off!

When Carol, owner of Hannah's Music, heard that 'Porthcawl Pavilion' was closing for refurbishment and the famous 'Porthcawl Elvis' was having to scale down, what did she do?...he contacted the organiser and said "Why not bring a little bit of Elvis magic to Chepstow!"

Long story short ... Porthcawl is now bringing the fabulous - 'ELVIS GOSPEL SHOW' - along with 4 top Elvis tributes to 'ST MARY'S CHURCH, CHEPSTOW on the evening of Sunday 16th June.

AND... to welcome Porthcawl to Chepstow, A Family fun day of 'EVERYTHING ELVIS' is planned throughout the town centre during the day!

A full day of family fun is in place, as we bring you:

- Singalong with Elvis at the Palmer Centre
- Best junior Elvis
- Best Dressed Priscilla (£100 Prize)
- Best Dressed Elvis (£100 Prize)
- Junior Elvis
- Elvis Art Competition for local schools
- Elvis themed Park Run (Saturday Am across the Severn Bridge)

- Chepstow Does Elvis (local musicians/bands - heavy metal plays Elvis etc)
- And of course - Best Dressed Hound dog ! (dress your dog up the Elvis way !)
- Childrens rides, games, fun and much more
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So come along and join in the fun !

The whole day is FREE !

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Hannah's Music: 01291 627122

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THE ELVIS GOSPEL SHOW

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SUNDAY 16 JUNE 2024

HOSTED AND PRODUCED BY
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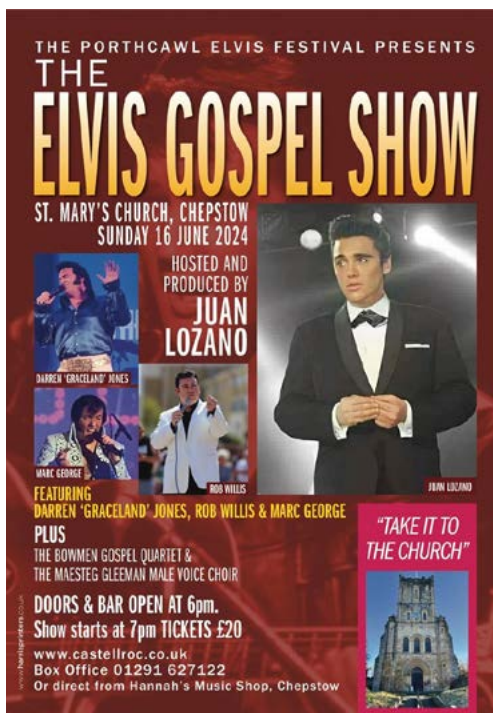
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SUNDAY JUNE 16TH

11AM - 5PM

11AM
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ELVIS
THE PALMER CENTRE

2PM
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DRESS YOUR DOGS
UP THE ELVIS WAY
PRIZES!

4PM
JUDGING OF
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£100 PRIZE DONATED BY
CHEPSTOW ROTARY CLUB
AS ELVIS OR PRISCILLA TO ENTER

1PM
ARTS COMPETITION
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PRIZES

3PM
BEST JUNIOR
ELVIS
WINNER RECEIVES 2
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ST MARY'S CHURCH

4PM
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BEST DRESSED ELVIS
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Sibrydion Fan Hyn Whispers of this Place



‘Fan Hyn’

was a site-specific performance presented at and inspired by Dance Blast and its surroundings.

Dance Blast is your local centre for community dance & aerial circus. We are based in the heart of Abergavenny, in the gym of the former King Henry VIII grammar school, which was on this site from 1898 to 1971.

Whispers of the past emerged from the buildings around us and mingled with the present. Our stories and characters emerged like shadows from the books we read and were presented through beautiful scenes of dance and aerial circus.

Thanks to funding from Arts Council of Wales, with additional funding from Creative Futures, Fan Hyn was performed by Dance Blast’s three companies

MYDC (Monmouthshire Youth Dance Company) MYCC (Monmouthshire Youth Circus Company) and our adult inclusive Dance Company, MCDC (Monmouthshire Connected Dance Company).

To see more, go to The Fan Hyn page on our website:





Dance Blast

Tanio'r awydd i ddawnsio
Igniting the desire to dance



Dance Blast is an amazing resource for our community with activities for all ages and abilities.

You can see the full timetable and booking forms for all the classes available at Dance Blast by visiting our website. With over 40 classes to choose from and a range of styles, there is

something for everyone. Go to <https://www.dance-blast.org/timetables> or scan the QR code



Photography by Nicolas Young

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact us at

E: danceblastclasses@gmail.com

T: 01873 854811

W: <https://www.dance-blast.org>





JOIN US ON THURSDAY 6TH JUNE

**TO COMMEMORATE THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY
OF D-DAY WITH A DAY FULL OF EVENTS
IN ABERGAVENNY!**

Schedule of Events

8.00am

D-Day 80 Proclamation - Watch the live stream as we read the proclamation in full ceremonial robes.

11.00am

Wreath Laying at the War Memorial on Frogmore Street - Join us for a short service of remembrance.

5.00pm - Market Hall Opens

5.00pm - 6.00pm

Learn about Abergavenny's D-Day involvement - Interviews with veterans and WWII artefacts on display.

6.00pm - 6:45pm

BMJazz Katz perform jazz classics.

7:30pm - 9.00pm

A4B Performances - Sketches, musical pieces, and community sing-alongs with the Borough Band.

9:15pm

Lighting of the Clock Tower to mark the anniversary with the Lamp Light of Peace at the Town Hall.

Street Food Vendors from the Monmouthshire Markets Street Food events are coming along with plenty on offer to suit all tastebuds! The Market Hall will be set up with tables and chairs for you to enjoy the evening's events. Fancy dress encouraged but not essential!

Let's come together as a community to honour this significant day in history.



Cyngor Tref Y Fenni
Abergavenny Town Council



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Summer Gardening

With Tips from Abergavenny Garden Centre

Summer is approaching, so it's time to prepare your garden for the warmer months ahead. Follow these steps to get your garden in top condition and help it thrive:

Clear and Tidy Up: Start by removing debris, dead leaves, and weeds to keep your garden tidy and prevent pests and diseases. Prune overgrown shrubs and trees for healthy growth.

Soil Preparation: Healthy soil is crucial for a thriving garden. Turn the soil, add compost or well-rotted manure to improve fertility, and consider a pH test to make any necessary adjustments.

Plan Your Planting: Decide on the type of garden you want, whether it's for colour, vegetables, or herbs.

Summer Flowers: Plant summer-flowering annuals like petunias, marigolds, and zinnias for a vibrant display. Perennials such as dahlias and lupins are also great for long-lasting color. Ensure they're planted in well-draining soil and receive ample sunlight.

Vegetables: Summer is ideal for growing tomatoes, courgettes, beans, and peppers. Plant them in nutrient-rich soil, provide support for climbing varieties, and water and feed them regularly.

Herbs: Basil, parsley, thyme, and mint are great summer herbs. Plant them in well-draining soil and provide plenty of sunlight, especially if you want to use them in your cooking.

Watering and Mulching: As temperatures rise, water your garden regularly in the early morning or late evening to reduce evaporation. Mulch around plants to retain moisture and suppress weeds.

Pest Control: Keep an eye out for pests such as aphids, slugs, and snails. Use organic solutions like neem oil or introduce natural predators to manage these pests.

Come and visit us at Abergavenny Garden Centre for more advice and to browse our range of fantastic plants, gardening equipment and more. See you soon and Happy Gardening!

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Evesham Gardens, Church Lane, Llanfoist, Abergavenny, NP7 9LF
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Cynlluniau Rhentu Preifat

Cynlluniau Lesio Preifat

Gyda chymorth ac arweiniad gan ein tîm, cyfeillgar, profiadol a phroffesiynol.

Mae Gwasanaeth Gosod Sir Fynwy'n cynnig cynlluniau gosod tymor byr a hirdymor. At hyn, mae gennym lesioedd hirdymor, rhwng pump ac ugain mlynedd, ar gael drwy 'Gynllun Lesio Cymru' a ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru ac a reolir gan Wasanaeth Lesio Sir Fynwy.

Mae grantiau ar gael i helpu dod â chartrefi gwag yn ôl i gael eu defnyddio .

Os oes diddordeb gennych mewn gosod eich eiddo, neu os hoffech fwy o fanylion ynglŷn â'r gwasanaeth a'r hyn yr ydym yn ei gynnig, cysylltwch â Clare Hamer

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Monmouthshire Letting Service offer short and long-term leasing schemes. Additionally, with 'Leasing Scheme Wales' funded by the Welsh Government and managed by Monmouthshire Letting Service, we have long term leases available for between five and twenty years.

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If you are interested in letting your accommodation or to find out more details about the service and what we offer, please contact Clare Hamer



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Adventure Safely



As part of our feature on **Outdoors**, we invited Jane of **Crickhowell Adventure** to provide her expert advice on how to enjoy the great outdoors and mountain adventures. Remember, if you're in need of apparel and gear, **Crickhowell Adventure** is the best place for it. The team will assist with all your needs.

What preparation can we do to do to make our time on the mountains safe and enjoyable?

We need to be adventure smart!

Preparation starts before we've even left the house, ask ourselves some questions: how experienced are we for the route decided? Does it take us out of our comfort zone? Is the route known or will it be a new adventure? Do we have the skills for the day? Ground conditions or routes can be tricky, so make sure it's suitable for our experience/skills. Are we fit enough to manage the up-hills?

Even with the route decided, situations can change due to the weather. We know how fickle our weather can be and the difference between the car park and the hill tops are huge. Temperatures can drop and winds can howl, not to mention the rain, did you know we can have rain? Ha ha. Check the weather forecasts to see what is in store and plan accordingly.

Do we have the right gear?

A map is important. There are lots of Apps on phones, but what if the battery goes flat, usually this is at the end of the day, when we're already tired and irritable. Maps are the perfect backup and it's good to see the whole area rather than just a small square on a device. We do need to be able to read a map and have some understanding of navigation. Along with the map, we'll need a compass to take bearings and find North!

No matter what the weather is doing, comfortable walking boots

are necessary. Blisters will ruin a good day's walking, so make sure they fit well. A waterproof jacket is a must have. Even if it's not raining it will keep wind out and keep us warm. Good mid layers will also keep us warm, especially when stopping for a well earned tea break.



We need to take food and drink. On cold days we need something warm to drink to keep us warm and sandwiches taste glorious when eaten on the side of a mountain! When the temperatures are warm and we have sun, expect to drink more water than usual, it's hard work walking up hill! On sunny days, take sunscreen and a hat. It's so easy to burn and not so noticeable if there is a breeze.

We need to remember to keep our dogs on leads to keep livestock and wildlife safe.

Hope to see you up there!

*Jane Bradbury
Crickhowell Adventure
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Painting ‘En Plein Air’



As a landscape painter I try to get out into the landscape with my paints as much as possible ‘En Plein Air’. There’s nothing better than painting in the woods with birdsong or at the beach with the sound of the waves and gulls.

Painting in front of the view always gives different results than painting from photographs. The paintings tend to be fresher, livelier, capturing the colours and atmosphere of the day.



I would encourage anyone to give it a go. Here are some tips to to help:

- If you struggle finding the time, take a sketchbook when you go on holiday - you’ve usually got a little more time and a nice view to inspire you.
- Keep it simple: you don’t need much kit, you can rest a painting board or sketch book on your lap and a small watercolour set or pencils are a great way to start. If you get hooked then there’s plenty of opportunity to buy fancy easels.
- Keep it small: you’ll want to finish your painting before it gets dark so don’t be over ambitious with the size of your painting - aim for little gems.
- The light will constantly change so aim for an impression not perfection.
- Be comfortable: take enough food, drink, a hat, sunscreen, warm coat etc.
- Stay safe: always tell someone where you’re going and take a phone even if it’s just to capture photos of your paintings in situ.

If you want more en plein air chat, pop into my studio, 20 Monk Street, Abergavenny, NP7 5NP. Open every Thursday, Friday & Saturday.

You can follow Louise on social media @louisecollisartist and browse and buy paintings, cards and prints online: www.louisecollis.com

Bringing the Outdoors In



The Chelsea Flower show happened very recently and, although I marvel at all the incredible creations that have graced our televisions and social media this week, personally I have not been blessed with the skills and passion my parents have for a garden. However, when asked to write an article I immediately jumped at the chance as a favourite concept of interior design is to bring nature inside your home, to consider the outside space and root your home in the surrounding landscape. Connecting indoor and outdoor spaces not only creates continuity but has some mental and emotional health benefits of restfully connecting with nature. Nature-inspired interior design has a universal 'time-less' appeal and here are some simple ways bring the outside in when it comes to designing your home.

The colour of nature

Blues and Greens in all their tonal variations are still the preferred colour palette with our customers. From bold inky midnights, deep forest greens and emeralds to lighter teals, olives and sage. Taking inspiration from the land and sky you can create either a bold stylish look with colour and depth or a more muted, refreshing, calm and peaceful space. Earthy colour tones are another firm favourite for some staple muted and warm neutrals to help evoke comfort and relaxation.

Little Greene Paint is ideal for offering not only offering a sophisticated colour palette - many colours are derived from partnership with the National Trust, but also the science behind the colour to ensure a refined and hardwearing finish. We have

colour-cards and the full range of sample pots available to view in Jaybee Soft Furnishings.

Why not give it a go? Chase colours from your view whether it's your favourite flower or one of our beautiful mountains that offer you inspiration.

Natural elements

Use plants, fresh flowers or even potted trees throughout your living space to create an indoor oasis. For the more ambitious and committed to Biophilic design, try creating a living wall or roof. For those who are not a seasoned Titchmarsh, why not try Osborne and Little Green Wall wallpaper to get the look without the upkeep.

Organic materials

Wood, stone and rattan can all help create a natural feel. Panelling is still a popular interior trend and a half-panelled wall is an ideal way to use wood to perfectly partner your favourite wallpaper or paint colour.

Frame garden views

Maximise Light and create a seamless transition with large or floor to ceiling windows to capture the best views, a landmark or particular tree - in many ways as an art form to draw the eye. Patio doors or a wall of glazing which can be completely peeled back will help to open up your home for summer.

Nature framing in design

We are so blessed with the beautiful landscape in Monmouthshire which we can draw from to elevate our interiors. Frame views from your window by adding botanical, woodland or wildlife motifs into your wallpaper, furnishings or upholstery.

Some of my favourite nature inspired collections:

- Sanderson Arboretum and Embleton Bay
- Harlequin x Sophie Robinson
- Designers Guild – for big, bold and colourful florals.
- Swaffer Caru as seen in our latest window display (all fabrics are only £30pm).
- Tropical Twist

This trend can be so versatile - Why not evoke a holiday or beachvibe by introducing tropical elements in bold palms, bamboos or vibrant tones.

For inspiration try the following collections:

- Clarke & Clarke Exotica
- Prestigious Fabrics Caribbean
- Sanderson Glasshouse
- Go Alfresco



Why not carry an indoor theme outdoors by mirroring or continuing materials such as flooring or cladding to create a seamless transition? Many design houses have released some of their favourite designs on outdoor performance fabrics which can be used to elevate your outdoor entertaining spaces with an abundance of cushions and seating options.

As Abergavenny high street prepares to embrace Wales in Bloom again this year, why not embrace the natural beauty on our doorstep? Blur the boundaries between indoors and outdoors and create a harmonious and inviting home that most importantly reflects your personality.

*Pippa,
Jaybee Soft Furnishings, Frogmore Street,
Abergavenny.*



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June Weather Outlook

by Jonathan Powell

Following on from a rather mixed May which provided a fair blend of both rain and drier conditions, unfortunately, for heat lovers, June doesn't look like being a 'flaming' affair. However, we can expect high pressure to be in the vicinity, if not all the time, providing periods of glorious summer sunshine with temperatures that duly match. Whilst it seems unlikely that any significant run of dry weather will occur, the best chances of something mirroring such a scenario look set to potentially occur in the first two-thirds of the month, with the latter part of June perhaps appearing generally less settled. Any passage of warmth may well break with thunderstorm activity. As far as summer itself goes, July looks frontrunner to offer the best of the summer heat. June is expected to return a slightly drier than average month, with temperatures on or above the average.

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Receiving life, without effort

“When I argue with reality, I lose
– but only 100% of the time.”

~ *Byron Katie, 'Loving What Is'*

In all the years I've been helping people to worry less, and live more, I've concluded that the most difficult notion for us humans to get our heads around is acceptance.

In its endless search for meaning, and its slavish devotion to categorisation and comparison, the mind whirs away endlessly, analysing the circumstances of our lives and coming up with plans for betterment... all the while blissfully unaware that maybe *it's* the problem.

To accept (which comes from the Latin word '*accipere*') is "to receive, without effort," which doesn't seem to jibe very well with our experience of life, does it? When was the last time *you* received — without effort — bad news, criticism, a disappointment, a financial shock?

To the mind, all of these situations are simply wrong, and to *not* react negatively to them seems equally wrong: detached, uncaring, submissive even. If we *do* want to ultimately 'worry less and live more' it looks like what's required is to change or avoid as many of life's pitfalls as possible, so that we can look back and marvel at how skilfully, or luckily, we dodged all the 'bad stuff'.

But deep down, you and I both know it doesn't work like that. While we continue to draw breath, we will continue to face challenges, and it's how we deal with them that will last in memory, not their presence or absence.

My daughter recently suffered a minor knee injury – nothing too serious, but we were advised to keep her off all vigorous activity for a full two weeks, at which point we realised, as a family, just how much of this she does! The news was very much *not* received "without effort" and a miasma of sadness settled upon the house.

One evening, just before lights out, in floods of tears, her mind produced a litany of woe: a greatest hits compilation of how unfair it was, how she'd never be able to do any sports ever again, what it was going to be like sitting out at P.E. tomorrow, how she wished she'd never gone on that stupid trampoline in the first place... it was heartbreaking to witness, in addition bringing back my *own* sporting injury disappointments, of which there are many.

In this scenario, it was easy enough for an outside observer to identify the root cause of her suffering: not the knee injury itself — a situation

that had happened and was now past — but the mind's response to the injury. Of course there'd be sports again; sitting out at P.E. actually turned out to be ok; and the return to ballet and gymnastics and cycling and performing madcap physical feats around the house were truly joyous events.

Right there and then — *that* present moment; which is the only experience any of us *ever* gets to have — she was snuggled up in bed, overlooked by doting parents, and completely pain free. Life continued – that's what it was giving, but the mind had other ideas, arguing with reality and tormenting her with its time-based tribulations.

How much of our suffering comes about as a result of the mind's *response* to what life offers? All of it? Given that our entire experience of each moment is delivered to us by the infinitely creative power of thought, I think so.

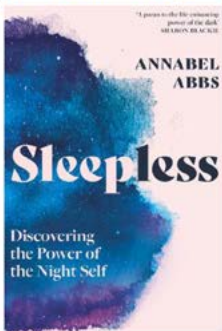
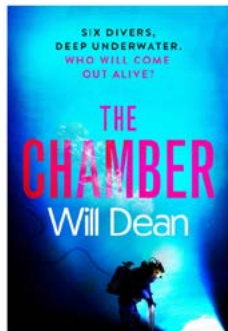
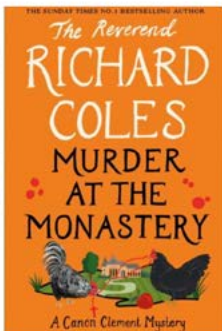
You don't get to choose what happens – life's happenstance is a result of 13.8 billion years of cause and effect and your mind can do diddly squat about that. Neither do you get to choose the thoughts and feelings you experience in a situation – that's a product of the same irrepressible energy force, that happens to include your genetics and your conditioning.

What you *do* get, is an opportunity to wake up from the dream state; to see these self-evident truths playing out in your own life. To realise, for yourself, that the "effort" of non-acceptance stems wholly from your relationship to the mind's complaining, well, that's how real change occurs.

That's when it starts making more and more sense to receive life, *without effort*.



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This month's wonderfully curated list of what deserves space on your bookshelf, as recommended by the Booksellers at Book-ish.



The Lost Paths

Jack Cornish £20

Hundreds of thousands of miles of paths reach into, and connect, communities across England and Wales. By 2026, 10,000 miles of undiscovered footpaths around Britain stand to be lost. Jack Cornish has dedicated the last five years of his life to walking these forgotten routes, and this book is the result. It is Jack Cornish's hope that The Lost Paths will show just how special these forgotten rights of way are, and how embedded each path is in the history of Britain. This is a celebration of an ancient network and a rallying cry to reclaim what has been lost and preserve it for future generations.

Nature Cure

Richard Mabey £9.99

The father of modern nature writing describes his descent into depression and subsequent salvation through connection with the British landscape, in a work which pioneered the sub-genre of therapeutic nature literature.

England & Wales - Island Bagging

Lisa Drewe £20

Go on an inspirational and fascinating coastline journey – familiar islands are visited, such as Lundy and the Isle of Wight;

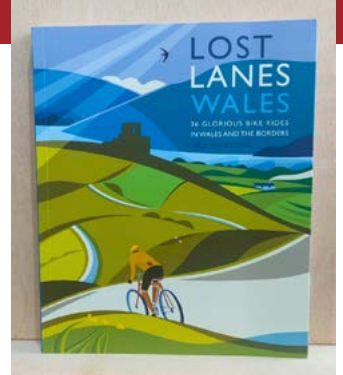


others are less well known, such as Gwynn in Pembrokeshire and Coquet Island in Northumberland. Almost 300 islands are included, from larger, populated islands to remote, uninhabited islets – some can be reached by foot at low tide, others have ferry services, and some you will need your own transport, or be content to view them from the mainland. Once you've found your island this book introduces you to the best sites on the island to appreciate: hidden beaches and coves, the tastiest local food and the wildlife that can be seen in the locality. Watch the Cemlyn Bay terns on Anglesey, go paddleboarding around Mersea Island in Essex, walk in the footsteps of pilgrims on Lindisfarne in Northumberland, or enjoy ice cream from one of the smallest dairy herds in the country on St Agnes in the Isles of Scilly ... it's all there to be enjoyed in England & Wales Island Bagging.

Lost Lanes Wales

Jack Thurston £14.99

Travelling at a leisurely pace Jack explores the Wales and the border counties taking in mountain summits, enchanted woodlands, wild seashores, shimmering lakes and ancient ways. Enjoy 36 specially selected rides with downloadable information. Graded from easy to challenging, with handmade maps, best pubs and tea stops, wild swims



and finest viewpoints. Overnight stops, from B&Bs to camping under the stars. Most rides are accessible by train.

A Year in Story & Song: A Celebration of the Seasons

Lia Leendertz £10

We humans love stories. We love to hear them and to tell them, around fires and by bedsides, and we love to use them to make sense of the world around us. The seasons, in all their ever-changing variety, give us many opportunities for storytelling: the full moons and their names, Epiphany in January, St Patrick's Day in March, May Day, Midsummer, Halloween and more. They feature mischievous boggarts and fairies, saints and sailors, leprechauns and dragons, pilgrimages and charms, milk maids and rose queens, Robin Hood and the green man. The songs range from shanties and love songs, to bawdy ballads and wassails, to carols and rounds, and have been sung for hundreds of years, often at particular moments in the calendar.

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Georgian Bling

Berrington Hall might look dour from the outside but is buzzing with colour indoors. Helen Morgan from Abergavenny Local History Society reports.

This neo-classical mansion near Leominster stands proud in a rolling green landscape, looking westwards towards the Black Mountains. Thomas Harley who built it nearly 250 years ago had long family links with Herefordshire and, by his mid-forties, felt the urge to return to his county of birth as a relief from the hurly-burly of city life. Having commissioned Capability Brown to design the parkland with its 14-acre lake, he also employed Brown's son-in-law, Henry Holland, to design a house in the latest French-influenced Neo-classical style, using the finest craftsmen.

Harley had no male heir, but was delighted when in 1781 his daughter Anne married the son of Admiral Lord Rodney, a great naval commander. She inherited

Berrington in 1804 and the Rodneys continued to live there for the next 95 years. Much of the glittering interior that we see today, however, is not indigenous. The house came to the National Trust relatively bare as the 7th Lord Rodney had gambled away the family wealth and many valuables including several Gainsborough paintings. Instead it is widely furnished and decorated with The Elmar Digby Collection bequeathed to the Trust in 1981, and features fine examples of French furniture, snuff and sewing boxes, seals, clocks and watches, and small objets d'art and de virtue. The ceramic collection is considerable, ranging from a blue and white Chinese plate and carved oriental stand from the 1700s to a 1885 set of Copland bedroom china in a white ground

and gold rope design. The painting collection is small but holds Allan Ramsay's portrait of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and four large sea battle scenes from the War of American Independence. A number of drawings and watercolours are also on display, including a caricature of Winston Churchill as a pirate, and numerous prints, many after Angelica Kauffman featuring historical, mythological and allegorical figures. Last but not least is the court mantua dress from the 1760s that belonged to Anne Harley. It was bought at auction in 2010 in 10 pieces and was missing part of its left sleeve and stomacher. The missing sections were reproduced using digital technology and the entire garment was reconstructed in situ in 2018.



To book your seat for Berrington Hall and the Mappa Mundi in Hereford on July 18th, go to abergavennylocalhistorysociety.org.uk. To join this trip you need to be a member. Lectures resume in September.

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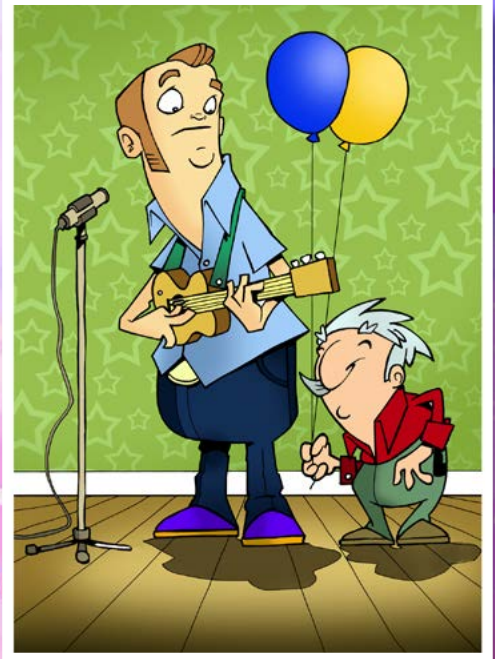
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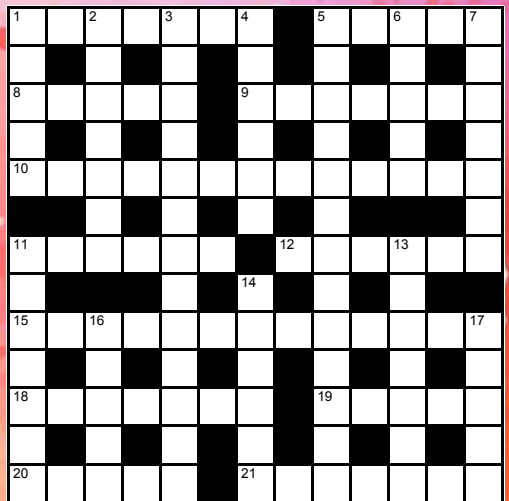
Quick Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Type of pudding (7)
- 5 Trimmed (5)
- 8 Large pebbles (5)
- 9 Brutal (7)
- 10 At right angles (13)
- 11 Without effort (6)
- 12 Grieves for (6)
- 15 A protest (13)
- 18 Financial system (7)
- 19 Beverage (5)
- 20 Stairs (5)
- 21 Hauled (7)

DOWN

- 1 Sticky liquid (5)
- 2 Accompanies (7)
- 3 Assorted (13)
- 4 Split (6)
- 5 Book of facts (13)
- 6 Snarl (5)
- 7 Removes weapons (7)
- 11 Goes on forever (7)
- 13 Fence (7)
- 14 Remained (6)
- 16 Large deer (5)
- 17 Nude (5)





PREPARING YOUR GARDEN FOR POTENTIAL BUYERS

TIPS FOR CREATING AN APPEALING SPACE

Are you thinking about selling your property?

Many people choose to list their homes for sale during sunnier, warmer weather. June often has one of the highest median sale prices for houses and the most overall sales, making it one of the best months to sell a home. When selling your home, first impressions are crucial, and your garden plays a significant role in creating a welcoming ambiance. An attractive, well-maintained garden can significantly enhance the appeal of your property and potentially increase its market value. Here are some tips to ensure your garden becomes an enticing space for potential buyers.

Clean and Declutter

Start by cleaning up your garden. Remove any dead plants, fallen leaves, and debris. Trim overgrown hedges, mow the lawn and weed flower beds. A tidy garden looks well-cared-for and inviting. Store away garden tools, toys, and any other clutter to create a neat and orderly space.

Enhance Curb Appeal with Flowers

Adding colourful flowers can instantly boost your garden's

appeal. Choose a mix of perennials and annuals to provide vibrant blooms throughout the selling season. Planting flowers in borders, beds, and pots near the entrance can create a welcoming look. Consider low-maintenance, drought-resistant plants to appeal to buyers who may not have green fingers.

Define Spaces

Create defined areas within your garden to showcase its full potential. Use hedges, garden furniture, or planters to delineate spaces for dining, relaxation, and play. A well-placed bench or a cosy seating area can help buyers envisage themselves enjoying the garden.

Address Repairs & Maintenance

Fix any broken fences, gates, or garden structures. Power wash patios, walkways, and decks to remove dirt and mildew. Ensure all garden lights are functioning properly, as good lighting can enhance the garden's appeal during evening viewings.

Add Fresh Mulch

Applying a fresh layer of mulch to flower beds not only improves the appearance but also helps retain

moisture and reduce weeds. Choose a natural colour that complements your garden's palette.

Create a Focal Point

Introduce a focal point such as a water feature, sculpture, or a beautiful tree. This draws the eye and adds interest to the garden. Ensure the focal point is proportionate to the size of the garden and complements its style.

Keep It Simple

While it's tempting to go overboard with garden décor, simplicity often appeals to a broader range of buyers. A garden that looks easy to maintain and versatile will attract more interest.

By investing some time and effort into enhancing your garden, you can create an appealing outdoor space that complements your home and leaves a lasting impression on potential buyers.

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