

The New Times

The Parish Magazine for the Llantilio Crossenny Group of Parishes



Find out what is happening in our churches and communities

The New Times July 2026

The parish magazine for the Llantilio Crossenny Group of Parishes

Sunday 5th July Trinity 5.

9.30am **St. James the Elder, Llanvetherine** (Morning Prayer)

11.00am **St. Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny** (Morning Worship)

This service is followed by tea/coffee and a chat; everyone is very welcome even if you do not join the service. Refreshments served from Noon-12.30pm.

3.00pm – 5.00pm. **St. Mabli's, Llanvapley** Strawberry Tea.

Sunday 12th July. Trinity 6.

9.30am **St. Cadoc's, Penrhos.** (Morning Prayer)

Refreshments are provided after the service from approximately 10.20am onwards and everyone from the community is very welcome

11.00am **St. Mabli's, Llanvapley.** (Holy Communion)

This service is followed by tea/coffee and a chat; everyone is very welcome even if you do not join the service. The bell will be rung when the service finishes.

Sunday 19th July. Trinity 7.

9.30am **St. James the Elder, Llanvetherine.** (Holy Communion)

11.00am **St. Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny.** (Holy Communion)

This service is followed by tea/coffee and a chat; everyone is very welcome even if you do not join the service. Refreshments served from 11.55am-12.30pm.

Wednesday 22nd July.

12.30pm. **St. Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny.** Wedding.

Sunday 26th July. Trinity 8.

9.30am **St. Cadoc's, Penrhos.**

Refreshments are provided after the service from approximately 10.20am onwards and everyone from the community is very welcome

11.00am **St. Mabli's, Llanvapley.** (Morning Prayer)

This service is followed by tea/coffee and a chat; everyone is very welcome even if you do not join the service. The bell will be rung when the service finishes.

7.00pm. **St Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny.** "Organ Epic" - Philip Norman will be putting the newly restored organ through its paces. All are most welcome.

Pilgrimage along St Aidan's Way from Wexford to St David's Monday 29th June to Sunday 12th July

Please note that our Vicar, Revd Heidi Prince, will be unavailable for the duration of the Pilgrimage. If you would like to speak to a priest please contact Revd. Julian Gray, Ministry Area Leader. Tel: 01873859881. Email: mardyvicarage@yahoo.co.uk

News from the Four Churches

St. Cadoc's, Penrhos

June at St Cadoc's (until the heatwave)

The Victorians had some rather wonderful phrases and aptly, here is one:- "church bell - This term refers to a woman who talks so much she reminds you of the incessant clanging of church bells".

Well, I don't intend to carry that mantle, so keeping it brief (and if you want very brief, please scroll to the last paragraph) here's a nod to the Great British weather and its ilk.

It is a topic most of us are happy to schmooze about, and depending on whether we are attempting to hold events en plein air, whilst desperately praying for a dry spell, or for some pluviophiles, willing the downpours to arrive from a farming or gardening perspective, we all seem to have a view.

A highlight of summer rain is however, the rainbows that accompany it. And they did not disappoint this month, did they?

Following the broken high temperature records in May and the tendency to observe "no mowing" in the churchyard, June at St Cadoc's was heralded in with unseasonably high winds, colder temperatures, rain and the flattening of all that long un mown grass.

Classic British summertime!

Anyway, unperturbed, the few good farming folk of Penrhos, Richard, John and Colin, duly cut down the grass and cleared away the ivy, while Pip unlocked the church doors to welcome in "Open Churches" week.

The Penrhos grape vine informed that there was at least one visitor!

The monthly Drop-In, with the now infamous "Quiz by Yvonne" and the Whitecastle Community Council meeting were both well attended under the 15th century barrel vault ceiling.

All is well!

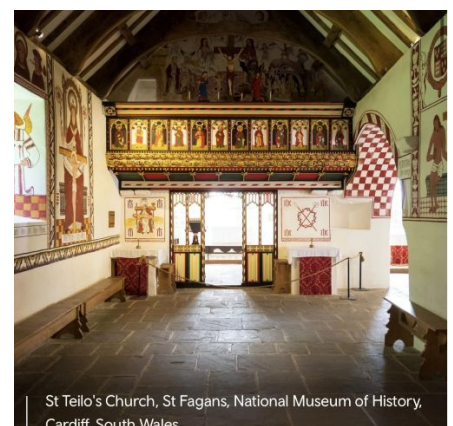
Leandre Fellows

Penrhos Village website

In the June edition the question was asked about who put together the Penrhos Village website at <https://www.penrhosvillage.co.uk?>

The mystery has been solved by Margaret Price who informed your Compiler that the Penrhos Village website was put together by the late Mr Geoff Adams and was helped technically by Mr Matt Burhouse, formally of Penrhos. Geoff was project manager when the work was completed on the church roof.

Talking of website gems, sit down with a nice cup of tea and take a look at this one (found by Leandre) at <https://www.visitwales.com> entitled 'Churches, chapels and places of faith in South Wales'. It's a wonderful overview of places of different faiths in South Wales.



St Tello's Church, St Fagans, National Museum of History, Cardiff, South Wales

Churches, chapels and places of faith in South Wales

The faith heritage of South Wales is strong and with a long history. Early Christian sites, ruined Cistercian monasteries and holy wells are just some of the treasures available for visitors to enjoy.

St Cadoc's Hog Roast Review- a Majestic 5 stars!

It's still possible to be lost in the leafy lanes of Penrhos and come across a delicious meal at St Cadoc's church, which was transformed into a bijoux Bistro for the afternoon of June 28th.



Locals came from here, there and everywhere to enjoy the tasty Hog (obviously), piles of potatoes, a variety of yummy salads and all the trimmings. The few vegetarians were well catered for and the strawberries and chocolate brownies were simply sublime.

But this Hog Roast wasn't just about the food. It was about everyone coming together to have a jolly nice time in this beautiful place. Laughter soared, banter bobbed, children played and conversation flowed as people of all ages enjoyed a sunny June afternoon in the company of their friends and neighbours.

A heart felt thank you to everyone who helped make this event happen- setting up, clearing up, washing up, dishing up as well as bringing food to share and flowers to the tables. It is very much appreciated by the St Cadoc's team. And of course, thank you to everyone who came along and made the whole afternoon so special. And there was a rumour started by some that the St Cadoc's Bistro will be back for another Hog Roast around this time next year. Watch this space!

In the meantime, don't forget that there is the monthly Drop Inn to enjoy. BYO and enjoy the company of others. Contact Pip at piprumsey2001@yahoo.co.uk if you would like to be added to the email list.

Poetry please

As I was going to St Cadoc 's church
With Flora and blooms to besmirch
I looked up aloft
To admire the soft
Reds of a kite, on her perch.

Unperturbed was the bird
By my rather absurd
Spectacle of flowers in hand
Aloof was her state
Soaring up to her mate
Over the Remembrance Gate.

Leandre Fellows

Do any of the other churches want to join in our slow paced and virtual Poetry Slam?
Looking forward already to your verses!

St. James', Llanvetherine



Sharp-eyed/eared viewers may have picked up during the broadcast of the Trooping the Colour parade this year that the parade was commanded by Lt Colonel Tom Spencer-Smith, officer commanding the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, the most senior Infantry Regiment in the British Army. This command also carries a personal appointment to HM The King. Lt Col Tom is the son of Peter and Chrissie Spencer-Smith of Llanvetherine. He was very severely injured in Afghanistan some years ago, undergoing multiple operations before returning to duty. Many of us have followed his career from the time he entered Sandhurst and was subsequently commissioned into the Welsh Guards. His parents must be very proud of him as are all of us who have been privileged to know him for some years.

St James the Elder were pleased to be able to open in June under the Unlocked Churches programme this year, and both the church and churchyard have looked glorious.

St. Mabli's, Llanvapley

**Llanvapley Church
Strawberry Tea
Sunday 5 July
3pm – 5pm**



**Come along and enjoy a relaxing afternoon in the church garden while also enjoying a delicious strawberry tea.
£7 per person
£3 for children**

Everyone welcome



Llanvapley Church is delighted to invite friends from the village, Penrhos, Llantilio and Llanvetherine to its annual Strawberry Tea. We will be setting up in the garden if it is nice weather and inside if its raining. We hope to see you in the garden!

Visitors to the Church

The Church did not officially take part in the Open Churches event this year but a number of visitors have passed through our doors which are open daily in June. These included visitors from Llanvihangel-ystern-llewen, Hereford, Tal-y-coed, Monmouth, Abergavenny and as far away as Crickhowell. It was good to see that one of the visitors was on the pilgrimage around all the churches in the Ministry Area and was delighted to stamp their passport.

St. Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny

Meditation update for July

Meditation continues in the Chancel at Llantilio Crossenny Church on Tuesday mornings from (the earlier time of) 8.15-8.45am over the summer.)

We are a regular cohort of 2 from Llantilio, and 2 from the Catholic Church in Llanarth. Everyone welcome - no experience necessary

July 14th & 28th July, Any queries, please contact Jenny 07891 016768

A tribute to Mansel Thomas

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon in June at St Teilo's church the audience was entertained by beautiful music and singing. This was a tribute to the works of the famous composer Mansel Thomas.

Mansel Thomas was a distinguished Welsh Musician, pianist, conductor, adjudicator, examiner and Festival Director. His great love was composing music, and his enormous corpus of composition is testimony to this. He was for many years BBC's principal music representative for Wales.

His music was played by a String Quartet and pianist.

Helen Hall and Elizabeth MacFie – violin

Wendy Betts – viola

Sonia Howard - cello

Accompanist - Jeanette Massocchi.

We were also fortunate to hear Ifan Thomas, Tenor, sing some wonderful songs both in English and Welsh. Also, Bridget Tomlinson, Soprano (great granddaughter of Mansel Thomas) sang "Songs from the Year" – February, April, June and August.

The afternoon finished with refreshments and wonderful cakes provided by the ladies of the church.

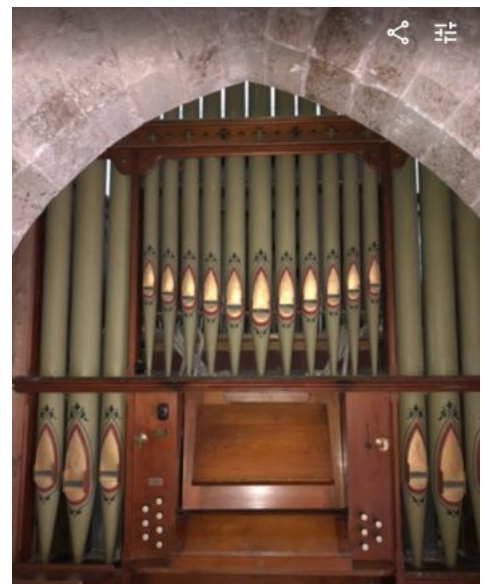
A big thank you to Sian Cobb of Talycoed, daughter of Mansel Thomas for allowing us to hear her father's music.

Myfanwy Williamson.

Another musical treat in store!

Our readers will already know that we were very fortunate to have the organ at St Teilo's fully restored by the charity 'Pipe up for Pipe Organs' using their Sleeping Beauty grant.

What better way to celebrate the restoration than joining us at St Teilo's for an "Organ Epic" on July 26th at 7.00pm? Philip Norman will be taking the organ to its limits as well as providing an insight into the mysteries of the instrument.



Organ Epic

A Multimedia ~~Extravaganza~~^{thing}

NOT an organ recital

The restored organ in St Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny

What is it? What isn't it?

What can it do? What can't it do?

Philip Norman puts the instrument through its paces and
looks at organ whys and wherefores

Sunday 26 July 2026 7.00 pm

St Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny 8SU

Retiring collection

pkn@pnms.co.uk | 01873 590 055

Church Maintenance Group

A huge thank you to the six people who turned up to the rain delayed inaugural gathering of the Church Maintenance Group on June 7th. We started digging out the little trees that had started to sprout in the wrong places and strimmed the weeds and grass where needed. We also carefully started to remove the ivy from walls surrounding the church as well as some grave stones.

We meet just for an hour or two on the first Saturday of each month (weather permitting). If you can spare any time once a month to help with garden or maintenance jobs please contact Lauren via Facebook or on 07971607157.

Thank you so much, Lauren Hughes.

North Monmouthshire Ministry Area News



THURSDAYS IN THE SUMMER
HOLIDAYS
JULY 23RD & 30TH
AUGUST 6TH
CRAFTS, GAMES, BIBLE
STORIES AND TODDLER AREA.
SNACKS AND DRINKS

KIDS ZONE

SOMETHING FOR TODDLERS TO
PRIMARY AGES
10.00-12PM
ST TEILOS CHURCH LLANTILIO
PERTHOLEY
TO BOOK CONTACT
EMILY BAILEY
TEXT 07539 062299



FAMILY CHURCH
A NEW WORSHIP SERVICE FOR
THE COMMUNITY OF NORTH
MONMOUTHSHIRE MINISTRY
AREA
COME ALONG FOR A RELAXED WAY TO
BE WITH GOD.
CRAFTS FOR CHILDREN, FREE PLAY
AREA AND A COMMUNITY CIRCLE TO BE
TOGETHER IN WORSHIP
LLANTILIO PERTHOLEY PRIMARY
SCHOOL
SUNDAY JULY 5TH 2.30-3.30PM



Summary of Information supplied at
North Monmouthshire Ministry Area Council Meeting
held at St Nicholas Church, Grosmont, 16th June 2026

- A full set of bibles has been gifted by a MAC Trustee for each of the 3 schools in the NMMA – St Teilo's CiW Llantilio Pertholey, Cross Ash and Llanvihangel Crucorney.
- Three Organ Scholarships have been funded for young people across the NMMA.
- There is a vacancy for People's Warden on the MAC; anyone interested please contact their local clergy.
- Rev'd Mary Moore is to leave the Grosmont Group of churches after her last service on 2nd August. The post will be advertised in due course. Cover has been arranged for the churches up until December either with Lay Worship Leaders or clergy.
- Work on the riverbank project at St Teilo's, Llantilio Pertholey will begin in late July.
- Archbishop Cherry will preside at a Confirmation service at St Teilo's, Llantilio Pertholey on 18th October.
- Numerous activities including Churches Unlocked events, open gardens and other social gatherings have taken place across the MA. Watch the MA Website for news of church and MA events over coming months.
- MA accounts have been submitted to the External Examiner.
- Fifth Sunday services will be held at 4.00pm rather than 6.00pm
- A new form of Family Church is to begin soon following the outreach work undertaken by the Schools Engagement Pioneer Emily Bailey. This will take place every 6 weeks at St Teilo's CiW school, Llantilio Pertholey. The aim is to encourage families to reconnect with God in an environment in which they feel comfortable and eventually return to more conventional church services, thus building up our congregations.
- Communication was a focus for discussion and it was felt that the MA Website and Newsletter have been very useful in helping the 17 churches keep connected and share news and details of events.
- MAC members' terms of office will be three years with one third of members standing down each year, although they can stand for re-election should they choose.
- A Faculty was approved for submission for St Teilo's to install a handrail.
- Philip Norman has developed a book and toolkit to assist churches in running choirs and playing church music. Approach Philip if interested.
- The NMMA will hold its Annual Meeting on 21st July at St David's Church, Llanddewi Rhydderch. This will be a cheese and wine event with an external speaker. All are welcome.



Pip Rumsey

Spotlight on Jeanette Massocchi

Jeanette Massocchi is many remarkable things: a gifted musician, teacher, accompanist, singer and mentor, whose contribution to music has touched countless lives. Her talent, knowledge and generosity have inspired generations of students and performers. Yet for me, beyond all those achievements and accolades, Jeanette is something even more special: my beloved neighbour. She is a kind, gracious and treasured presence, and I feel deeply privileged to know her.

Jeanette has enjoyed a distinguished musical life as both singer and accompanist. Over the years, she has served as one of the official accompanists for the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales, the Llangollen International Eisteddfod and the Welsh National Opera Male Choir.

Her teaching career began more than sixty years ago, when she became Senior Lecturer in Music at the Royal Welsh College in Cardiff. It was there that she first met Mansel Thomas, then Head of Music at BBC Wales, who sat on the interview panel for her appointment. Her achievements and contribution to music have been recognised by the Royal Academy of Music in London, which honoured her with an Associateship, and by Trinity College London. She has also received the Honorary Archbishop of Wales' Award for Church Music.

Jeanette is also a Bard of the National Eisteddfod and remains closely connected to the local musical community, serving on the committee of our own Eisteddfod in Abergavenny.

Today, she continues to be in great demand as a vocal coach and accompanist, sharing her experience, encouragement and love of music with all those fortunate enough to learn from her.
Ros Jeffries

When did you first realise that music would be a significant part of your life?

"I was four years old when my love of music first began. We had a piano at home, and I loved nothing more than sitting down and tinkling away on the keys. I discovered very early that music was in my blood. The sheer joy of being able to make music captured my imagination, and from there I happily worked my way through all the piano exams. I never had to be told to practise.

From the beginning, I seemed to have a natural love for the relationship between the notes written on the page and the sound they could become when brought to life at the piano."

Who inspired you the most as a young musician?

"My mother was very musical and inspired me from an early age. She took me to local eisteddfods until I was old enough to go on my own, and both my parents, along with my older brothers, encouraged and supported my music. During the Second World War, when we lived in Sennybridge, my parents would invite American soldiers to join us at home, and I loved playing the piano for them after supper."

Was there a particular moment when you thought "This is what I want to do for the rest of my life"?

"No, not really. It was more of a natural progression. I was never drawn away in other directions; I simply followed my love of music. I went on to graduate from the Royal Academy of Music in London, where piano was my principal study and singing my second. I began accompanying



others by helping my college friends at auditions, and because I could sight-read well, it soon became something I loved and, eventually, my forte.”

What do you enjoy most about accompanying others?

“I love the partnership between the piano and the voice. The voice is an instrument too, and when singer and pianist work together well it becomes a true duet. For me, the words are poetry, and the role of the accompanist is to help reveal their meaning through the music.”

What makes a great accompanist and is there a difference from accompanying a singer and ‘accompanying’ an instrument?

“For me, a great accompanist needs sensitivity, musical understanding and a real appreciation of poetry and text.

When accompanying a singer, there has to be a deep connection, almost as though singer and pianist are breathing as one. It is still a duet, but the accompanist’s role is to support and elevate the soloist. That means working with many different personalities, communicating through body language, and adjusting seamlessly to the singer’s pacing and expression. The words are always the focal point, and the singer and accompanist together bring their meaning to the audience. The text affects how I play: where I shape a phrase, emphasise certain notes, fade into the background, or allow the piano to shine briefly without ever overpowering the voice.

Playing with instrumentalists can be different. In a quintet, for example, I am not simply an accompanist but a pianist and collaborator. The focus is on shared leadership, rhythmic independence and awareness of the whole musical context. In that setting, I am an equal partner in the musical conversation.”

What do you enjoy the most about teaching and coaching?

“I love talking about the voice as an instrument. With a new student, I enjoy discovering the best way to bring out the particular quality, range and character of their voice. I also love working with the text of songs and helping students understand the characters they are portraying in opera. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing a voice develop and grow.

I believe that anyone can sing, and that with the right teaching and coaching everyone can improve, however small that improvement may seem.

My greatest pleasure comes from the reactions of students when they hear the music they are making, whether they are amateurs or professionals. After all their hard work in rehearsal, I love hearing them perform and watching them engage with an audience, especially when they are singing in languages such as French, Welsh, German or Italian with care and correct pronunciation.”

What is one thing that people don’t know about you?

“There is more than one thing!

I appeared on Donald Peers’ radio show with Tom Jones, sang as soloist with the National Youth Orchestra of Wales on their summer tour, and appeared on Songs of Praise in Swansea.

Although I am of Welsh and Italian ancestry — my mother was Welsh and my father Italian — I am also a true Cockney, as I was born within the sound of Bow Bells. Perhaps that is where my love of music truly began!”



What piece of music never fails to move you?

“There is such a wealth of music I could choose from, but one piece that never fails to move me is Desdemona’s Ave Maria from Verdi’s Othello. It is music of great beauty and emotional depth, and I have also had the privilege of singing it as a soloist.”

What has music taught you about life?

“Music has taught me how to love, how to be patient, and how to appreciate the qualities that give life its depth: beauty, joy, sadness, gratitude and kindness.

For me, music is where the heart speaks. The meaning of words can evoke such powerful emotions, and I hear colour and richness in the voice as it moves through those emotions.

I have worked with music all my life, and it has given me immense love, enjoyment, pleasure and satisfaction. One of my greatest joys is passing on that passion to my students.

Song is my greatest love because it brings together beautiful music and words that are written like poetry.

To be able to share the love and joy I feel in words and music, and to see my students, past and present, absorb that gift and flourish, gives me no greater satisfaction in life.”

Which composer would you most like to have dinner with?

“I would choose Chopin, because his music has such a romantic atmosphere. Schumann is also a particular favourite of mine; his music, too, is romantic, expressive and wonderfully warm.”

What brought you to Treadam?

“Fate – Mansel Thomas being on the interview board over 60 years ago brought me to Treadam. He and his family and I became great friends, and when he lived here, I would visit often. When the house later came up for sale, I bought it because I had fallen in love with it. I felt that music echoed throughout the house, the studio and the garden and continues to do so to this day.

Mansel was an influential and much-loved Welsh composer who left a rich legacy of vocal, choral and instrumental music. We recently celebrated that legacy in a concert at St Teilo’s.

What about your faith?

“Going to church was part of my family life. My father was Catholic and my mother was Church in Wales, and I attended church with my mother. Later, when I moved to London as a student, I lived with Anglo-Catholic nuns at All Saints Home, just off Oxford Street, and I loved it.

Faith plays a huge part in my life. I speak to God in prayer for help and guidance, and I thank Him for my musical gift. Faith has given me a deep trust in people, and a love for all of God’s creatures.”

When you sit at the piano today, after all these years, what do you feel?

“I feel excitement — excitement that I am still able to make music, and that people still find joy in hearing it – my gift from God”

Community News

Llanvavpley and District Gardening Club

Gardening Club News – July

On Wednesday 1st July at 3pm the Gardening Club are visiting a local garden, Bryngwyn Manor, Raglan. The 3 acre garden is a haven for bees and wildlife and includes mature trees, a walled parterre garden, mixed borders, a pond and shrubbery. All members and friends are welcome to come. The entrance fee is £12.50 which includes tea and homemade cakes. All money taken from the visit will go to the National Garden Scheme. In 2025 the NGS raised a staggering £3,875,596 which was donated to many nursing and health charities including MacMillan, Parkinson’s, Marie Curie, Maggie’s centres and many more. For further details please contact marion.ashton@yahoo.co.uk

Flower and Produce Show, Saturday 22nd August.
The programme for the show is at the end of this newsletter



LLANVAPLEY & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

Flower & Produce Show

Saturday
22nd August
2pm-4pm

Tea
Coffee
& Cake

Cake stall

Plant stall

Tractors

Vintage Car

Children's Games & treasure Hunt

Raffle

Holly + Son
Tool and Knife sharpening services

Meeting 7pm first Wednesday every month
At Llanvapley Pavilion, NP7 8SN

Entry forms available

llanvapleyvillagecommittee@gmail.com

Llanvapley Sports Pavilion & Village Hall. (LSSA)

What's on at the Pavilion Llanvapley June/July 2026

Wednesday 24th June 9am-10am

Pilates Video 40 minutes with weights £2

Saturday 27th June 7pm-9pm

Film Night - Mother, Father, Sister, Brother

Monday 15th and Wednesday 17th June 9am-10am

Pilates Video 40 minutes with weights £2

Wednesday 1st July

Gardening Club visit to Bryngwyn Manor Gardens.

Wednesday 8th July

WI Annual Outing

Sunday 12th July 2pm-6pm

LCC v Moccas CC with pop up bar drinks & snacks

Thursday 16th July 10.30am

Coffee Morning £3 plus £1 raffle

Thursday 23rd July 5.30pm & 7pm-9pm

There are TWO Cornhole Games this month.

Children and Parents at 5.30pm.

Adults at the usual 7pm.

Frydays fish & chips will be delivered 8pm-8.15pm

Order by Wednesday 22nd July 2pm

Saturday 25th July 10am-4pm

Quilters

Saturday 25th July 7pm-9pm

Film Night

Llanvapley Walking Group

The next Llanvapley Walking Group village walk is NOT the first Saturday of the month, BUT will take place on Saturday 11th July at 10:30 – meeting at the pavilion. I will send out a reminder in the week before the walk. I have also been sent details of two interesting events over the next week or so:

The first is a meeting of the White Castle Volunteer Footpath Maintenance Group, which takes place NEXT WEDNESDAY (1st July), meeting at Llantilio Church Car Park, at 10.00am.

The second is a film screening and community discussion of The People's Emergency Briefing (or, rather, two screenings on the same day). The film outlines the latest science on the climate and nature crisis - this is an 'accessible 50-minute film' followed by discussion and takes place on Wednesday 8th July at 1.00 (for 1:30 start) and 7:00 (for 7:30 start) at Cross Ash Village Hall. *Phil Allsopp*

PUBLIC BRIEFING · REF 08-07-26 CROSS ASH, MONMOUTHSHIRE

FILM SCREENING · COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

THE PEOPLE'S EMERGENCY BRIEFING

NOT CLASSIFIED
OPEN TO ALL
FREE · ENTRY

The latest science on the climate and nature crisis — brought together into one powerful, accessible 50-minute film.

WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 2026

<p>AFTERNOON SCREENING 1:00pm · for 1:30pm start <small>Doors & refreshments from 1:00pm</small></p>	<p>EVENING SCREENING 7:00pm · for 7:30pm start <small>Doors & refreshments from 7:00pm</small></p>
<p>VENUE Cross Ash Village Hall</p>	

Teas, coffees & light refreshments served

Based on a landmark **Westminster briefing to UK leaders**, the film explores what the crisis means for the nation — from food and health to security and the economy — while pointing to practical, hopeful responses.

Designed for community screenings, it invites us to engage with the facts, reflect together, and consider what an effective national response could really look like.

AFTER THE FILM A facilitated discussion of up to an hour — reflect on the issues raised, share perspectives, and explore positive responses within our community.

“*It felt uplifting, empowering, engaging, revitalising and informative. It left me wanting to double down on my own efforts — and reminded me to do it together, not alone.*”

— ATTENDEE AT A RECENT SCREENING

FREE ENTRY · ALL WELCOME

BOOK A SPACE | orchardacremarketgarden@gmail.com

CROSS ASH VILLAGE HALL · WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 2026



Llantilio Crossenny WI

The heatwave and red weather alert of the final few days of 'Flaming June' were simply stultifying. Members of the Llantilio Crossenny WI hunkered down in the cool and agreed that the cancellation of Choir practice was sensible. Nevertheless, we kept in touch by WhatsApp and other virtual means, sharing messages including birthday celebrations, jokes and even the best place to purchase a rechargeable neck fan (we assume that it is the fan that is rechargeable, not the neck!)

However, before the heat induced malaise set in we were able to function as normal. At the beginning of the month, three Committee members attended a session run by Gwent Federation on the topic of 'Risk Management, Safeguarding and Insurance'. The important aspects of running our WI will be taken back to the full Committee for consideration and any action required.

Our monthly meeting was very well attended and a jolly affair. Our speaker for the evening was Sarah Darling who entertained us with her talk entitled, 'enchancingly,' History of the Toilet Roll'. This is what we now know...

We learned that the first toilet paper was invented in the 2nd century in China, as the Emperor and his wife needed to use 'something' and it was made from Hemp paper, which was made into extremely large piece of paper and was incredibly hard to use. It was quite rough and rather too expensive for other people to use anywhere else. So, over the centuries, many people used leaves, though some were poisonous and, as a result, many people didn't live past the age of 35. It also depended on where you lived. If you lived by the sea, you could use a sea sponge, or moss, (it was the gold standard as contained iodine a natural antiseptic). There was also other natural equipment that could be used to clean your derriere such as shells, stones and pebbles. The Japanese would use a shoehorn shaped stone; the Romans used a stick with a sponge on the end which each person passed onto each other, once dipped into vinegar or wine to clean then passed along to the next person. Americans used a corn on the corn, basically people used what was to hand. On ships the TOW rag was used to 'wipe the bottom'. Did you know the best paid job for the King was the 'Groom of the Stool?'. Hence, the saying, when a nurse asks, 'have you passed a stool?' Pockets at this stage were invented so that these major pieces of equipment could be kept secretly, as no one talked about their toilet habits.

In 1736, laws were introduced against disposing of bodily waste during the day; it had to be thrown out at night. Before this, people would shout 'Garde l'eau' as a warning, which is said to be where the word 'loo' comes from. Newspaper was used before toilet paper was invented, in 1857 by Joseph Gayetty. It was called Izel, coloured pink and targeted at ladies, and was originally a treatment for hemorrhoids. It didn't sell so well as it had quite a few splinters in, somewhat painful. Then proper toilet paper in the 1880's came along but it didn't sell for a number of reasons.

In the 1800's, we had workhouses and some men had to work as 'night men' down cesspits, they usually died within a year. In 1858, the 'Great Stink' closed Parliament during Summer which led to the law being changed and the sewage system commenced. In addition, all manner of sanitary ware was invented such as the toilet by Thomas Crapper, the bidet and hand sink.

Sarah was warmly thanked for this very informative and enjoyable historical talk. And then we all had a cup of tea and some delicious cakes and went home happy!

We are a friendly and usually energetic WI and welcome members of all ages. Contact Sue at sue.raynor@icloud.com if you would like more information.

Whitecastle Community Council

The Community Council was delighted to hold its monthly meeting at Penrhos Church on 18 June. This was the second time the Council has met at the church, and it continues to prove an excellent venue. The Council would like to thank the Church Committee for its generosity in making the venue available.

The next Community Council meeting will be held at the Grange Project in Llanvihangel-Ystern-Llewern. Members of the public are always welcome to attend Council meetings and are invited to raise local issues during the public participation session at the start of the meeting.

If you are unsure where the Grange Project is located, it forms part of Grange Farm. It can be reached by turning left at the Onen, then taking the left-hand lane and following it for approximately one mile.

Big News!

This may not be headline news, but it is an important update all the same!

The Community Council's website contains a wealth of information about the Council's work, local services, and what's happening across the community. The Council has recently changed the website's domain name from .co.uk to the more appropriate .gov.uk, reflecting its status as a local government body.

If you search online for "Whitecastle Community Council", Google may still direct you to the old non-functioning website for a short while until its search results are updated. In the meantime, please make sure you visit the new .gov.uk website for the latest information.

www.whitecastlecommunitycouncil.gov.uk

Whitecastle Volunteer Footpath Maintenance Group Join Us At Our First Meeting

WHITECASTLE VOLUNTEER FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE GROUP

INVITATION TO THE FIRST MEETING

Following the successful Community Task Day on 4 June, it was agreed to establish a **Whitecastle Volunteer Footpath Maintenance Group**. The group will be supported by Ross Emery from the County Council's Rights of Way Team.

If you enjoy the countryside and would like to help keep public footpaths and rights of way within the Whitecastle Community accessible and well maintained, we would be delighted to hear from you.

FIRST MEETING DETAILS

DATE: Wednesday 1 July

TIME: 10:00am

MEETING POINT: Llantilio Church Car Park

Everyone Welcome!
All ages and experience levels welcome – many hands make light work!

The meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss how the group will operate, identify priorities, and plan future activities.

Help care for and improve our local countryside and footpath network.

Make a positive difference in our community.

Work together, have fun and enjoy the great outdoors!

TO ATTEND, OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED BUT CANNOT MAKE THE FIRST MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT:
whitecastlecommunitycouncil@gmail.com

Let's keep Whitecastle's footpaths open, accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

Llantilio Crossenny Village Noticeboard

The Community Council has approved the purchase of a new noticeboard for Llantilio Crossenny. The only question now is: where should it go? The current noticeboard (pictured), located in the hedge opposite the old Post Office, is no longer in good condition. The Council would like to install the new noticeboard in a more prominent and easily visible location so that it is more useful to residents and visitors alike. Ideally, the new noticeboard would be sited on a small piece of land beside the main road, but so far no suitable location has been identified.

If you have any suggestions for a suitable site, or know of a piece of land that might be available, please get in touch with the Community Council. The Council would love to hear your ideas. whitecastlecommunitycouncil@gmail.com



**and finally..... from the TNT team
Apropos of nothing, Hedgehogs!**

Meet Snuffles, spotted in a field and garden locally. Did you know that you can report a sighting of a hog in our gardens to www.hedgehogstreet.org



You can find out more about our churches on our website www.llantiliogroup.info

Contributions to the parish magazine are always welcome.