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## BRECON JAZZ FESTIVAL

4<sup>TH</sup> - 18<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST

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# Dear Readers,



Wales has long been a nation of pet lovers, and this month, we're celebrating that special bond we share with our furry, feathered, and finned friends. Did you know that looking at animals can help to reduce your stress and anxiety levels? So, even if you didn't contribute to our Animal Gallery on Page 16, you can still get some benefit from it, just by taking a look!

There's lots more to enjoy in this month's Focus with updates about local projects as well as outdoor events, festivals and productions to elevate your summer. If you're off on holiday, whether it's near or far, be sure to check out our summer read recommendations on Page 28

We hope this issue brings a smile to your face. Have a wonderful July!

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# New President elected at Brecon Rotary Club

**B**recon Rotary Club has welcomed its new President for the coming year.

At the final meeting of the current Rotary year, Hayley Ridge-Evans took over as President for the 2024-2025 year, which begins on 1 July 2024.

At the handover night, the presidential chain was passed to Hayley from outgoing President Carol Herbert.

During her year as President Carol was pleased to have welcomed many new members as well as engaging with the local community through the Community Chest Scheme, Easter Eggs Collections, Litter picks and supporting local schools and residential homes with

environmental projects and the donation of teddy bears to Brecon War Memorial Hospital.



Hayley Ridge-Evans (left), Carol Herbert (right)

The club was also pleased to be able to recognise six members of the club with their Long Service Awards, a fantastic total of 195 years' service between them.

Hayley Ridge-Evans said, "We are very lucky to have such a wealth of knowledge and experience amongst our members".

Brecon Rotary meets each Monday at 6:30 at the Wellington Hotel, Brecon if you are interested in becoming a member please feel free to call in or if you would like to find out more about the work we do please visit its website [www.breconrotary.com](http://www.breconrotary.com) or one of our social media sites including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Catherine Quarrell

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# The Lucas Memorial



**T**he Crickhowell and District Civic Society took on the project to clean and repair the grade II listed Lucas Memorial fountain as it required attention to ensure it remains the important feature in our High Street. The phase one of this process was carried out in September 2023, works were carried out by David Bennett of Bennetts Conservation. He was our chosen restoration mason as he is a recognised contractor to CADW and

**Heritage officer for work on listed monuments. He is also a local business and resident, so we are supporting our local economy.**

The Dr Lucas Memorial Fountain stands in the middle of Crickhowell High Street on the site of an old town hall. Dr Henry Lucas died in 1873 and the fountain was erected in his memory in 1875.

The Crickhowell and District Civic Society received funding from the Percy Davies trust, The Great British High Street prize fund, and some kind resident philanthropists. The monument was cleaned, consolidated, polished and joints repointed to arrest any further deterioration.

Like the Church lychgate which Civic society repaired in 2018, the fountain was also an orphan monument and had not received any regular maintenance or repairs since 1988. Many residents had approached us as they dearly wished for the fountain to be repaired and cared for so the Crickhowell and District Civic Society decided to take the lead in saving this monument.

The pre phase activity was working with the Crickhowell town council for them to add this monument to

the town councils blanket insurance cover and this was agreed and now in place. The works were agreed with The heritage officer Bannau Brycheiniog national park, Cadw and Powys County council .

There is much local support for a potential phase 2 project which will involve planning and works to bring a method of restoring some form of water supply.

There are many issues to overcome in a phase 2. The water supply itself, drainage, health and safety, and water testing procedures, financing of water usage to name a few. A full restoration plan and then funding will have to be secured at some future time.

The Crickhowell and District Civic Society believes the fountain is a central part of Crickhowell's Heritage and Landscape. Repairing this monument benefits all our residents helping to keep our heritage for future generations.

The picture is of The Dr Lucas Memorial fountain looking resplendent now it has been cleaned and repaired with Dave Williams Chair of Crickhowell and District Civic Society and David Bennett of Bennetts Conservation.

Contact [civcnp8@gmail.com](mailto:civcnp8@gmail.com) for details on membership or supporting the societies activities.

Pat Webb

## July Weather Outlook

by Jonathan Powell

After a June that delivered some lengthy spells of dry and often sunny weather, albeit hindered by a northerly airflow especially early month, July looks set to deliver a not altogether dissimilar pattern. With high pressure set to have a good deal of influence, we can expect the lion's share of the more stable conditions, with pleasant periods of dry and fine weather, and temperatures perhaps on a par if not better than June. Whilst July may not return any searing bouts of heat, the lack of these warmer values may well play into our hands, with lower but more stable daytime temperatures unlikely to trigger an upset to the appcart. July won't be without rain, but the balance is most definitely with the settled weather column. A drier plus warmer than average July.



★ Trustpilot



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# Mayor Chris Holland Officially Opens New Kitchen Showroom on Cross Street, Abergavenny



**S**igma 3 Kitchens is proud to announce the official opening of their new kitchen and bedroom showroom located at 18 Cross Street, Abergavenny.

The showroom's grand unveiling took place on Saturday, June 15th, with the esteemed Mayor of Abergavenny, Chris Holland, cutting the red ribbon to declare it open.

The historic building, originally constructed in 1926 by W H Smith, now houses the latest in kitchen and bedroom designs. As the top-rated kitchen retailer in the UK with a stellar 5-star Trustpilot rating, Sigma 3 Kitchens is dedicated to providing clients with an exceptional design experience and service.

Branch Principal Alice Vaatstra

expressed her excitement, 'I'm thrilled to officially open our new kitchen and bedroom showroom in the beautiful building at 18 Cross Street. We welcome you to visit our showroom and experience the latest in kitchen and bedroom designs.'

The team at Sigma 3 Kitchens invites residents and visitors to explore their showroom and discover the innovative and stylish options available for kitchens and bedrooms. With a commitment to customer satisfaction, Sigma 3 Kitchens aims to exceed expectations and deliver excellence in every aspect of the design process.

Visit the new showroom on Cross Street to witness the epitome of kitchen and bedroom design excellence.



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# Brecon Jazz Festival 2024

## WORLD SOUNDS ~WELSH VIBE



Eliane Correa will be performing on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> at the Guildhall with her Cuban Quintet

*Join us in Brecon this August for the annual celebration of all things Jazz!*

**B**uzzing all over the town on different stages, places and spaces, BJJ is diverse, fun and welcoming.

This year it opens with our ever popular jazz-themed 'Family Day', on Sunday 4th August. Relax on the lawns and gardens of the Castle Hotel, the magnificent Beacons in the background, while music & workshops for all ages

take place throughout day, with main events under cover in our large outdoor Marquee. Food and drinks, snacks and ice creams from vendors and the Hotel and eight hours of entertainment all on one site!

Advance tickets: £18 pp, with all accompanied children completely free!

The classic 'Jazz' weekend follows (9,10,11 August), with ticketed as well as open access events, a public opening (Friday 9 August from 2:15pm) that includes the amazing musician, N'famady Kouyaté and three whole days packed with live music and things to do for all. The Saturday highlight is the afternoon Frazz Parade (from 2pm) and outdoor concert by wonderful

Wonderbrass for everyone to enjoy – with top line jazz at noon and night!

There'll be small and large concerts taking place in venues across the town on Sunday (11 August), and a dazzling array of local and international musical talent. Guitarists, vocalists, horn & sax players, harpists, pianists, bassists, strings and percussion... all travelling to Brecon, and conjuring sounds to delight many of them collaborative and with compositions just for and 'made in Brecon'.

Come to the centre of Wales this August and experience the inviting mix of international and community music-making that is *BJJ*, right before you, with opportunities to get involved too!

And there's more – the final weekend of Brecon Jazz 2024 is on Saturday and Sunday 17-18th August, with film screenings ('Monk'; 'Django'), live sets, talks, swing and hot club jazz. Unmissable.

BJJ 2024 / 40th Anniversary

**Weekend, Day & Single Tickets**

[www.breconjazz.org/tickets](http://www.breconjazz.org/tickets)

Brecon Jazz Club



Jingu Bang



# JULY @ THEATR BRYCHEINIOG

Get ready for another a month filled with spectacular shows at Theatr Brycheiniog



**T**his July, we are proud to present a diverse line-up of exceptional performances that will captivate audiences and celebrate the beauty of music from different cultures and genres. From classical masterpieces to rock and roll legends, from traditional Zulu rhythms to enchanting folktales, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Kicking off the month on Thursday, July 4th, join the Welsh National Opera Orchestra and WNO Music Director Tomáš Hanus on a musical journey through Central Europe. On

Saturday, July 6th, prepare to be transported back in time with *"Oh What a Night!"* as the incredible career of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons comes to life.

Thursday, July 18th, marks a special occasion as The Zulu Royal Chorale takes the stage to honour the life and times of King Zwelithini. This theatrical extravaganza of music, dance, and Zulu athleticism promises to showcase the unique relationship between the people of Brecknock and the Zulu culture. The following evening, on Friday, July 19th, witness the extraordinary collaboration between the legendary Zulu Royal Chorale

and the Aberhonddu and District Male Voice Choir. The symphony of voices created by this 30-member ensemble will be a remarkable display of cultural exchange and harmony.

On Wednesday, July 24th, immerse yourself in the enchanting world of *Tam Lin Retold*. This collection of captivating stories, accompanied by live music, explores unsung voices of Scots/English folklore. Closing the month on Sunday, July 28th, Zervas & Pepper present *'This Flight Tonight'*, an intimate acoustic tribute to the music of Joni Mitchell. Featuring her iconic songs like *'California'*

and *'Both Sides Now'*, this five-piece band will transport you to Joni's house in Laurel Canyon during the summer of love, evoking a sense of intimacy and nostalgia.

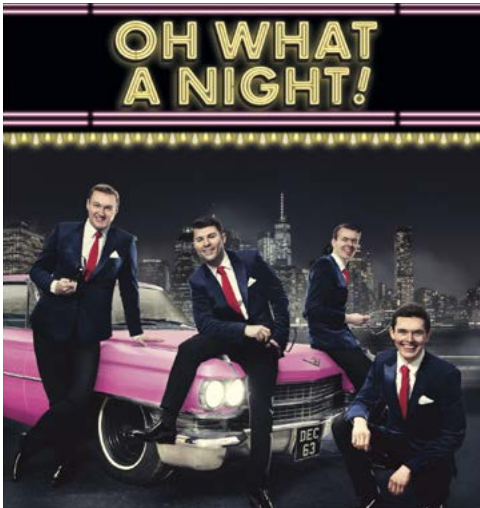
For our youngest audience members, Baby B! Storytelling Group is a free parent and child activity group every Wednesday at 11am. Join us for interactive and inclusive sessions filled with songs, rhymes, and stories.

Lastly, if you're looking for a midweek pick-me-up, join the Uplift Singing Sessions led by Tanya Walker every Tuesday at 12pm. Let the power of singing uplift your spirits and bring joy to your week.

Come and immerse yourself in the magic of live theatre and music. Book your tickets now and let the entertainment begin!

Our canal side cafe is such a great place to relax and spend time, whether it is before a show, for breakfast, lunch or coffee and cake, we have menus for all occasions. So, there you have it, a taste of what's to come in July at Theatr Brycheiniog.

*Team Theatr B!*



# THEATR BRYCHEINIOG

## Romeo a Juliet

An extraordinary adaptation of Shakespeare's masterpiece.

**Tue 2nd July | 7.30pm**

**Wed 3rd July | 1.30pm**

## Crossing Borders with Welsh National Opera Orchestra

An inspiring journey through the rich musical tapestry of Central Europe.

**Thu 4th July | 7pm**

## Oh What a Night!

A musical journey through the incredible career of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons.

**Sat 6th July | 7.30pm**

## Zulu Royal Chorale performs in song, dance and praises the life and times of his Majesty King Zwelithini

Showcasing the special relationship between the people of Brecknock and the Zulu people

**Thu 18th July | 7.30pm**

## The Zulu Welsh: A Symphony of Voices

The legendary Zulu Royal Chorale join forces with Aberhonddu and District Male Voice Choir.

**Fri 19th July | 7.30pm**

## Tam Lin Retold

A collection of enchanting and sharp stories that explore unsung voices of Scots/English folklore.

**Wed 24th July | 7.30pm**

## This Flight Tonight: A Tribute to Joni Mitchell

An intimate five-piece acoustic live tribute.

**Sun 28th July | 7.30pm**

## The Great Insect Games - Free Outdoor Event

Flex your muscles and practise your lunges, it's time for the Great Insect Games!

**Sat 24th Aug | 1pm & 3pm**



Theatr Brycheiniog, Canal Wharf, Brecon, LD3 7EW  
Box Office: 01874 611 622 | [www.brycheiniog.co.uk](http://www.brycheiniog.co.uk)

# Cwmdu and District Show 2024

*Saturday 13th July*



**C**wmdu and District Show is a local show with a big heart welcoming everyone! Situated within the valley of the Black Mountains, it is an opportunity to explore and take part in rural life, where there is a lovely church, local pub and plenty of walks, making it a perfect day out for everyone.

There will be many activities available such as side stalls, bouncy castle, face painting, children's sports as well as a new adventure for us this year; we are going rodeo style with a bucking bronco! There is going to be a live competition with prize money. Now, who said the people of Cwmdu do not know how to have fun?!

The show takes place in the village centre where exhibitors come to showcase their horses, sheep, cows and dogs. Whilst the animals are definitely worth observing what might also interest you, is the local talent on display in the village hall, where there is range of cakes, vegetables, art and craft, flowers and children's exhibits to delight in.



To finish off the day we have the Cwmdu Community Choir performing live in the beer tent! The Wurzels are definitely making a comeback! So why not get your summer off to lively start and come and join us amidst glorious scenery, make some new friends, bring your family with you for what promises to be a fabulous afternoon.

Please follow us on Facebook  
[@CwmduDistrictShow](https://www.facebook.com/CwmduDistrictShow).

*Cwmdu & District Show*



  
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# Meet Top Culinary Talent at the Abergavenny Food Festival



**T**he Abergavenny Food Festival takes place over the weekend of 21 and 22 September.

A day Stroller ticket (Day: £16, Weekend: £25) gives access to six market venues in the centre of Abergavenny with over 190 exhibitors and caterers. Free entry for children under sixteen if with a paying adult. Buy Stroller tickets online now at [www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com](http://www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com) where you can view the full guest and exhibitor line-up.

Take your pick from a packed programme of guest performer events each day, including chef demonstrations, talks, debates, and cooking over fire. Enjoy the theatre of it all.

Watch Tom Parker Bowles demonstrate dishes from his latest book 'Cooking and The Crown - Royal Recipes from Queen Victoria to King Charles III'; meet anarchist cook, DIY chef and 'Snack Hacker', George Egg; get hot tips from BBQ legend, Genevieve Taylor, and take part in the Festival's famously hilarious Food Quiz.

There's plenty on offer for children. Be sure to catch the Abergavenny Rotary Club's Young Chef Competition Finals in the Market Hall on the Sunday, and enrol your future chefs in the Cook Stars cookery sessions at the Castle.

The Festival also has a collaboration with the BBC. The Food Programme (Radio 4, hosted by Sheila Dillon) and This Natural Life (Radio 4, host to be announced) will be recorded in the Octopus Books Dome at the Castle.

The full menu adds up to a delicious and memorable day out.

*Abergavenny Food Festival*



Buy your Day Stroller Ticket online now

Adults: £16 (free entry for under 16s)

All tickets to be sold in advance



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f 📷 @afoodfestival #AFF2024

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

# JULY 2024 EVENTS CALENDAR

## 6TH JULY SOUTH WALES SHIRE HORSE SHOW



Shire, Suffolk Punch, Cleveland Bay and Clydesdale Horses, Miniature horses, pony rides, a Punch and Judy show, dog show, catering stalls and many interesting trade and craft stands. Many other attractions - something for all the family.  
*Bailey Park Abergavenny*

## 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.

## 8TH JULY Book-ish Event AN EVENING WITH A.J. WEST

For info & tickets see Page 28  
visit [www.book-ish.co.uk/events](http://www.book-ish.co.uk/events)

## 10TH JULY Book-ish Event AN EVENING WITH DAN RICHARDS

For info & tickets see Page 28  
visit [www.book-ish.co.uk/events](http://www.book-ish.co.uk/events)

## 13TH JULY CWMDU AND DISTRICT SHOW



Exhibitors showcase their horses, sheep, cows and dogs. A range of cakes, vegetables, art and craft, flowers and children's exhibits will be on display. Side stalls, bouncy castle, face painting, children's sports as well as a bucking bronco! Live competition with prize money. Cwmdu Community Choir will be performing live in the beer tent. Follow us on Facebook:

**@CwmduDistrictShow**  
See article on Page 12  
*Wen Farm, Cwmdu*

## 15TH JULY Book-ish Event AN EVENING WITH ANNIE GARTHWAITE

For info & tickets see Page 28  
visit [www.book-ish.co.uk/events](http://www.book-ish.co.uk/events)

**29TH-30TH JULY****ARTISAN SUMMER MARKET**

Our Annual Summer artisan market has some new attractions this year - as usual it runs for two days on the lawns and gardens of the historic Tretower Court!

There are no entrance fees over the two days, so you can enjoy the opportunity to explore the crafts, arts, and food stands. We will have FREE children's activities run by the fabulous 'Talk to the Trees' team who will keep the younger visitors entertained with nature-based drop-in workshops.

10am-4pm, Tretower Castle & Court, Crickhowell  
Free Entry

**3RD AUGUST****BRECON COUNTY SHOW**

There are a whole host of events and attractions to be enjoyed, including over 200 trade stands, the fantastic food hall and craft marquee, fairground attractions, dog classes, horses, cattle, goats, sheep, sheep-shearing, poultry show, alpacas, countryside arena, woodland and forestry section, horticulture, handicraft & domestic, food demonstrations, music, tractors, vintage vehicles, 2024 brings the Jamie Squibb Freestyle Stunt Team and Jump Dogs Parachute Display Team to name a few.

Visit [www.breconcountyshow.co.uk](http://www.breconcountyshow.co.uk) for info

**4TH, 9TH-11TH, 17TH-18TH AUGUST****BRECON JAZZ FESTIVAL**

Organised over three weekends in August, with 6 days of music and fun as well as 20 ticketed concerts!

See article on Page 13

For tickets visit [www.breconjazz.org/tickets](http://www.breconjazz.org/tickets)

## LOOKING AHEAD

**21ST-22ND SEPTEMBER****ABERGAVENTNY FOOD FESTIVAL**

See our article on Page 13

Visit [www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com](http://www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com) for info and ticketing

# SHARE YOUR EVENT

Go to: [thefocus.wales/calendar](http://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

# Animal Companions

When we recently asked for photos of your Animal Companions, we were blown away by the response! Wales certainly is a nation of animal lovers and our area is no exception. We're delighted to feature a gallery of the Pets of South Powys. If you contributed a photo, we hope you'll find your friend in the gallery. We're certain that you'll agree, they're a rather fine looking bunch!





# PETS & BRECON



LUNA



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DARCEY, KIARA & NESSA



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BLU THE NAUGHTY LAB



BEAU



HALLE & GWEN



CANADIAN GOOSE WHO THINKS IT'S A DOG!



RESCUE BABIES BILLY AND OZZY



ELSA



TILLY, A RESCUE DOG FROM A PUPPY FARM.



ROX



MAXIS 6 MONTHS OLD



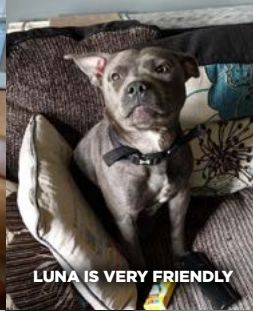
ORLA & RUBY



**DIESEL, A HUSKY X  
COCKPOOLE.**



**MOLLY**



**LUNA IS VERY FRIENDLY**



**PEPPA PUSS AGED 5**



**MOWGLI**



**THIS IS CHARLIE LOOKING  
VERY SMART**



**FLOPSY**



**SMUDGE**



**DAISY THE LOVELY WEST  
HIGHLAND TERRIER**



**THIS IS CHARLIE LOOKING  
VERY SMART**



**WHISPER**



**HERBIE**

# PETS @ CRICKHOWELL



**BANKSY & LUNA**



**DOTTY**



**ARGENT LIKES LONG WALKS  
IN THE WOODS**



**BERNIE (BUSHY-TAILED  
HIKER) - ADVENTUROUS  
WELSH COLLIE**



**HOLLY DOLLY, THE LITTLE  
PAPILLON**



**COMET**



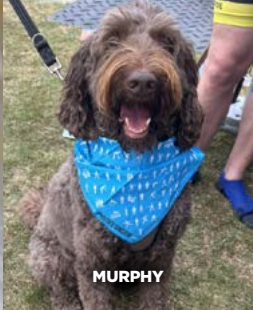
**COMET**



**SNOWY - THE CAT WHO ESCAPED THE WAR IN UKRAINE AND SETTLED WELL IN WALES**



**PETER, 18 MONTHS, RESCUED FROM A DUSTBIN IN GREECE, NOW LIVES IN BEAUTIFUL CRICKHOWELL**



**MURPHY**



**MAVERICK IS VERY ENERGETIC AND LOVES A CUDDLE**



**NIGEL THE MAINE COON**



**ALVIN, A MONGOLIAN GERBIL, HAS 35K FOLLOWERS ON INSTAGRAM**



**MURPHY, A 16 YEAR OLD YORKSHIRE TERRIER, IS BLIND, DEAF AND HAS DEMENTIA, BLESS HIM. BUT HE'S STILL ENJOYING LIFE**



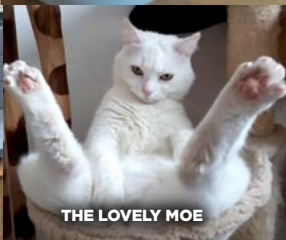
**PUDDING THE POMCHI AT 5 WEEKS OLD**



**RAIZEN THE CHINESE CRESTED**



**DAX THE BELGIAN TERVEUREN**



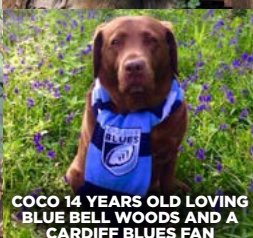
**THE LOVELY MOE**



**EIRA IS A SCOTTISH FOLD CAT, A RESCUE FROM DUBAI. SHE'S DEAF BUT VERY TALKATIVE**



**CHARLIE**



**COCO 14 YEARS OLD LOVING BLUE BELL WOODS AND A CARDIFF BLUES FAN**



**HILDA & HUGO ARE AFFENPINSCHERS**



**MYLA (LEFT) AND BELLA (RIGHT)**



**LILY & LUNA**



**BRYN, A BERNADOODLE PUPPY**



**PIPPA**



**WILLOW**



**PICKLE, POST PUPPACCINO!**

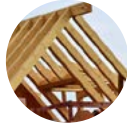


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# Dogs, Cats, Chickens, Ducks & Alpacas!

**C**anine Connections Dog Training has been offering puppy training and dog training courses for over 10 years now and I still love my job-helping puppies learn how to navigate the world as well as helping new owners with their teenage or adult dogs. As well as classes, I offer 121 sessions and often carry out the training in my paddock on my smallholding.



start the desensitization process and help a dog get used to being around another species. Here on the smallholding we allow the dogs to see the animals at a distance to begin with and gradually, over time, and with lots of patience allow them to get gradually closer as they are ready and stay relaxed. This enables the dog to become 'desensitised', in other words to be relaxed and eventually look and then ignore unfamiliar animals, or animals which move suddenly or in unfamiliar ways.

We often work on desensitization around the chickens (with a barrier so everyone is safe) and quite often in classes, the ducks will be walking by in the lower paddock (behind a fence) while the dogs are working, so we can build a solid recall with a big distraction. Bob the cat is very nosy and very streetwise and does not shy away from dogs that come, so he is an ideal 'meet and greet' cat at classes, although he quite often wants to join in the class, so I have to put him in bed for a nap! Pete the alpaca is quite nosy too and he will often want to see who the new doggy arrival is and if the situation is appropriate a gentle hello can be managed.

Our cat Bob is best friends with our dog Kip, they can play and clean each other for hours. Kilo is a bit frightened of the ducks (as one bit her bottom once!). I have a couple of customers whose dogs are best friends with a rabbit and one that's best friend is a pot-bellied pig! I wonder whether your dog has a cat, rabbit or another animal as its best friend? I would be interested to know!

*Tracey Prall - Canine Connections  
www.canineconnections.co.uk*

One thing you may not know is that as well as our lovely dogs, Kilo, Tiny Timmy and Kip, we also have chickens, ducks, our cat Bob and two alpacas called Pete and Fiona! It's a family that has grown over the years and the extended family often helps in training sessions with puppies and dogs that visit. I am always very careful to respect the animals' emotional needs which are at the forefront of everything I do, but Bob the cat, the chickens, ducks and alpacas often help- and as you can imagine Pete and Fiona get a lot of human attention too!

If your new pup or dog hasn't encountered new animals, birds or a cat, it can be quite scary, especially if they are large or move quickly. A gentle, steady introduction, at a safe distance can





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# Can we be Sustainable and Productive?



“ Previously, I understood the ‘what’ but not so much the ‘why’ and especially the ‘how can we find this out?..” ”

**We hear a great deal about sustainability, but food security and business viability are important too.**

Through ‘Levelling Up’, Powys County Council have funded training for anyone who lives or works in Powys to learn new skills to help the county to embrace the latest thinking around production and sustainability. The courses, which are delivered online by IBERS Distance Learning at Aberystwyth University, focus on integrating digital technologies with circular economy principles as a key to achieving long-term environmental and economic goals.



So, if you live or work in Powys, why not check out what’s on offer:

- Free consultation to identify a training package tailored to your needs
- Free access to our modules and workshops for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or towards postgraduate qualifications (September 2024 only)
- Free support in developing a Green Digital Transformation Strategy for your business, if applicable

Our courses cover a wide range of topics, from Behaviour Change to Agri-Tech Advances, Livestock to Horticulture, Food Innovation to Life Cycle Assessment.

Here’s what one of our CPD students had to say after completing her short course:

One of our postgraduate students had this to say about the Horticulture module:

“It has been a complete eye-opener and fascinating.... Thank you for helping me discover the potential for a career change.”

Another of our students taking both CPD and a Post Graduate module said:

“This has been the most useful thing I’ve done in years! The courses have really helped me gain new knowledge, and consolidate what I already know”.

The courses are delivered completely on-line and are designed to fit around your work and family commitments. Whether you aim to make your business more sustainable, advance your career, or work towards a qualification, don’t delay - get in touch today!

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# Exercise for Summer



**W**ith the warmer weather, exercise of any kind can feel like too much effort and we often choose to forego our regular practice and enjoy the longer summer days and evenings. Getting hot and sweaty can be very unappealing as we may feel lethargic or listless and the idea of working out goes out of the window!

However, Pilates has always been so much more than just a way to work out or exercise and consistency is the key to its success. It is the complete coordination of body, mind and spirit and its benefits never cease to amaze me. Because its low impact, it's the perfect way to stay fit and strong in the heat and is suitable for those with joint issues or those who prefer to exercise more gently. All of the exercises can be modified to suit different abilities and levels of fitness which means its available to everyone.

If you don't know much about Pilates, essentially, it focuses on strengthening the core muscles which can improve posture, stability and body alignment. The exercises emphasise elongating and stretching muscles which can lead to improved flexibility and range of motion.

While it targets the core, it also engages other muscle groups providing a comprehensive, full body work out in a safe and controlled way. The movements are precise and deliberate, which focuses the mind and helps with concentration.

Pilates exercises often mimic every day functional movement patterns so regular practice can also improve performance in everyday activities and as the

core muscles develop and get stronger, the spine is protected and back pain eases.

Exercise fads come and go but Pilates is now universally recognised as one of the most effective methods to stay strong and flexible well into later life. Why not give it a try?

## Access Pilates classes anywhere, anytime with local instructor Kate Thomas

Learn Pilates from scratch with my 'Tiny Habits' 31 day challenge. **Just 10 minutes a day, starting January 1st.**

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Beginners to Advanced classes with everything in between.

Videos with small equipment (weights, circle, bands) to add resistance to your training.

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# Looking Upstream

**“Mental health lies within the consciousness of all human beings, but it is shrouded and held prisoner by our own erroneous thoughts.” ~ Sydney Banks**

**I**n my years of medical training and latterly as an innate health coach, I've come across several ways of helping people with mental health conditions, each of which works on troublesome thoughts & feelings in a different way.

In describing them to you, it can help to imagine these targeting the various parts of a river, where anything done *upstream*, washes away the need for interventions performed further *downstream*. Each of these has the exact same end goal: peace of mind. None is right or wrong, they're not necessarily exclusive, and each has its own appeal.

**1. Symptom relief.** Our first port of call, furthest downstream, is symptom relief. This might include avoiding triggers, which makes a lot of sense, until we notice our lives getting smaller as we dodge more and more scary-looking situations.

Medication and drugs fall into this category too, be that prescribed or recreational. By altering our biochemistry, they make us temporarily feel different, which is an attractive proposition. But they have side effects, can become addictive and do nothing to address the root cause of our malady.

Some habits, like gambling, shopping, disordered eating & self-harming can also relieve symptoms of mental stress, by taking our mind

off our selves and making us more present, albeit briefly.

**2. Content of thought.** If we've identified that the pain we feel is as a result of hurtful, repetitive thinking, then we might move further upstream and address those thoughts, head on. We've all made the difficult transition from infancy to adulthood, and the traumas we experienced (of varying magnitudes) and the ways we learned to cope when young, form the basis of our conditioned thinking and behaviour, now.

Talking therapies can help by exploring the past, making these connections more visible, and allowing us to leave behind redundant patterns, in turn reducing, or eliminating the need for symptom relief.

But it *can* be a painful process, and one that inadvertently makes matters worse, by repeatedly focusing on topics that keep harmful memories alive.

**3. Structure of thought.** What if we could deal with troublesome thoughts and feelings by just zapping them, or changing them when they happen, somehow? Enter cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), neurolinguistic programming (NLP) and positive psychology, which, being still further upstream, potentially bypass the need for therapy, and symptom relief.

The general approach here, is to nullify, reframe or replace hurtful beliefs with more realistic, or in some cases, positive ones. This can be incredibly effective for phobias and repetitive patterns of thinking. But these tools are dependent on keeping up with practices, they're usually directed toward one specific problem, and they can be overwhelmed by, or resistant to very strong emotions.

**4. Nature of thought.** All of the above have one thing in common: they see thoughts and feelings as troublesome; problems to be dealt with. There's an underlying assumption that some aspect of us is malfunctioning, requiring fixing. But what if that just isn't true?

When we start to explore the *nature* of thought, we discover it to be neither positive nor negative; it's just a picture of the world being painted by the mind, moment to moment, and it changes all the time. As author Richard Carlson put it, "Thought, in and of itself, is harmless" and it's only when we ascribe to it a power it simply doesn't have that it looks like we *need* tools, techniques, therapy, avoidance or medication in order to 'handle' our experience.

When we stop our incessant tinkering, the mind is a self-correcting system and shrouded beneath our "erroneous thoughts" we find that who we really are is whole, unbroken. It is here, at the very wellspring of our experience, that we find our ever-present innate mental health, washing away our troubles.

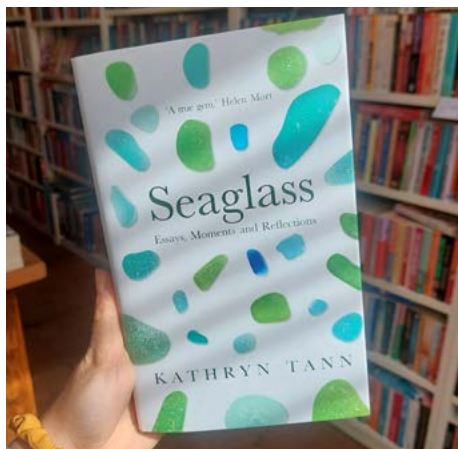
Maybe this is what it means to 'go with the flow.'

Dr Giles P Croft [gilescroft.com](http://gilescroft.com)  
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*If you'd like to start your day with a quick, light-hearted reminder of how your mind works and how being human is ok, then sign up to my FREE Daily Reminders newsletter here: <https://gilescroft.com/newsletter>*

# Book Recommendations

*If you're heading off on summer adventures this month, here are the top summer read picks from the talented bookselling team at Book-ish. Be sure to pack a few!*

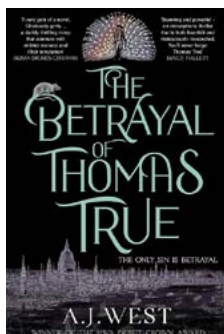


**Seaglass**  
**Kathryn Tann**  
£16.99

On a windswept stretch of the Durham coastline, there's treasure to be found: jewels of shining sea glass, swept in by the tide after years at sea. Gathered together in a jar on the windowsill, each seaworn pebble is a moment in time, a glinting archive of unknowable lives.

Seaglass is a collection of such moments; essays blending creative non-fiction with nature writing and memoir, and portraying with powerful observation and moving honesty the journey of a young woman navigating modern adulthood.

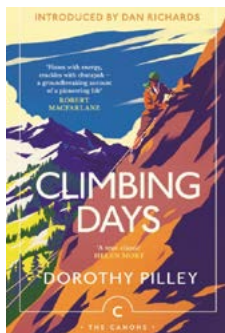
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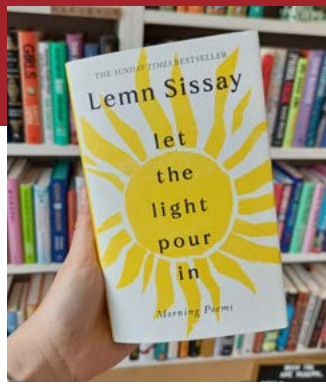
BOOK ONLINE: [WWW.BOOK-ISH.CO.UK/EVENTS](http://WWW.BOOK-ISH.CO.UK/EVENTS)



## Master of Death Olivie Blake

£9.99

From the No. 1 internationally bestselling author of *The Atlas Six*, *Masters of Death* is a queer, page-turning fantasy bursting with Olivie Blake's signature sharp wit, stunning prose and unforgettable characters. Vampiric estate agents, death's godson and a demonic personal trainer all abound in this witty and page-turning urban fantasy.



## Let the Light Pour In Lemn Sissay

£12.99

For the past decade, Lemn Sissay has composed a short poem as dawn breaks each morning. Life-affirming, witty and full of wonder, these poems chronicle his own battle with the dark and are fuelled by resilience and defiant joy. *Let the Light Pour In* is a collection of the best of these poems, and a book celebrating this morning practice.



## Why Women Grow Alice Vincent

£10.99

Women have always gardened, but our stories have been buried with our work. Alice Vincent is on a quest to change that: to understand what encourages women to go out, work the soil, plant seeds and nurture them, even when so many other responsibilities sit upon their shoulders. To recover the histories that have been lost among the soil and to understand women's lives, their gardens and what the ground has offered them.

## Tom Lake Ann Patchett

£9.99

In the spring of 2020, Lara's three daughters return to the family's orchard in Northern Michigan. While picking cherries, they beg their mother to tell them the story of Peter Duke, a famous actor with whom she shared both a stage and a romance years before at a theatre company called Tom Lake. As Lara recalls the past, her daughters examine their own lives and relationship with their mother and are forced to reconsider the world and everything they thought they knew.



## More Days at the Morisaki Bookshop

Satoshi Yagisawa

£10.99

Continuing the heartwarming tales from Satoru and Momoko's astounding Tokyo emporium, Yagisawa's sequel to the bestselling *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop* finds niece Takako in charge as her aunt and uncle embark upon a holiday.

# St Edmund's Eco Church and Churchyard

**M**embers of St Edmund's Church have been interested in the environment for a long time and have increasingly become concerned about Climate Change and the decline of wildlife and wanted to do something about it.



Three years ago, St Edmund's decided to embrace the issues and took up the challenge to sign up to the Echo Church Award Scheme organised by a Christian conservation group called 'A Rocha'. It provides a lot of resources to help churches to become more eco-friendly and encourages us to tackle a variety of issues with, for example, our buildings, lifestyle and the churchyard, and encourages action. We have since gained the bronze and silver awards and are now going for gold!

Our recent projects have been in the churchyard. An organisation called 'Caring for God's Acre' has helped us to write a churchyard management plan and given us a lot of advice about how to increase biodiversity.

Like some individuals and other organisations, St Edmund's church joined in with #NoMowMay this year, allowing most of the east end of the churchyard to grow so that the wildflowers could bloom and provide much-needed pollen for bees, butterflies and other pollinators. We hope you have enjoyed seeing them. Maybe you have even wandered through our wildflower meadow on the winding path that was cut and maintained by our wonderful gardener, Simon, for access to graves or just for the pleasure of wandering through it.

As you can see from the pictures, most of these wildflowers were still blooming well into June which is when we held our Annual 'Churches Count on Nature' events. Our monthly 'Messy Church' for children and families enjoyed looking for and identifying wild flowers and insects. A group of

teenagers and other volunteers did a pollinator survey and set a moth trap to identify our nightly visitors. By the end of June, the areas of long grass were cut, to allow smaller flowers to have their moment in the sun.

If you are interested in supporting the upkeep of and projects in the churchyard and/or getting involved practically, please contact me on 07976 737665 - Many thanks.

*Kerry Andrews  
Chair of Eco Church Group  
St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell*



# PUZZLES

## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



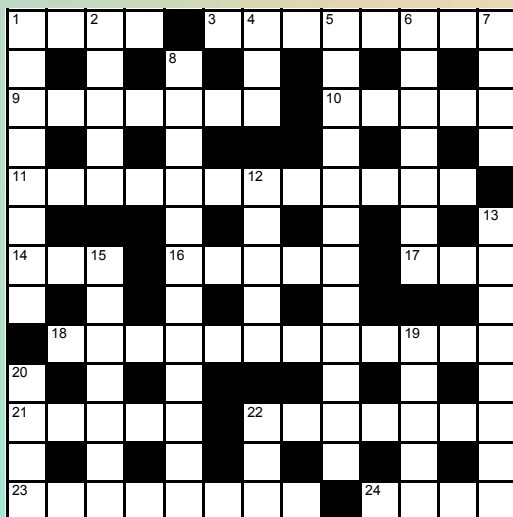
## Quick Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Unable to hear (4)
- 3 Previously (8)
- 9 A lawn game (7)
- 10 Tease (5)
- 11 Produced (12)
- 14 Period of time (3)
- 16 Stop (5)
- 17 Feminine pronoun (3)
- 18 In spite of (12)
- 21 Shoreline (5)
- 22 Placing (7)
- 23 Daily (8)
- 24 Requests (4)

### DOWN

- 1 Twelfth month (8)
- 2 Embellish (5)
- 4 Not in (3)
- 5 Dimensions (12)
- 6 Entrants in a race (7)
- 7 A toy (2-2)
- 8 Adequately (12)
- 12 Map or diagram (5)
- 13 Communications (8)
- 15 Mean (7)
- 19 Departs (5)
- 20 Land measurement (4)
- 22 Small vegetable (3)





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