

Shire

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Your local community newspaper
with news and views from the
Shirehampton area

No. 635 - December 2024 www.shire.org.uk 5,000 copies monthly

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REMEMBRANCE: Remembering D-Day

November 10th saw Remembrance Sunday at Shirehampton Cenotaph very well supported by the local communities and wreaths were greater in number. The local Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Cubs, Scouts, Avonmouth Sea Cadets and Fire Brigade were out in force. Military veterans remembered friends lost in later conflicts as well as those who went before them. One hymn sung hit technical problems and with no music everyone carried through the song to the end.



© Kathryn Courtney

This year marked the 80th Anniversary of D-Day, a turning point in WWII for the Allies. Known as **Operation Overlord**, allied forces launched a combined naval, air and land assault on the **Normandy** beaches opening a long and costly campaign to liberate **Northern Europe** from **German** occupation. Primarily American, British and Canadian forces, Australian, Dutch, French, Czech, Polish, Norwegian, Rhodesian, Belgian, New Zealand and Greek forces were in support. Shortly after midnight on **6th June** the invasion of **France** began.

My Uncle, **Tom O'Neill**, was one of those who made it to the beaches at 8am that morning. The following extract from an interview I did with him in 2014 has the blessing of his family, my cousins, to print.

“I was called up on **14th December 1943** at the age of eighteen by the army in the first instance. Then

Continues on page 8.



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© O'Neill Family

Brothers Patrick O'Neill and Thomas O'Neill.

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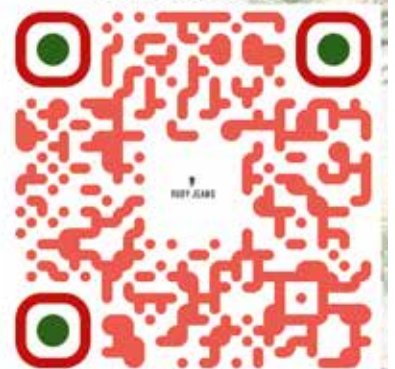
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for the Christmas menu

Shire

We hold regular monthly meetings on the first Monday of each month at 5.30pm in Shirehampton library. All welcome!

Official address: The Library, Public Hall, Station Road, Shirehampton, Bristol BS11 9TU.

Please contact Shire on: chairperson@shire.org.uk

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We welcome contributions for publication in 'SHIRE' but reserve the right to edit any copy received. Articles should not exceed 500 words. Any material published is at the editor's discretion and may also be included on our website www.shire.org.uk unless the copy is clearly marked 'not to be included on the world wide web'.

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REGULAR EVENTS IN SHIREHAMPTON

SHIREHAMPTON PUBLIC HALL REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

MONDAY	Twyford Art Club	10am-12noon	Main Hall
TUESDAY	Music with Mummy 9 to 5 Ladies Choir Line Dancing Community Living Room Bereavement Support (1st Tues) Puppy Training	10am-12noon 11am-1pm 2-3pm 3-5pm 5.50-7pm 6.30-8.30pm	Main Hall Library Main Hall Library Library Main Hall
WEDNESDAY	Healing Rooms (2nd Weds) Over 75s Exercise Extraordinary Links (Term Time) Women's Fellowship (2nd and 4th Weds) Shire Stitchers (3rd Weds)	10.30am-1.30pm 2-3pm 3.30-5.30pm 7.30-9.30pm 7.30-9.30pm	Main Hall Main Hall Main Hall Main Hall Main Hall
THURSDAY	Shire Social Group Tai Chi Family History Group (2nd Thurs) Model Railway Club	10am-12noon 2-3pm 6-8pm 7-10pm	Main Hall Main Hall Library Main Hall
FRIDAY	Youth Group (2nd and last Fri) Shire Stitchers (1st Friday)	7-10pm 10am-12noon	Main Hall/Penpole Bradley Room
SUNDAY	Church of Grace	11am-4pm	Main Hall & Springfield

The Hall is also home to Shirehampton Community Action Forum (SCAF) and Tandem Arts CIC

SHIREHAMPTON COMMUNITY ACTION FORUM (SCAF) SHIRE COMMUNITY LITTER PICKS 2025

Meet at 10.30am at Shire Public Hall, Station Road, BS11 9TU

pick up equipment & we'll go to different areas of Shire and tidy up for 1-1.5 hours.

Our last Litter Pick this year will be on Thursday 19 December

Thursday 16 January

Thursday 20 February

Thursday 20 March

Saturday 12 April

Thursday 15 May

Thursday 19 June

Thursday 17 July

Thursday 21 August

Saturday 6 September

Thursday 16 October

Thursday 20 November

Thursday 18 December

Please come along and help us clean up Shire! All litter picking kit will be provided.

**Contact: Ash Bearman at SCAF on 0117 982 9963
or email ash@shirecaf.org.uk**

Events in our library



Every Tuesday afternoon 3pm – 5pm

Shire's Living Room –

free tea/coffee/biscuits/games and a friendly chat.

1st Wednesday of the month 7:30pm – 9pm

Record Appreciation Club –

(next one on 2nd October)

Using analogue equipment, we play a classic vinyl album every month and have a discussion afterwards.

2nd Thursday of the month 6pm – 8pm

Family History Group –

We have a team of experts at hand to help you navigate the Ancestry.com website and other online tools and find out more about your family's history.

Every Sunday evening 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Heartfulness Relaxation and Meditation

Email southwest@heartfulness.uk before your first session. All welcome 18+

If you'd like to attend any of the above sessions, either email friendsofshire@gmail.com or phone/text 07943-401575



Cotswold Community Association
Dursley Road, Shirehampton,
Bristol, BS11 9XH
Registered charity no. 1101427
Website: cotswoldcommunity.org
Email: cotswoldca@gmail.com
Phone: 07943-401575

Regular Events at the Cotswold Community Centre

MONDAY	Pilates 9.30-10.30am Kettlebells 5:15-6:15pm 6:30-7:30pm
TUESDAY	(NEW) Over 70s Exercise Class 2pm-3pm (contact Sarah on 0117 907 0680 for more details) Film Night 7:30pm (1st & 3rd of month)
WEDNESDAY	Keep Fit 10:30-11:30am Kettlebells 5:15-6:15pm Pilates 6:30-7:30pm
THURSDAY	Welcome Space 10am-Noon Bingo 2pm Kettlebells 5:15-6:15pm 6:30-7:30pm Table Tennis 8pm
FRIDAY	Happy Space 2pm-4pm (3rd of month)
SATURDAY	Coffee Morning 10am-11:30am (2nd of month) Bingo 7:30pm
SUNDAY	Cotswold Christian Community Service 4:45-6pm (2nd of month)

Come along and join in the fun

For more details and regular updates, join our list by emailing cotswoldca@gmail.com



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The *Shire* Community Pages

Community Bulb Planting to Brighten Our High Street

Shirehampton Community Action Forum and Bristol City Council Parks Department had a Community Bulb Planting event organised for Thursday 31st October from 10am until 12noon taking place on the top part of The Green in Shirehampton. There were bags of bulbs including daffodils, crocus and snowdrops waiting to be planted.

The first half hour was quiet with Bristol City Council Parks Operational Coordinator, Parks Supervisor, Ash from SCAF, BCC Councillor Don Alexander and Sara Cech-Lucas of Bee Happy Shire beginning work and skimming up the grass in readiness to plant the bulbs.

People of all ages began to arrive and it was good to see a couple young families taking part, the children learning about bulbs and flowers with help from the adults. The children were certainly captured by the whole process and didn't mind getting their hands dirty. All found it an enjoyable event with the added bonus of the sun shining that day. The Green will certainly be full of colour next spring and thank you to everyone who helped that day.

There will be more plants, flowers and bulbs being planted further along the High Street by the Parks Department staff over the next few months. There are planting areas within the revamped High Street parking areas and of course by the old plant nursery.

All this is meant to add colour and ambience to the area and compliment what is already being achieved by our local green community groups including Bee Happy Shire and Shire Greens, where more volunteers would be most welcome. Please contact SCAF on: 0117 982 9963 for more details about both groups.

Kathryn Courtney



© Kathryn Courtney

SHIRE DOOR TO DOOR SHOPPING TRIPS 2024



PICK UP FROM 9AM UNLESS STATED

**WEDNESDAY 6 DECEMBER
CHRISTMAS SPECIAL TO
CADBURY GARDEN CENTRE**

Pick up from 9am – Return 2pm

WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER: THORNBURY

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Apology

Photos for the Climate Repair Cafe article in the November Shire were taken and supplied by Kathryn Courtney. We apologise for the incorrect attribution.

The Editor

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Dennis Graham Price



© Jean Price

Passed away November 2nd 2024.

He will be sadly missed by his loving family; wife **Jean, Sue, Mark** and partners and all of his grand and great grandchildren.

Thank you all for your kind messages and support.



We especially enjoy spreading community news and we love to hear from all our readers.

Please, send in your letters and stories to editor@shire.org.uk or deliver to The Library at The Public Hall.

If requested, we will not print the name of a letter written to the Editor, but we cannot accept an anonymous letter.

Many thanks.

YOUTH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Dear Editor,

In the November issue article by **Darren Jones MP**, reference was made to the anti-social behaviour of young teens (and even younger) in the village. Halloween was a particularly active time around the **Pembroke Rd** area. Fireworks being thrown, a fire in a wheelie bin, an empty house had its door kicked in, cars were damaged or 'egged' and there was a general air of menace and threatening behaviour. The police were patrolling the area and a fire appliance was called out (what a waste of man power and public money). Something has to be done, these kids aren't going to read this article but hopefully some of their parents will take note and if they don't know where their young people are late in the evening, should perhaps question their activities.

(Writer's name given but withheld)

PENPOLE AVENUE PLAYOUT

Dear Editor,

I wish to thank our friends, neighbours and local residents for their support of our second year of **Playout**.

On the first Sunday of the month during this year we had permission to close the street to allow the children to play out safely, unfortunately, the weather this year did not receive the memo! Although we had several washouts we did manage to gather as a community and create play opportunities. This included an "Olympics" themed event for the children and adults.

We hope to have one last gathering on the **8th of December** to switch on lights and share some Christmas spirit.

Thank you to all involved in making these community events happen.

Jan Wilson



© Jan Wilson

GREAT ORGANISATION!

Dear Editor,

I went to the **Shirehampton Surgery** this weekend for my seasonal Flu and Covid immunisations. I'm always really impressed with the way these sessions are run, they are really efficient with multiple doctors and nurses set up to do the jobs and the rest of the team checking people in and organising the queues. I arrived at 8.30am just as they were starting and although there was a long queue of people snaking outside, I was in and out in 10 minutes. Everyone is always very friendly, helpful and jolly! Well done Shirehampton group practice - see you next year!

Thanks, *Sarah*



Hello there! **Would you like to improve your well-being?**

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Linda x x

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- **Bootcamps: Monday and Wednesday 6.15-7.00am. Please message for details.**



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Hallow'een In Shirehampton

There was plenty of activity happening in Shirehampton during Hallow'een. This seasonal event is certainly growing in popularity with many people dressing the outside of their homes with decorations of ghosts, spiders, witches, wizards - all good I hope! -spider webs, bats and pumpkins. Some even put works of Hallow'een art on show in their windows that were very impressive.

Carol and Lesley from the local Co-op dressed up as a ghoulish witch continuing to serve customers throughout the day. The New Redland Bakery had Kay decorating their shop window with a friendly looking witch, spider webs and ghosts whilst the customers had to get past the witches,

monsters & ghosts who want to hog many of the cakes and pastries to themselves.

Shirehampton Social Club ran their annual Hallow'een Party where the hall had every Hallow'een decoration you could find on the walls,

ceiling and stage area. Even the disco had a ghost DJ playing their part. The place was packed and the children were wearing well thought out Hallow'een costumes. A great family event for all.

Meanwhile the local Shirehampton Art and Craft Exhibition had a visit from a little good witch and her cat trying out their artistic talents at the children's activity table.

I wonder what gems I will find next year and who I will meet along the way? Hopefully nothing too scary!

Kathryn Courtney and Photos © Kathryn Courtney



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Thur 26 Dec	Sat 28 Dec
Fri 27 Dec	Mon 30 Dec
Mon 30 Dec	Tue 31 Dec
Tue 31 Dec	Thur 2 Jan
Wed 1 Jan	Fri 3 Jan
Thur 2 Jan	Sat 4 Jan
Fri 3 Jan	Mon 6 Jan
Mon 6 Jan	Tue 7 Jan
Tue 7 Jan	Wed 8 Jan
Wed 8 Jan	Thur 9 Jan
Thur 9 Jan	Fri 10 Jan
Fri 10 Jan	Sat 11 Jan
Normal collections from Mon 13 Jan	

🎄 Christmas trees

Take your Christmas tree to your nearest recycling centre for free.

For those with a tree collection, put it out on your first big bin day starting from Tuesday 7 January.

↓ 2025 collection dates

Download your 2025 calendar now!
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🔔 Garden and bulky waste

Don't forget, paid bulky and garden waste services are paused over the festive period as well as all deliveries for replacement bins.



👉 Scan me!

For more info and festive tips visit:
bristolwastecompany.co.uk/festive



REMEMBRANCE: Remembering D-Day

Continued from page 1.

I was told I was going into the navy and ended up as an SBA, Sick Birth Attendant, which was regarded as a nurse. A three year training course was condensed into an intensive six months. On the 30th May we finished our training and on the 31st May thirteen of us were called together. We were taken to Portsmouth Harbour. We were put aboard the motor boat, taken to first 4 and 6 landing ship tanks. It was all top secret - we didn't know. All we knew was that we were part of the second front".

"What I remember about D-Day was the noise of the shells from the battle ships, the depth charges being dropped to keep the submarines away, the torpedo boats speeding in and out looking out for enemy boats. On the top deck of our ship I could see the hundreds of small invasion craft carrying troops and watching the troops go onto the beach."

"Our first trip was equipment to build a runway within 12 hours to allow gliders to land. Other trips included tanks that could go on land and sea. We had thirty docks that could go on land and carry troops and we had ambulances on the deck too. Once the equipment was dropped off we had to go down and prepare for the wounded to come on board, all nationalities, stretchered patients, many unconscious, walking wounded, up to 550 at any one time. We'd go back to England, discharge the patients to hospital then load up with more equipment. I remember on 19th June we were shelled whilst moving patients from a cargo ship where they lost two crew members. For me it was my job."

"There's no glory in war and if you can work together, remain part of Europe, we stand a better chance of things turning out better for us all. It is important to remember people, especially the sacrifices that were made by many".

Kathryn Courtney and Photos © Kathryn Courtney





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REMEMBRANCE: Poppies On The Green Continues To Remember

This year there were four painting poppies sessions including the High Street Market, The Living Room held at Shirehampton Library and two sessions at the new Shirehampton Art And Craft Exhibition. Thank you to you all taking part in painting poppies this year and to the people who came along and painted more poppies to add to this year's display.

Tuesday 5th November, with the help of volunteers, the Poppies On The Green display was set up on The Green in Shirehampton. We already have silhouette soldiers Reg, Les, Bill and Paddy guarding the display and this year added another two silhouettes, Tom the Navy Medic and Sally the WREN, that you may have spotted by the Victorian tree. We also have a white dove silhouette as well as smaller doves in some of the poppy wreaths. There was a small display at Shirehampton Railway Station and the War Horse on the Daisy Field also had some smaller poppies this year.

This display will continue to grow and next year we will make available the back stories of our military people that are featured amongst the poppies, all named after local people. We will continue to follow and support the Royal British Legion.

Once again thank you for all the positive feedback we have received. It obviously means a lot to our local communities. Thank you's go to

Ash Bearman, Ruth Morris, Peter Vincent, Olivia, Jane Geater, Sarah Jane Warren, Karen Taylor, Carol Niemczyk, Paul McMillan, Amanda Parsons, Kim Tudor, John Hastings, Sally Ann Knowlson, Ian Knowlson and Daphne Llewellyn for all your help this year in getting the display on The Green once more to remember the fallen and the ones who returned home.

In the meantime we are looking for two volunteers to run our painting poppies sessions in 2025. This includes making the poppies out of plastic bottles and helping prepare the displays. If this is of interest to you please email: poppiesonthegreen@gmail.com or call SCAF on 0117 982 9963 and leave your name and number so we can discuss further.

Kathryn Courtney and Photos © Kathryn Courtney



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SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL HIGH STREET!

Continental Polish Shop

Marta Pokorska is the Store Manager of the Continental Polish Shop and has been part of our High Street for almost thirteen years. It is an Aladdin's cave of lovely food which is a favourite with a friend mine who stocks up with food items when he visits me.



Marta continued "I like to meet and talk with all our customers who are like family here. I want to make them feel happy with what we sell as well as trying out new products and discovering new tastes."

The shop remains busy and I ask Marta why she thinks it's popular. "The shop is full of products from Poland that are different and unique. Biebrzowka is Polish smoked ham, crispy and full of flavour which is a favourite along with our apples and tomatoes which come from Poland that have a different flavour. Our Polish traditional cakes are popular and are perfect with coffee or tea. We also want to make our customers feel welcome and help them where I can."

Asking about the future of the High Street Marta said. "We are small businesses and need the community to continue to support us and shop local. We talk with our customers and get to know them. We need to stick together, help each other and keep our streets safe for everyone."

The Continental Polish shop can be found at 15 High Street, Shirehampton and is open from 8:30 – 20:00 Monday to Saturday, 10:00 -16:00 on Sunday.

Kathryn Courtney and Photos © Kathryn Courtney

Being part of the **Food Plus group**, it's owner **Konrad** wanted a place where the **Polish community** could buy, talk in their native language and feel like home as well as introducing Polish products to local communities giving them chance to try something different.

I asked Marta to describe a typical day to me. "We start the day with fresh bread delivered from our Polish bakery in Bristol. There is the morning rush from parents who pop in after the school run buying essentials and favourites. Throughout the day we continue serving our customers which is a priority and we make sure all our shelves are well stocked." As for what she liked most about her job



The Lifeboat Upcoming Events

December

- Sun 1st Dec 7pm - Elton John Tribute
- Thurs 5th Dec 8pm - Karaoke
- Sun 8th Dec 4pm - Billy Driscoll
- Weds 11th Dec 8pm - Open Mic
- Fri 13th Dec 8pm - Singer TBC
- Sat 14th Dec 8pm - Mike Bess
- Sun 15th Dec 4pm - Singer TBC
- Tues 17th Dec 7.30pm - Quiz Night
- Sat 21st Dec 8pm - Christmas Karaoke
- Sun 22nd Dec 4pm - Seb Hawley
- Boxing Day 4pm - Michael Hennessy
- Sun 29th Dec 4pm - Ryan Haynes
- New Years Eve - Party (ticket only)

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The Lifeboat Christmas

Opening Hours

- Christmas Eve 11.00 - 23.00
- Christmas Day 12.00 - 14.00
- Boxing Day 12.00 - 22.00
- New Years Eve 11.00 - 17.00 (ticket event from 8pm)
- New Years Day 12.00 - 22.00

Merry Christmas Everyone



An Update from Darren Jones MP, Bristol North West

www.darren-jones.co.uk | [fb.com/darrenjonesmp](https://www.facebook.com/darrenjonesmp) | [@darrenpjones](https://twitter.com/darrenpjones)

In mid-October, the journalist Lucy McDaid from ITV West Country joined me on a visit to my former school, Oasis Academy Brightstowe (known as Portway School back then), where I delivered my first public speaking masterclass for students of the new academic year. The students were clearly engaged and eager to learn – they'd even sacrificed an inset day to attend! – but most were a bit shy and nervous to talk to me.

The journalist was worried the TV camera was making the students clam up, but I had a similar experience when I delivered the masterclass in the school last year, and when I've visited many of our other state schools, too. But that's why these sessions are important – we need children from all backgrounds to be confident public speakers if we're ever going to smash the class ceiling. If you would like to see the news clip, it's a featured post on my Facebook page ([fb.com/darrenjonesmp](https://www.facebook.com/darrenjonesmp)).

Now, I always try my best to keep you informed of upcoming events in this column, but sometimes an event is arranged at short notice that falls between issues. That's what happened with my **Assisted Dying Town Hall**, which needed to be held

before a vote in the **House of Commons on 29th November** on whether to legalise assisted death.

I hope that many of you managed to hear about it from other means. But in case you missed it, I wanted to briefly outline my position here, as I know how emotive an issue this is across our communities in Bristol, with strong feelings on both sides of the debate.

My view is that a **Private Members' Bill** is not the right way to try to introduce a change in law on such a complex issue. Private Members' Bills, which are introduced by backbench MPs, don't get anywhere near the same level of scrutiny and debate as the bills put forward by the Government. As someone who has passed a Private Members' Bill in the last Parliament, I am aware that they are normally only

used for small changes in law – and legalising assisted death does not fall under that category. I therefore plan to either abstain or vote against the Bill on these grounds. If you're interested in this debate, please feel free to contact me for a full policy response.

My next constituency event will be my annual **Christmas Coffee Morning on Saturday, 14th December**, which will be held this year in **Henbury** (10:30am-12:00pm). This is a great opportunity for constituents from across **Bristol North West** to come together and chat with me about the past year and what's on their minds for 2025 – all while enjoying a hot drink and a mince pie! **To book, please visit darren-jones.co.uk/events or call my office on 0117 959 6545.**

Finally, thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the **Poppies on the Green** installation this year. It was a wonderful tribute to remember those who sacrificed so much for our freedom.

As always, if you need my help or have a question, you can get in touch with me on e-mail at darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk, by calling my office on 0117 959 6545 or by writing to me at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

CONTACTING YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLOR
Shirehampton is in the Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston Ward

Your Councillors are:

Donald Alexander – Labour: cldr.donald.alexander@bristol.gov.uk

Zoë Peat - Labour: Cllr.Zoe.Peat@bristol.gov.uk

Tom Blenkinsop - Labour: Cllr.Tom.Blenkinsop@bristol.gov.uk

Labour Members' Services Office: 0117 922 3827

CONTACTING YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Shirehampton is in the Bristol North West Constituency

Darren Jones Phone: 0117 959 6545

Email: darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk

Website: www.darren-jones.co.uk

Shirehampton's New Bench With a View!

Shirehampton village has recently had its 15 minutes of fame on TV – well, more like 5 minutes!

It was a surprise to hear a mention of **Shirehampton** on **Points West** the other week. They had picked up the flurry of interest on social media regarding the strange positioning of a new bench at the top of **Station Road**, where the pavement has been widened and bedding areas for plants created. A new bench has been placed into position but instead of facing what will hopefully be attractive bedding, it is facing the dilapidated old nursery building and broken greenhouses! A lovely view to sit down and enjoy!

The day after it featured on Points West, I met a woman on the street who had travelled up from **Somerset** specifically to see the bench and take photos! She thought it was some sort of joke! What a bizarre world we now live in. I find it amazing – and sometimes frightening - how posts on social



© Vanessa Evans

media sites such as Facebook can spread so far and wide so quickly and become news items of local and even national interest on TV.

Shirehampton now needs **Banksy** to come here and leave his mark ... this will surely be a more newsworthy item!

Vanessa Evans

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River Soundings: A Hopeful Future?

“We cannot create what we can’t imagine” (Lucille Clifton)

Shirehampton Climate Emergency Group hosted an immersive sound workshop, River Soundings, in November. The workshop asked us to imagine what the future of our river might be as the climate changes over time. What would the river be like and what kind of community would we like Shirehampton to become as we adapt to the effects of climate change? Though it was a mizzly, dim and murky November afternoon we were asked to imagine positive and hopeful futures because *“we cannot create what we can’t imagine”*.



We were asked to spend a few minutes beside the river recording our ideas and feelings which were then woven into a soundscape incorporating all our dreams for our future. Despite the gloomy day our imagined future river was clean and sunny, its quality automatically monitored by our community owned water company. Our local **Citizen’s Assembly** had decided to build a footbridge from the **Portway to Pill** so people had easy access to allotments and communal vegetable farms on both sides of the river. We knew that many familiar trees and plants hadn’t survived the extremes of weather we’d been having, but we saw that new species taking their place were also beautiful. There were many birds of all kinds and our heronry had survived!

What struck me most listening to all these dreams for the future was that all of them imagined a much more simple, communal way of life where everyone shared what they had; where everyone respected and cared for the natural world – for trees and grasses, butterflies and slow worms; where we joined together to decide how to use our resources for the good of everyone. Our river, our water, our wind, our sunshine provided all the energy we needed. There was no fossil fuel polluting our future.

Possible? Can we imagine it?

RS

**MERRY
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22nd February 2025
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ORGANISED BY
Shirehampton Climate
Emergency Group (SCEG)
Shirehampton Community
Action Forum (SCAF)



Nature Notes

This photo was taken today, November 13th 2024! Venue, my front garden. It is a lovely rose bush that produces small, beautiful red flowers every summer, and gets pruned usually in November!! Except this year the pruner will be left in the garden shed for a while! As I write, the sky is a brilliant blue, backed up by a rather dazzling sun!



This followed many days of thick grey cloud which sat formidably over most of the country, threatening never to move on!

Such is the shift in the seasons which is confusing both flora and fauna.

I mentioned the squirrel that was busily stocking up the conkers around here last month, and it seems it might have decided to go and take a nap after all it’s hard work, as I haven’t seen it for some time.

The only birds coming into the garden regularly at present are the feral pigeons, occasional wood pigeons, jackdaws and crows. There are some of the smaller birds now and then, often the Robin, and of course our ever faithful goldfinches.

Let us hope for a benign winter, although I feel that is perhaps not the best idea I’ve had! We must just wait and see what is in store, as has our squirrel!!

Happy nature watching folks

*We at Shire wish all our advertisers a
very Merry Christmas and a
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We rely almost entirely on our advertising income to keep our community paper going,
showcasing all that is best in the life of our own and our "sister villages".

Times have been tough financially in recent times and some of our advertisers have been forced to withdraw their support.

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Happy Christmas

CAROLS ON THE GREEN

1. *The First Nowell*

The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay a-keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a Star
Shining in the East beyond them far,
And to the Earth it gave great light
And so it continued both day and night,
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same Star
Three Wise Men came from country far,
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the Star wherever it went.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

The Star drew nigh to the north-west,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

Then entered in those Wise Men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

2. *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin
Where meek souls shall receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas Angels
The great glad tidings tell,
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel.

3. *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on Earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With Angelic host proclaim
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"
*Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the ever-lasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel!
*Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and Life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings.
Mild, He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of Earth,
Born to give them second birth
*Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

4. *While Shepherds Watched*

While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

"Fear not", said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled minds,
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
To you and all mankind.

"To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line,
A Saviour who is Christ the Lord –
And this shall be the sign.

"The Heavenly Babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,
And in a manger laid."

Thus spake the Seraph, and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of Angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song –

"All glory be to God on high
And to the earth be peace;
Goodwill henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease."

5. *O Come All Ye Faithful*

O come all ye faithful,
Joyful and Triumphant
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem,
Come and behold Him,
Born the King of Angels:
*O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!*

God of God,
Light of light,
Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb!
Very God
Begotten, not created
*O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!*

Sing, choirs of Angels,
Sing in exaltation,
Sing all ye citizens of Heaven above:
'Glory to God
In the Highest'
*O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!*

6. *Silent Night*

Silent Night, Holy Night
All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child,
Holy infant so tender and mild.
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glory streams from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!

Silent night, holy night
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiance beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace.
Jesus Lord at thy birth
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

To all our readers

CHRISTMAS EVE • 7:30PM

7. *Away in a Manger*

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love thee Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay,
Close by me forever, and love me I pray!
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

8. *Good King Wenceslas*

All:
Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about
Deep and crisp and even.
Brightly shone the moon that night
Though the frost was cruel
When a poor man came in sight
Gath'ring winter fuel.

Men and Boys:
"Hither, page, and stand by me
If thou know'st telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"

Women and girls:
"Sire, he lives a good league hence
Underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence
By St Agnes' fountain."

Men and Boys:
"Bring me flesh and bring me wine,
Bring me pine logs hither,
Thou and I shall see him dine
When we bear him thither."

All:
Page and monarch forth they went,
Forth they went together,
Through the rude wind's wild lament
And the bitter weather.

Women and Girls:
"Sire, the night is darker now
And the wind blows stronger.
Fails my heart, I know not how,
I can go no longer."

Men and boys:

"Mark my footsteps, good my page,
Tread thou in them boldly.
Thou shalt find the winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly."

All:

In his master's steps trod
Where the snow lay dinted.
Heat was in the very sod
Which the Saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor
Shall yourselves find blessing.

9. *Once in Royal David's City*

Once in Royal David's City
Stood a lowly cattle-shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for a bed.
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

For He is our childhood's pattern;
Day by day like us He grew:
He was little, weak and helpless;
Tears and smiles like us He knew.
And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him
Through His own redeeming love;
For that Child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in Heaven above;
And He leads His children on,
To the place where He is gone.

10. *The Holly and the Ivy*

The holly and the ivy,
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown
*The rising of the sun
And the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.*

The Holly bears a blossom
As white as the lily flower,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our sweet Saviour.

The Holly bears a berry,
As red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To do poor sinners good.

**Carols on the
Green is an ALL
WEATHER event.
Please come
prepared.**

The Holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas day in the morn.

The Holly bears a bark,
As bitter as any gall,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all.

*The Holly and the Ivy
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The Holly bears the crown.*

11. *We Three Kings*

We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we travel afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star,
*O star of wonder, star of night
'Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

Melchior: Born a king on Bethlehem plain,
Gold I bring to crown him again –
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign...
O star of wonder...

Caspar: Frankincense to offer have I;
Incense owns a Deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, all men raising
Worship to God most high
O, star of wonder...

Balthasar: Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom,
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
O, star of wonder...

Finale

**We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas
And a happy New Year**

**Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a Merry Christmas
And a Happy New Year!**

Churches in the Shirehampton Area

St Mary's News

We can't quite believe we are approaching the Advent Season for 2024! Where has the year flown? Lots is happening at St Mary's this December. You are welcome to come to any of our services or events - we would love to see you.

Advent Sunday 1st December:

10:30am Sung Eucharist Service

4pm Christingle Service - a special service for all the family. After the service there will be carol singing, treats and drinks, and A collection in aid of The Children's Society.

Wednesday 4th December:

10:15-10.45am Prayer Hub - call in if you would like someone to pray for you. The Prayer Hub will continue to run every Wednesday.

10:30-11:30am Goldies - come and enjoy songs from the 50's onwards.

Saturday 7th December:

10am-1pm Christmas Fayre - stalls, refreshments, games, Christmas bargains, dance performances and more. There will be a Chocolate Factory theme featuring a special guest. Hot lunches will be for sale from midday.

Sunday 8th December:

8:30am Rise & Shine "Mary's Munches" Breakfast - join us for a nutritious breakfast, a time for food, friendship, fun and faith.

10:30am Holy Communion Service

2:30pm Shirehampton Area Choir Concert - a special performance welcoming the choir's new members. There will be a retiring collection in aid of St Mary's Church. Mince pies and mulled wine will be available during the interval.

Sunday 15th December:

8:30am Rise & Shine "Rooted" - an interactive Bible exploration with coffee and breakfast pastries.

10:30 am Holy Communion Service

6pm Carol Service - hear the Christmas story, sing carols by candlelight and be filled with the wonder

of the season. Mince pies, mulled wine and hot chocolate will be available after the service. See our Christmas Tree display - we have some local organisations dressing additional trees this year and we are excited to see their ideas

Monday 16th December:

Please note there will be no coffee morning today, a service is taking place at church.

Tuesday 17th December:

4pm Christmas Movie Pop-Up - showing a Christmas movie with popcorn and snack bar, board games and more. This is a free event.

Wednesday 18th December:

6-7pm Carols by Disco Light - following the success of our Glow Celebrations over the past few years, we thought we would try out this new carol service. So, grab your flashing headbands, funky Christmas accessories and of course, your Christmas jumpers and join us under the disco lights for a good dance and sing along to remixed versions of classic Christmas carols! Light refreshments will be served.

Saturday 21st December:

10:30am Carol Singing in support of Christian Aid - inside St Mary's. All welcome.

7pm The Longest Night Service - this simple service, with readings, prayers and carols, acknowledges the pain, loss and anxieties of life that many of us live. In the midst of struggle, we find hope in the Christ Child.

Sunday 22nd December:

10:30am Worship for All Service

Christmas Eve Tuesday 24th December:

4pm Crib Service - The Christmas Mix Up - come

along and help us unravel the true story of Christmas. A nativity play for all the family - come dressed as your favourite Nativity character and join in the fun.
11:30pm-Midnight Holy Communion for Christmas

Christmas Day

10am Christmas Holy Communion Service - Note the earlier start time. All are welcome.

Sunday 29th December:

10:30am Communion for Everyone - joint ASMA service at St Edyth's, Sea Mills.

The church will be closed from 26th December to 1st January, enabling our lovely staff and volunteers to spend time with their family and friends. The church will re-open on Thursday 2nd January for its 11am Holy Communion service. Coffee morning resumes from Friday 3rd January at 10am. Our Welcoming Space continues on Fridays until 2pm, with hot lunches served from midday.

If you would like to leave flowers in our Memorial Chapel, please ensure this is done by Christmas Day. We are open every morning of the week.

We would also like to share some information about the Bereavement Journey course that Rev Alison is running from January 2025. This will take place on Wednesdays 1:30 - 3:30pm from 8th January to 19th February at St Edyth's Church, Sea Mills. If you would like more information, please contact us by email - office@stmarysshire.org or call us on 0117 907 7026. Spaces must be booked in advance.

Finally, St Mary's wishes you all a Happy and Blessed Christmas. We pray that 2025 will bring health, security and peace to all. Thank you to all who have helped the church in any way in the past year, we couldn't open our space to the community in the way we do without all of you - we are truly blessed to be able to open our doors every day. It has been especially pleasing to see our Friday Welcoming Space thrive and grow in numbers, and seeing our pop-Up events being so well attended and appreciated. Merry Christmas to you!

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Hello from Shire Methodist

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Happy Advent to you all! Advent is a time when we think about how we long for better conditions for our world. Christians have hope that things will be better because we have faith in Jesus. During Advent this year our Minister, Reverend Martin Slocombe, will be leading a 4-session bible study group on Friday afternoons at 2.30pm from 15th November until 13th December (not 6th Dec). It is called the Good, the Bad and the Ugly. Anyone is welcome to come along. Martin apologises that Clint Eastwood is unable to attend. You might have your own ideas about who the good, the bad and the ugly are in the story of the birth of Jesus.

The national Methodist Church's Advent campaign this year is "Hush the Noise: Join the Love Song This Christmas". Christmas is loud, isn't it? So much expectation. So many voices telling us how to celebrate, what to wear, what to eat and drink, what to watch and what to buy. Instead, this Christmas everyone is being invited to hush the noise. To listen for the love song that the angels bring, this and every year. They sang it for the first time more than 2,000 years ago, on the midnight clear. They're just waiting for us to join in. More information can be found at methodist.org.uk/HushTheNoise.

We would love to invite you along to our **Carol Service at 3pm on Sunday 22nd December**. Our other Sunday services through December are all at our usual time of 11am, and as always everyone is welcome: **1st December** is led by a visiting preacher; **8th December** is All Age Worship; **15th December** is Holy Communion led by our Minister; **29th December** is led by a visiting preacher. Please note that there is **no morning service on 22nd December** because we are meeting for our Carol Service in the afternoon.

Christmas Day will be a busy day for our Hub and Church. We start with our Christmas service at 10.30am, followed by coffee and carol singing at around 11.15am. Why not pop in and join us for one or both of these gatherings? Dinner will be served from around midday. **Darren**, our **Hub Coordinator**, and his family and friends are generously hosting a wonderful afternoon of food and fun particularly for people in our local community who would otherwise be struggling at Christmas, perhaps due to loneliness, poverty or other circumstances.

If you or someone you know might be worried about coping this Christmas, please don't be afraid to contact Darren to register your interest in coming along for Christmas Day dinner. You can phone or text 07305 066 478 or email projectcoordinator@jtehubshire.org

May God's peace and joy be with you all during December. Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas.

Everyone at Shire Methodist

Shirehampton Hub at the Methodist Church

We invite you to the **Christmas Community dinner on Christmas Day 25th**. The invitation is up on Eventbrite – search **Christmas Dinner – Shire Hub** or it's on our Facebook page. **Bookings are needed by 18th December**.

This year we have a welcome here, from **10.30 for the Christmas Day service**, or **11.15 for carols and coffee!** With the dinner to follow after 12noon. You are welcome to any or all of this, but please book if you are staying for the meal. Message **Darren** on email below or via Facebook or Eventbrite.

Regular Activities:

Chatty Café 1-3pm on Tuesdays – for cake, tea and a chat. Starting soon.

Business Café - Support for Start-ups, sole traders and hot-desking – drop in on a Wednesday 10am to 1pm or call/ pop in for an appointment anytime. Free Wifi and use of a computer too!

Talk Club for men – Wednesday evenings – see our Facebook page for timing

HUB'S CUPS, a Drop-in on Mondays 11-12.30pm – and **Job Club** on Tuesdays 10-12pm.

Cost-of-living advice or benefit checks – Monday or Wednesday mornings. Fuel vouchers are also available.

Games sessions, films and modelling events – watch our Facebook page for news.

The Community Fridge update **M&S** and **Tesco** are frequent donors, with **KFC** and **Nando's** on occasions. See online – Facebook or the WhatsApp notifications **Shire Hub Food Group**. There are no restrictions or referrals. Mondays to Thursdays usually 9.30-4pm. Donations are also welcome.

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NOTE - We are closed after Christmas for a week.

Rev'd Pearl Luxon



BRISTOL HEALING ROOMS are in Shirehampton every second Wednesday of the month.

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Shire Baptist Church News

The first Advent candle will be lit in many churches on December 1st. During the four Sundays of Advent Christians prepare their hearts to remember the birth of Christ and also to wait for His Second Coming.

The candles symbolise **Hope, Love, Joy and Peace** and are lit in that order.

Another Christmas tradition which has become popular is the **Christingle**. On **December 8th** the **Cotswold Christian Community** will celebrate at the **Cotswold Community Hall, Dursley Road**. We trust many will join us in this lovely service enjoyed by adults and children.

Another Carol Service we in Shire Baptist are looking forward to is our Carol Service led by our

Rock Steady Club members. They will be doing drama, music and dance. This will take place at our church building on **Sunday December 22nd** at 6pm. Last Christmas was the second of its kind and the room was filled with children, parents, grandparents and friends, followed by refreshments.

The themes of Advent, Hope, Peace, Love and Joy are universal in the human experience. 2024 has had its share of war, violence, hunger, injustice, floods, earthquakes and oppression for millions of people.

The message of the angels to the shepherds was *Peace on Earth, good will to all men*. This is the prayer, prayed by us all.

We remember those who will be facing their first Christmas without a loved one who has died. May we all find the joy, hope, peace and love which comes from Christ whose birth we celebrate.

We invite all to join us at Shire Baptist, Station Road - every Sunday at 10:30am - and for our Carol Service Sunday December 22nd, 6pm, and also Christmas Day 10am.

Happy Christmas

M.B.

Reptiles Spotted on the Cotswold Estate

On Friday 15th November at the monthly Memory Café held at the Cotswold Community Centre guests were treated to an exotic afternoon. Following the usual tea/coffee and cakes we were “exposed” to snakes, lizards, and other reptiles!

Many were hesitant to join in because of their phobias, but in the end everyone took part (except one - ME!). Another successful afternoon arranged by **Lisa Dicker** and her team from the **Bristol Dementia Action Alliance**. Many thanks to **Brad and Jasmine of Reptile Encounters** for a very enjoyable and informative afternoon.

Jill Williamson



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The Arts in Shirehampton

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KAT WRIGHT

Fine Artist

Kat is a local artist known for captivating dream-like landscapes and figurative abstractions inspired by a profound spiritual experience which has enriched her artistic expressions since graduating from the Surrey Institute of Art & Design in 2000 with a BA Honours Degree in Fine Art.

Kat describes how this spiritual experience has empowered her to delve into her art on a deeper, soul-stirring level. "Through letting go of preconceptions and trusting, a portal is unlocked where images seem to appear as if by magic." These ethereal visions

manifest themselves as sacred temples, expansive landscapes, seascapes and enigmatic ghostly figures.

Harnessing the fluidity of inks and brushes, combined with textures from acrylic paints, Kat effortlessly captures the dynamic energy of her

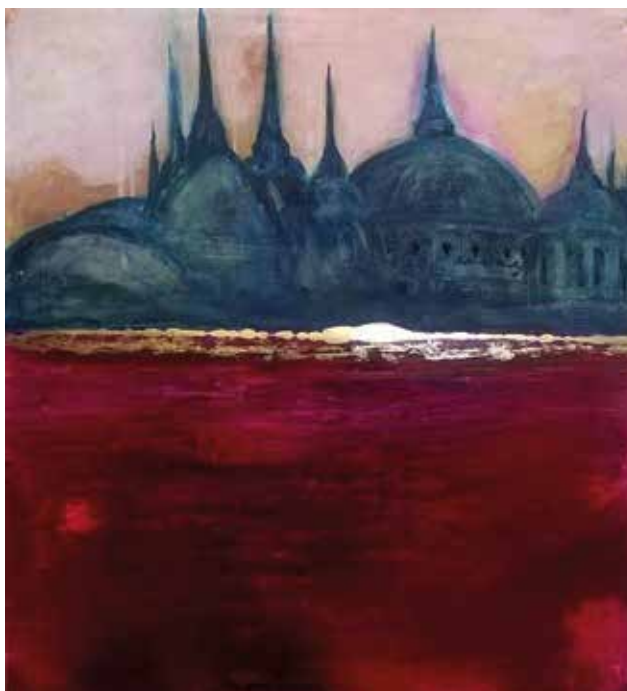
visions throughout the process. The vibrant colours she employs evoke a sense of raw emotional power, inviting viewers into the depths of her creative realm.

Kat's Art resonates on a deep spiritual level, transcending the realm of the mundane, inviting viewers to contemplate the interconnectedness of all things. Kat has exhibited and sold work widely throughout the UK.

Annelies Egli and Photos © Kat Wright

All work is for sale. High quality giclee prints of Kat's work are available to order on request.

If you would like to speak to Kat about any aspect of her work please feel free to contact her: katamoorang@yahoo.co.uk 07920 001881.





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Success Shines Bright for Shirehampton Art and Craft Exhibition

It seemed the end of an era when the Shirehampton Craft Exhibition held its final event in 2023. Gail and Ed Amphlett and their team had achieved such great success over the years.



But by January 2024 a group of people who felt they could continue the story with a few changes to include art had stepped forward. Discussions with **Gail and Ed** began and Shirehampton **Art and Craft Exhibition** was born. Along with hard work and new team at the helm, exciting times lay ahead.

Fast forward to the last few days of **October** when the **Lord Mayor of Bristol, Andrew Varney**, officially opened the Shirehampton Art and Craft Exhibition. Feedback was very positive and works of art began to sell. All the hard work put into creating the event had paid off and any doubts that may have been simply melted away. Success was shining bright for this event.



There were craft stalls that showcased throughout the exhibition - open from **Wednesday 30th October until Saturday 2nd November**. There was a good balance between art and craft that gave everyone from the four villages and beyond the opportunity to display their artistic and creative talents. **Trym Woodcrafts** and **Needles Lawrence Weston**, sat alongside guest stalls each day. **The Little Craft Company 2015, J. Krafts, Sally Knowlson, St. Mary's Church Craft Group** and **Gill Dix** had plenty to sell over the four day event. There were also painting poppies sessions and a popular children's activity table.

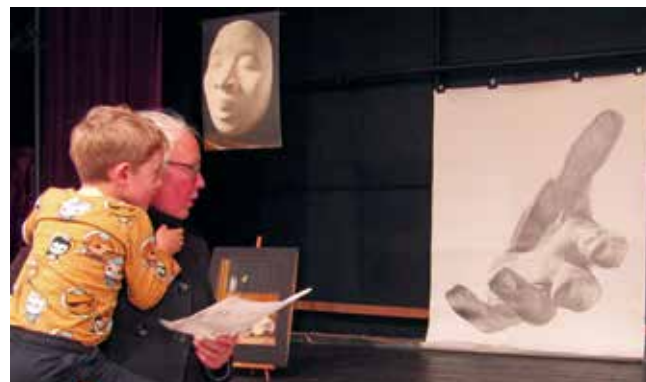
The art exhibitors included **Twyford Art Club, Avonmouth Art Group, Shire Inspire, David James, Jocelyn George** and upcoming artists of the future from **Shirehampton Primary School** and **St. Bernard's Catholic Primary School** who oozed plenty of imagination and artistry.

Visitors were fascinated by *the hand*, a piece of art that stood out at the back of the stage done in pencil by **Sarah Trigg**. The *owl collection* by **Shelley Eynon** was quickly gaining fans. **David James** collection of trains in particular were almost photographic to view. Portraits, wild life, nature, pets and scenery also featured. In fact every piece of art on show had its own uniqueness and artistic flair that drew many in. Visitors were encouraged to choose their favourite piece of art and joint winners were **Kay Welsford** and **Jocelyn George** who were presented with their prizes the following week.

Shirehampton Art and Craft Exhibition Organising Group said:

"We are delighted with the support given by the local community. It's been an amazing experience and we will be back next year. In fact, we are looking forward to it and working with more groups, artists and crafters."

"We'd like to thank everyone who took part in the exhibition including St Bernard's Catholic Primary School and Shirehampton Primary School and especially our volunteers, cake bakers and the many visitors who came along during the four days the exhibition was open."



For more information please contact Shirehampton Art and Craft Exhibition by email: shirehamptonexpo@gmail.com or their FaceBook page: www.facebook.com/ShirehamptonArtAndCraftExhibition1

Kathryn Courtney and Photos © Kathryn Courtney



Arts and Craft Exhibition Painting Competition

Thank you to everyone who voted for their favourite painting. We have 2 joint winners: "Little Blue" by Kay Welsford and "The Highlands" by Jocelyn George.

Congratulations to both artists and to everyone who participated in The Art & Craft Exhibition.



© Kay Welsford



© Kay Welsford and Catherine Scott

Top Left: Jocelyn George, Bottom Left: "The Highlands" by Jocelyn George.
Top Right: Kay Welsford, Bottom Right: "Little Blue" by Kay Welsford.



© Jocelyn George



© Jocelyn George and Catherine Scott

Shire Stitchers

Shire Stitchers is a group of friendly ladies that work with quilting, patchwork and various crafts. We have a full programme for 2025 and will welcome anyone willing to learn or bring their experience to the group.

During 2024 the group worked on the "Chair's Challenge" to make lap quilts for a children's hospice. In total 21 were completed. These were handed over by two of our ladies to Jen Nichols, Fundraising Administrator at Charlton Farm Children's Hospice (centre of the picture) on Thursday, 7th November.

We were given a tour of most of the vast facilities but unfortunately could not see everything as an 'end of life' child was sadly brought in. We were informed at depth what the facility means to both ill children, their siblings and especially their parents. The hospice is open every month for a tour if you ring and want to visit.

Each year we are given a challenge for a charity group which is great fun. We also have UFO days where help can be given if required either on the challenge or the individuals' project. We meet the third Wednesday of each month, 7:15 – 9:15 at the Public Hall, Station Road, Shirehampton, BS11 9TX. Pop in one Wednesday evening to see if it's for you. We would love to see you.



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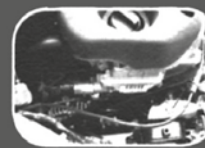
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Sport and Activities IN SHIREHAMPTON

Ambitious Developments at Shirehampton Football Club

You may have noticed that Shirehampton have not recently been playing their home games at Penpole Lane, their home since 1954. The club was originally founded as "Kingsweston Star", later known as "Shirehampton Sports" and then simply the Shirehampton F.C. that represents our village today. The reason for the absence from Penpole Lane was the league's requirement for floodlights. Peter McCall, chairman of the club, is delighted to inform you that the work to install these has now commenced, and should be completed by the end of November.



FIRMITAS IN PROFUNDUM

Another development that Peter was delighted to tell Shire about is that, after years of being linked to **Shire Colts**, the club now has its own junior section up and running. Home games are at **Penpole Lane**, normally early afternoon on alternate Sundays. You can be sure that *Shire News* will be up there soon to report on the progress of our club's youngsters.

It is hoped that the first home game back at Penpole Lane will be on **December 7th v Wells City**, k.o. 3pm. (Check the fixtures before you head up to Penpole Lane by searching for **Jewson Western Football League, First Division, Fixtures**)

Other fixtures we have to look forward to are the return local derby against **Hallen on Friday 20th December** at 19.45 and a potential **Boxing Day** cracker away to newly promoted **Avonmouth**, kick off at 13.30. What better way to burn off some of the Christmas excesses than to take a walk down the **Avonmouth Road** to cheer on one or other of your local teams. Thanks to **Peter McCall** for keeping us up to date with developments at our local club. Keep an eye on Shire for further reports.

Paul McMillan and Photos © Paul McMillan



It may not look like much to you, but this foundation for one of the floodlight pylons represents a big investment in the club's future.



Remembrance Day Centre Spot at Penpole Lane.

Latest News from 191st St Mary's Scout Group

Since the start of the new term in September, we have invested many new young people into the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. It is so exciting to see all the groups growing in numbers. This couldn't happen without the help from all our dedicated volunteer leaders. We are pleased to welcome 'Keego' as another assistant Scout leader.

There will be more exciting news on leaders' next time. Thank you to all the young people who attended the **Remembrance Sunday Parade**,

the leaders were very proud of you all. Thank you again to all of the leaders who plan and attend these events.



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“Football is an art, like dancing is an art – but only when it’s well done...” ~ Arsene Wenger

Look at these photos; how can you argue with Arsene Wenger? We can’t report results at this age, so we decided to present you with a pictorial. It was a feisty, hard fought match, brimming with skill, commitment and passion. By the way, it will not be possible to work out the score from the photos!

Paul McMillan. Photos by © Bob Pitchford.



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"Football is an art, like dancing....."

Three Generations; Tots Rugby at Avonmouth Rugby Club

For nearly a decade, this family centred club has been offering children the opportunity to set out on their rugby journey from the age of 4. At this age, the children experience a range of fun activities, some with a rugby ball and some not, which are about much more than learning to play rugby. On Sunday 10th November, Isaac was being coached by two generations of his own family, his grandad Simon and mum Abigail.

Here's some photos of the fun the kids were having.

When the children reach school year 2, they move into **u7 mini rugby** with touch tackling and beyond that every age group up to the senior teams. The club was buzzing today, with just about every junior age group playing but, it being **Remembrance Sunday**, the youngsters from clubs all over Bristol lined up at 11am for the 1 minute silence.

Avonmouth OBRFC is a club rooted in the values of community, providing an environment for our youngsters in which they can build their confidence, self-esteem and sense of respect for others. Lifetime friendships are built here, the building blocks of a strong and successful community.

If you would like to know more about the opportunities that the club can offer you and your family, here are some contact details: Lucy Souch: 07398 770858. Website: pitchero.com/clubs/avonmoutholdboys

Paul McMillan and Photos © Paul McMillan



Three generations of the rugby family; grandad Simon Johnston, daughter Abigail and grandson Isaac.



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A Farewell to the City and Port of Bristol Bowling Club

After 53 years of bowling, hundreds of member and thousands of games the City and Port of Bristol Bowling Club closed the gate to the green at the end of the 2023 season.



David Hinksman welcoming everyone to the City and Port of Bristol Bowling Club Farewell Dinner on October 25th.

To remember those many happy hours of bowling --- not only in Shirehampton but on many other greens and in many places there was on **Friday 25th October a Farewell Dinner at Shirehampton Park Golf Club**. Members in the club's final season and a number of members and supporters from previous years were invited to come along and share memories of the club that meant so much to so many people over the years.

Fifty seven bowlers, families and friends gathered for a splendid three course meal, with wine on the



Finding the right table at the start of the evening.



Sharing a memory and enjoying the food at the Farewell Dinner.

tables and a drink at the bar to remember and to celebrate the clubs 53 years of bowling.

The room was beautifully set up by the Golf Club for the very special occasion and very special it turned out to be. Thanks go to **Debbie** at the Golf Club for all that she did to make it as good as it was.

David Hinksman who organised the event started the evening with a short speech to welcome everybody, to thank the Golf Club for what they had done to make the evening special, and to pay tribute to those who had been members in years gone by and sadly were no longer with us. He went on to ask everyone to remember the club, to enjoy the evening and share their particular memories whatever they are – maybe a particular game, a special day out, a tour or any one of the many activities that took place over the years. There was a big display of photographs and other memorabilia --- some of the pictures were from many years ago. David asked that everybody look at the display and use it as a way of remembering points in the club's history. He pointed to the list of special dates in the club's history and in particular the one in 1985 when membership was capped at 120. This was a big number at a time when clubs of today with 100 -- 150 members had far fewer – the **City and Port of Bristol Club** got there first!!

Howard Surman later spoke on behalf of everybody to thank David for organising the event and in doing so bringing so many people together for one last time to celebrate and remember the club.

The whole evening was very highly enjoyable. It was a fitting tribute to what was once a strong, thriving and successful bowling club. Events will live long in many memories --- maybe the visit to the **Royal Household** or the trip on a boat to play on **Island Bohemian** or maybe a club tour or Winter Break. But mainly --- being a part of it all and as somebody said in 1970 -- trying this bowling lark.



Bowlers and their families enjoying the Farewell Dinner. A great start to the evening.



Waiting for the feast!!



Time to remember the club.



Peggy Roache sharing a story.



Time to circulate!!



Laurence Evans sharing a story.

Great thanks go to everybody who helped and supported the club over the years – it's been appreciated.

Goodbye from the City and Port of Bristol Bowling Club.

Avonmouth Sea Cadets News

LJC Matthew and AJC Riley joined the ranks of Senior Cadets on 24th October. Congratulations to them. Volunteers and Cadets have all now been issued with new uniforms, following the uniform that is worn by the Royal Navy.

Cadets Jenna and Nicole will start their training for the **Ten Tors** next year and several cadets are looking forward to starting the **Duke of Edinburgh Award**.

Training will start for our **Drill and Piping competition** in January 2025, this is a District event competing with the other eight units that make up **Avon District**.

As we move into the Autumn and Winter Sessions cadets concentrate on Specialisation training, in a variety of subjects : First Aid, Catering, Seamanship, Marine Engineering and PT.

We say thank you to the **Port of Bristol** for their donation this month. Donations help us to improve facilities and resources for the cadets, ensuring they enjoy their Sea Cadet experience.

We welcome young people from the ages of 12yrs-18yrs. We will be holding our next Taster evening on January 23rd 2025. Please contact us on avonmouthseacadets@gmail.com to book a place or for further information.

We also welcome adult volunteers and have a variety of roles available, including Supporters, Uniformed Instructors and Management Team members. If you would like to know more, please contact us on avonmouthseacadets@gmail.com



News from ShireStrong Kettlebell Club

The ShireStrong Kettlebell Club, a dedicated community of fitness enthusiasts, gathers three times weekly to build strength and endurance through kettlebell training. We also host popular outdoor Bootcamp sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays at 6:15 a.m. at Lamplighters Marsh playing field, which welcome participants of all ages and abilities. Bootcamp attendees engage in a series of timed bodyweight exercises, sometimes incorporating small handheld weights, for a high-energy 45-minute workout to kickstart their day.

After a successful fundraiser covered in last month's issue, I thought I would update everyone on how the run up to the competition and the competition itself went. With the invitation to compete in hand, I was committed to an intense training regimen, pushing through increasing weights and building both physical and mental resilience. A hip injury threatened to derail my plans, but my resolve held firm and I pushed through each challenging session. The mindset plays a massive role, and mine was set on completing each session no matter how hard it seemed.

From the anticipation at Heathrow Airport to the adrenaline-charged competition venue, the experience was surreal. That's when the nerves really set in. Getting through the weigh-in and kit check was the first hurdle, and as my turn to compete got closer, the adrenaline rush kicked in.

The intense focus during the lifts, particularly on the squat – my least favourite – paid off. It wasn't until

the final rankings that I discovered I had secured a bronze medal in the deadlift. I had no idea where I was in the rankings so when I was told I'd won bronze, I was overjoyed.

The achievement would not have been possible without the overwhelming support from the community. I am beyond grateful to the **Cotswold Community Centre Committee** for organizing the fundraising event and to everyone who packed the **Cotswold Centre** on the day raising an incredible £1080.00 to send me on my way.

My thanks also to my incredible **ShireStrong Community** who not only attended the event in numbers but helped me to celebrate with some gifts on my return. Thank you all.

Linda Thorne





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Fencing Rules

In many human conventions, whether an art, a science or a sport, what's left out is as important as what's kept in. My sport, like all others, has rules and rules principally tell us what's excluded and within them we can do pretty much what we like.

Fencing is a game made from fighting - and even the fighting, back then, had rules - but they leave a lot out.

One obvious thing left out is physical danger: the weapons aren't sharp and the kit keeps us safe from them.

In two of the three forms of the sport, foil and sabre, the rules also determine who scores when both hit. That's because leaving out a part changes the whole. With a blade heading for my heart, I probably wouldn't just say to myself, I'll take him down with me; I'd try to defend myself. In foil and sabre if I ignore a threat that hits home, my own hit won't score.

That's a relic of when fencing masters taught soldiers and duellists the art of de*fence* but it also makes for a more interesting game. Epee fencing also has rules but they're more of the type found in boxing: no gouging or biting, etc - though biting isn't really possible while wearing a fencing mask.

The rules, like the principles of self-preservation they were designed to replace, become second nature, like the rules of the road, just as the actions that work become like a second language when we fence.

Rules, clearly stated, understood and fairly enforced make the game exciting, rewarding and fun.

At this, of all times, we know war is pure horror but just as football evolved by rules from the village against village brawl of the bonspiel, fencing keeps the skill and excitement of combat, without the misery, pain and loss.

John Rohde

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