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St. Asaph & District ^{new} City Times

Issue No 19

December 2022



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We're always looking out for letters, items, reports or features relating to St Asaph. Or that special photo! The deadline for the February issue is Monday January 16th – but **please** submit well before to ensure publication as the paper fills quickly. All letters must be accompanied by name and address, although these can be withheld from publication on request.

We are also fully reliant on and very grateful for sponsorship and advertising—if you would like to sponsor or advertise, please contact via editorsact@gmail.com

Gwynt y Môr grant to City Times



The City Times has been awarded a grant of £2400 from the Gwynt Y Môr Community Fund to help defray the costs of printing over the next two years. We are extremely grateful for this support.

Over the approximately thirty year lifetime of the GyM windfarm, the fund will be making £19 million available for the coastal communities of Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire. It focuses on the key themes of building strong and sustainable communities, developing prosperous communities with strong economic growth, and reducing poverty and inequality. The fund is independently administered by Community & Voluntary Support Conwy) in co-operation with Denbighshire and Flintshire Councils for Voluntary Services. CVSC employ a full time, locally based fund manager. You can see examples of the many and varied community projects they support on their website—search Gwynt Y Mor Community Fund.



Christmas 2022

Fr Rex Matthias

When Mary gave birth to Jesus there was no royal fanfare, no 21-gun salute, no cameras, no TV crews. Outside the stable the crowds in Bethlehem went about their business, unaware that anything momentous was happening, other than the census which had brought them there in the first place. But heaven was celebrating the birthday of life, life for all humankind.

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth.”

Significantly, the only ones to whom this message was communicated were the shepherds, quiet in the fields outside Bethlehem. The shepherds symbolise the poor in spirit, those humble enough to seek and find God in our mundane human circumstances: they gazed into the starry night and saw the light.

We should, like the shepherds, be humble enough to seek the Christ-child and kneel before the manger with nothing to offer but the poverty of being human. Our lives we can offer; we can pray: “Come and rescue me and redeem the whole of my life”. We can join the angels and cry: “Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth” by living our lives to the glory of God and working for peace for all.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you all a very joyful and blessed Christmas, and all that is good for 2023.

Christmas Fair at the cathedral!

After missing the Christmas fair for the last two years, there was a huge turnout for this year's fair, with many stall-holders, local schools singing, a lantern trail, and of course Santa. A great start to the festive season!



“12 football pitches” – consultation on location of major St Asaph substation for the Mona offshore wind farm

John Oliver

A consortium comprising **bp** and **EnBW Energie** was successful in a bid for the licence to construct and manage two major wind farms in the Irish Sea – Mona and Morgan, as well as one off the east coast of Scotland. **bp** is a company well known to us all, but in the petrochemical sector rather than with renewable energy. However it has committed to a net zero future, and hence its involvement in this project. The German firm **EnBW** by contrast is extremely experienced in the windfarm and renewable energy sector.



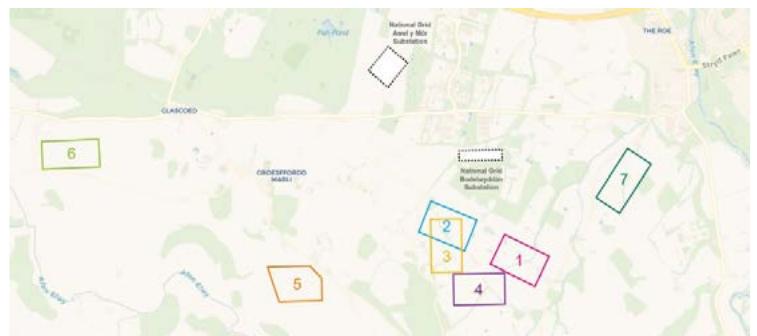
Possible routes for the underground cabling

“Committed to undergrounding” 2028 is the planned date for the start of electricity generation from the windfarms, and so they are at the early stages of the work. Along with other windfarms, it is planned for the electricity cables to come ashore somewhere between Pensarn and Llandulas, and for the cabling to link into the National Grid at the Bodelwyddan substation (oddly, much nearer St Asaph than Bodelwyddan). The cables are about 9 inches diameter and will be buried underground. No new pylons are envisaged. The exact landfall and route of the cable is yet to be decided but possible routes are shown on the map opposite.

However, the cables will first need to go to their own substation. **bp** and **EnBW Energie** recently held a series of public consultations events to explain their plans as to where they plan to locate their substation. Equivalent in size to about 12 football pitches, they have identified 7

possible locations near St Asaph, shown in the picture opposite. The new substation would then connect to the existing National Grid substation behind Qioptic's existing facility. The consultation ran till 7th November. Many local people attended the events, most of whom were concerned about the visual and environmental impact of such a big project and the amount of agricultural land it would take up.

Ifer Gwyn, a spokesperson for the consortium said: "After talking with residents and landowners and further research we plan to come up with a short list of one or two possible sites by spring next year. We will then hold a further series of consultations and provide more details. This will help us form our final plans to enable us to submit the "Development Consent Order" which is essentially the planning application".



Sites around St Asaph under consideration for the new substation

When asked why the old Chance Pilkington factory site wasn't under consideration, Mr Gwyn explained that it had been considered but in fact was too small. However, although the site would cover 12 football pitches, the outer part would be stands of woodland to screen the site from view.

He was also asked why it would not be possible to co-locate the substation with the one planned to serve the **Awel Y Mor** windfarm. The main reason for this decision lies in the difficulties encountered co-ordinating such significant projects, operating at different times and involving different companies.



As with other windfarms, there will be set aside funds available for community projects over the lifetime of the project.

Do you want your say? As noted above, there will be further consultation. You can still send views and comments via the project website www.morganandmona.com

or email info@morganandmona.com

Most importantly, the sites under consideration are shown at:

www.morganandmona.com/en/our-proposals/mona/our-substation-infrastructure/

You may wish to check this out...

Gwynt y Môr Windfarm

City Times is grateful to Joshua Morris of RWE for answering a barrage of questions about the windfarm!



Photo: Anthony Woodhouse

Gwynt y Môr was built and is operated by a consortium in which the major partner is RWE Renewables. The Crown estate owns the seabed, which it has leased to RWE for this purpose. Planning permission was granted in 2008, work started 2011 and it opened fully 2015. Investment during construction was around £2 billion. The site was selected for a combination of wind resource, shallow water depths, suitable connections to the National Grid and for having suitable ports nearby for construction and operational maintenance. The anticipated lifespan is 35 to 40 years.

There are 160 turbines, with tip height 150 m above sea level, and with a rotor diameter of a massive 107m. If wind speed is too low (less than about 2.5 m/s, or light breeze on the Beaufort Scale) then the wind turbines will not be able to make electricity, and if it is too high (more than about 25 m/s, storm force gales) the turbines are shut down to avoid damage.

Sometimes you see some turning, and others not. Each wind turbine can be considered as its own power station, which can be switched on and off remotely to meet the needs of the National Grid at that time. If not needed, they won't be turning. The orientation of the turbines and also the pitch of the blades is computer controlled and adjusts using information from their own anemometers to always point the turbine into the wind for maximum efficiency.

Each turbine can generate 3.6 megawatt; the whole farm can produce 576 megawatts, sufficient to power around 500,000 homes (ie 30% of Wales). The electricity reaches the National Grid via four 20km subsea cables, which connect via onshore cables to the substation by the St Asaph business park. Gwynt y Môr had to be designed with turbines in straight rows, not for aesthetic purposes, but to create corridors for Coastguard SaR helicopters to safely enter the wind farm in emergencies. The turbines are separated out by a distance calculated to ensure maximum efficiency in capturing the wind energy.

The Gwynt y Môr wind turbines were constructed in Denmark which was the only place they could be built at the time of construction. Since then manufacturing facilities have opened in the UK for key components like blades. For the future, there are targets for how much local content should be included in new offshore wind farms. There are around 100 highly skilled staff maintaining the windfarm. To date, 30 wind turbine apprentices have been trained at Llandrillo College, the site chosen for RWE's training hub in the UK. In the wider supply chain, over 700 jobs were created during construction with £90m spent in Wales.

The foundations, wind turbine towers and the nacelle are all made of steel. The blades of a wind turbine are made of several layers of glass or carbon fibre infused with a liquid plastic resin. The foundations were transported from the construction facility by sea to Cammel Laird on Birkenhead. The wind turbine towers, nacelles (or hubs) and blades are transported into Mostyn by sea and stored on the quayside.

Specialist "Jack-up" vessels were used for the installation of the foundations and turbines. These are large vessels that lower legs to the seafloor to create a stable platform for lifting and installing components using heavy lift cranes. The turbines are each mounted on top of a single foundation pile up to 100m in length and 7m wide driven into the seabed. The seabed on average in the GyM windfarm is between 13 and 28m deep.

No UK Offshore Wind farm has yet been built without subsidy from the government, which ensures the projects that are built and the electricity they produce is affordable. However offshore wind produces electricity at a significantly lower cost to the UK consumer than gas or nuclear. Offshore wind generation has an estimated "levelised" cost of £179 per megawatt hour (MWh). This is the cost of electricity over the full lifespan of the particular plant. Thanks to innovation and the development of technology, wind farms that are planned to come online in 2025/26 could bring this down as low as £48/MWh. For comparison, gas generation prices have recently reached £446/MWh.

There is a long term study of data on seabirds for the whole of Liverpool Bay to identify effects of windfarms, and a substantial body of research is already in existence. What we can say for sure is that the technicians frequently find seabirds perched or nesting on the turbines and the substation platforms, and that reducing our carbon output will help



limit the man-made rise in temperatures that is causing habitat destruction around the world.

At a time of focus on the risks to migrant workers in Qatar, it is impressive that RWE had a remarkably good safety record during construction. Despite the great complexity of the project, there were no fatalities nor any life-changing injuries sustained.



"Jack-up" vessel installing a turbine. Worth looking up on youtube to learn more!

Selected items from St Asaph City Council meeting in November

Moving smartly with the times, the City Council meeting employed an electronic “Owl” for their November meeting, which allowed participation both online and in person. The system worked fine apart from an occasional briefly frozen councillor.



- **PCSO Dave Jones** reported a recent increase in fraud and scams (see page 18) There had been a theft of heating oil, and some antisocial behaviour reported. CCTV is in place to identify the culprits. Complaints had been received about pavement parking obstructing passage of parents with prams, or of mobility scooters
- **Mayor Colin Hardie** reported on meetings with Natural Resources Wales with respect to the Plant Project, whereby NRW had undertaken to plant and maintain trees in various sites (eg behind the Library). The trees had been planted, but maintenance had been unimpressive, and Cllr Hardie had been given assurances that this would be addressed.
- **Cllr. Gedd** reported from the environmental sub-committee. In discussion, **Cllr. Hardie** reminded the CC that although we are a small city, the Council has a significant amount of land for which it is responsible. Annual costs of grass cutting and litter collection are substantial—around £5k and £14k respectively per annum. There are 47 dog and general bins to be emptied. This takes place weekly, or twice weekly in summer. Dog owners are now aware that bagged dog waste can go in the black bins, and indeed can also go in domestic bins. As a result, removing some of the dog waste bins in close proximity to black bins would help cut down on the litter collection costs. This was agreed.
- **Cllr. Scott** continues to press for action from NRW about the risk of flooding down the footpath to Roe Park from beside the A55 river bridge, as noted in the Black and Veitch report.
- The Council had further discussions (see CC minutes online) about two proposed housing developments described on page 11. Traffic and access for construction are potential problems for both of these sites. **Cllr. Hogg** had arranged to meet with a traffic officer from the County Council planning dept to assess further. The City Council can make observations, but does not take the decision whether or not to proceed.
- **Cllr. Hogg** advised that there will likely be 10% less funding available for the County Council budget; whilst priority will go to education and social care, other areas may be affected. This will in turn affect the City Council, and councillors agreed that a forensically careful approach to council spending was required, even if it meant delaying or abandoning previously agreed plans. It was suggested that this might include regalia for the Mayor.
- The City Council agreed to take a pledge concerning maintenance of **civility and respect** in all their dealings—this has been a national initiative for all councils following well publicised spats at a parish council meeting in England, the video of which “went viral”. Such behaviour would of course never be encountered in St Asaph.

Official and full minutes of all the City Council’s monthly meetings are posted on the City Council website www.stasaphcitycouncil.gov.uk following approval at the subsequent meeting. Contact details for individual councillors are also on the website. You can contact the Council via the City Clerk, Mrs Jill Ellison, PO Box 224, Llanfairfechan, Conwy LL57 9EQ. Email: clerk@stasaphcitycouncil.gov.uk or tel 07521 641756



Mayor Colin Hardie and Lady Mayoress Gwenda Hardie, after the Civic Service, along with ever-helpful local brownies and leaders who assisted with crowd control at the event.

Denbighshire Commuted sums available

Funding totalling £100,614 is available to improve open spaces and play areas in Denbighshire. Denbighshire County Council’s Open Spaces Commuted Sums is now open to communities across the county. The fund is open to town or community councils, community or voluntary groups. To find out if your area has funding available, please visit: <https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/.../commuted-sums.aspx> If you would like support to develop a community project or idea please get in touch with the Community Development Team via email: communitydevelopment@denbighshire.gov.uk

Lest we forget—Alwyn's booklet now online.

Some years ago, Alwyn Evans of Bishops Walk was approached by Cllr Andrew Thomas (always gently persuasive) and asked if he could research into the background of the names recorded on the city Cenotaph. Alwyn himself had served in the RAF until 1970, and went on to work at PPE (later Qiotiq) during which time he worked with British Army Tank Squadrons, and had great respect for their team spirit and positive outlook. Alwyn set to with a will, and went on to compile a detailed booklet dedicated to the young people of St Asaph who had given their lives in the two world wars.

The booklet is now available online at the St Asaph City Council website under "Local Services" and then following the "History of St Asaph" section.

It makes for very sobering reading, especially at this time of war in Europe. Alwyn gathered as much information as was possible to record the individual histories of those involved. Eight of the fallen are buried in Mount Road cemetery, but the majority are buried overseas, particularly in France and Belgium during the first world war, and also in places much further afield such as Egypt, Greece, Gallipoli in Turkey, Baghdad, Germany and Burma.

Details were hard to come by in some but Alwyn cross-checked with multiple sources to gain as much information as possible. Each entry is accompanied by a summary of the regiments, squadrons and ships on which they served.

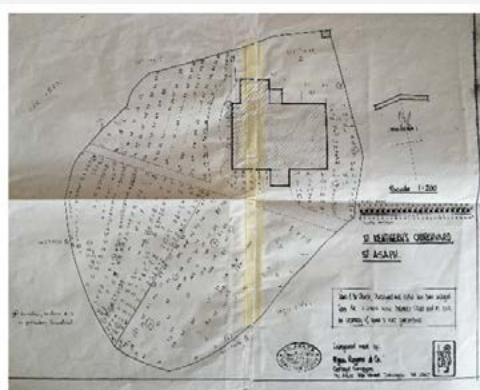


"David Roberts of Luke Street enlisted in 1872 by special authority at the age of just 14yrs and 7 months. He was 4' 10" and weighed 83 lbs. In January 1914 he was discharged with 21 years service, having served in India, Ceylon and the East Indies. He is thought to have re-enlisted with the Highland Light Infantry in 1914. He was killed in action on 1st April 1917 and is commemorated at the Thiepval Memorial in Picardie in France."

History in our churchyard

The list of burials in the parish church, and the map of their location, has now been uploaded onto the church website www.stasaphparishchurch.org.uk for ease of reference. The list is divided up into sections of the churchyard.

The most well known of those buried there is **Dic Aberdaron**, the itinerant polymath and linguist, but the earliest gravestone dates back to 1602, that of the bard of Wigfair, **Sion Tudur**. The dictionary of Welsh biography records that he lived to a ripe age,



Map of graves in the parish churchyard

serving in the Royal Courts of Edward VI and Mary, and as a bodyguard to Elizabeth. He wrote eulogies, elegies, and



Before the headstones were moved

begging poems to over sixty North Wales families; among them are poems to four generations of the house of Bodtryddan (*sic*), four of Mostyn and three of Llewenni. In those days, writing and reciting elaborate poems in praise of benefactors was perhaps akin to current day influencers being paid to extol products online, though no doubt much more eloquent!

Some of the entries in the list of burials are particularly poignant, especially when describing the last resting place of children and young people—in one case, the six infant children of Thomas Roberts. In another, Thomas Jones was "unfortunately shot in Towyn" in 1839, whilst William Griffiths was one of around 450 drowned following the wreck of the steam clipper *Royal Charter* off Moelfre in 1859.

Beside the path, one gravestone records the death of John Jones. *"For several years he resided as a merchant in Demerara in South America. On the 5th of September 1833, the second day after his return to his native Country, he died at Liverpool in the 42nd Year of his Age amidst the tears and regrets of all who knew him. Oh! who can tell His glorious welcome, or our sad farewell..."* A large slave rebellion in Demerara had broken out in 1823, and although it was crushed brutally, it is acknowledged to have been significant in the decision eventually taken by the British Government to abolish slavery; the law was passed on the 28th August 1833, just a few days before John Jones died. There must be quite a back story there...



Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday was a bright and sunny day, and as we thought of those who had made the ultimate sacrifice, we were all only too aware of the current and terrible war in Ukraine. There was a big turnout at the cathedral for the service, with representation from the Armed Forces, Emergency Services, City Council, County Council and community organisations. Canon Michael Balkwill gave the sermon, and the choir sang an anthem by John Ireland. Guides, Brownies and Rainbows complete with banners joined the solemn procession to the cenotaph, led by Major Brad Percival



The WI Poppy project: The WI Craft Club have been working on this incredible poppy project on and off throughout the year and we are delighted with the result. It has now been placed in St Asaph Cathedral and looks stunning. WI Craft Club leader, Tracy Annesley said: "It has been a pleasure working with the Llanelwy WI craft club ladies to make this tribute to our service men and women, veterans and their families. Please go and see it if you can."

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Dr James Davies MP and Mayor Colin Hardie raise the first British Legion Flag in St Asaph on Armistice Day

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Hospice welcomes new volunteer!

Janet Hill

Buddy, a 3 year old English bulldog from St Asaph, has passed all his therapy dog tests and has spent his first session at St Kentigern Hospice to the delight of our patients, their families and staff alike.

Owned by Laura and Gareth Williams (photographed here with Sharon Newell, Hospice Volunteer Coordinator) Buddy is an ideal dog for therapy. He gives lots of love and asks for very little in return.

Therapy dogs are not the same as service dogs in that they do not have a job to guide or protect; instead, their temperaments allow them to form

natural and easy bonds with the people they interact with. Therapy dogs act in their own lovable way and have a way of drawing people in. They are happy to give affection to whoever needs it and spread happiness and joy without a second thought.

Buddy is truly adorable. He is calm and at ease in any situation. He is confident, a necessary trait of a therapy dog and adores human contact. These dogs must be comfortable with everyone they meet and not show fear or nervousness, which could unsettle the person receiving care.

Laura remains connected to St Kentigern Hospice since her mother, Ann Clayton, was a patient here in 2012. Laura has special memories of spending valuable time here with her mum out of hours and her Dad could stay over to be by her mum's side. We are extremely grateful to Laura and Gareth who give their time to bring Buddy along.

Follow the St Kentigern Hospice Facebook page for updates on Buddy's therapy activities. You can even follow him on his own Instagram page! Budweiser_thebd



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Merry Christmas and a healthy
New Year to all our supporters!



Lots of positive comments on social media about good behaviour of young people on Halloween—and some very impressive costumes to be seen!

Photo Mike Jones

Follow us on Instagram

Ben Ross

To help us capture and share pictures of our city, the surrounding area, and our community, we've launched a new profile on Instagram. You'll find us at: [citytimesstasaph](https://www.instagram.com/citytimesstasaph)

We'll use this space to share snaps, old and new, spotlight the creativity of our locals, and keep the conversation going between print runs. Simply give us a follow to stay in touch.

Want to share something?

We'd love to receive your digital photo submissions, depicting St Asaph and its residents – human or otherwise. There are just a few rules to follow:

To use an image, we'll generally need permission from any people depicted within it.

Images should be suitable for public consumption – nothing saucy or overly controversial.

By sharing a picture with us, you're giving us the rights to use and publish it.

Good to go? Include a description if there's a story behind it. Email your pictures to: citytimesstasaph@gmail.com

Captured on film?

It'd be wonderful to see old photographs, showing how the town and the people in it have changed over the decades.

We can't wait to see and share some of your prized pictures.



St Asaph Choral Society

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Choral Soc: The Spring term will start on Mon 9th January 7.30-9.30 in The Parish Church, preparing to sing jointly with two choirs Ralph Vaughan Williams' **A Sea Symphony**, in St Asaph Cathedral on Sat 13th May 2023. All welcome!



CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Charity Christmas Carol Concert



Cor y Penrhyn



Only boys aloud

Tickets are now available for a spectacular Charity Christmas Carol Concert in St Asaph Cathedral.

Starts at 7pm to 9pm on Saturday 17th December, it will feature the soul lifting voices of **Cor Y Penrhyn Male Voice Choir** and **Only Boys Aloud**, with all funds raised for Stepping Stones North Wales, a local charity running for the past 38 years supporting adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Tickets at £15 each including a raffle ticket are expected to sell out very quickly, so please book your tickets now!

Contact Shirley on 07483994430 or alternatively access our ticket line:

www.ticketsource.us/stepping-stones-north-wales

Stepping Stones Office

01978 352 717 / 07814 358 882

info@steppingstonesnorthwales.co.uk

steppingstonesnorthwales.co.uk Charity registration No. 1043390

Choral Evensong – more than just a song at twilight!

Choral Evensong is a church service, traditionally held near sunset, focused on singing psalms and other biblical canticles. In origin, it is identical to the canonical hour of vespers. Old English speakers translated the Latin word *vesperas* as *æfensang*, which became 'evensong' in modern English. It is based on the form of Evening Prayer contained within the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England originally edited by Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1533 to 1555. This original was revised and authorised for use by the Church in Wales in 1984.

All six cathedrals of the Church in Wales and a number of parish churches offer choral evensong. Choral evensong is usually sung during term time; at other times, it is most often replaced with said Evening Prayer. There is hardly a famous composer ranging from Thomas Tallis, who was composer to 4 monarchs starting with Henry VIII, to the present day who has not written a setting of the Evensong. Within the service an anthem, with works by similar famous composers, is sung.

In St Asaph we are very fortunate in having a Cathedral on our doorstep where various forms of this service, or liturgy, have been celebrated for hundreds of years. Currently here the service is held on Friday evenings at 6.00pm and on Sundays at 3.30pm during school term time. It is sung by either the whole choir or, on some occasions, by the Lay Clerks only. The dedicated choir, ranging in age from 7 to 70, works hard to produce traditional choral evensong music of a high standard. This rehearsal and practice results in a period of beautiful praise, music, and singing in the peaceful, calm surroundings of the ancient stones of the Cathedral. It usually takes around 40 minutes. The essence of choral evensong is the 'song' of voices sounding together in harmony to the glory of God, giving those attending time for restful contemplation. There is no sermon and congregational participation is minimal.



Younger members of the choir

Roy Hamilton

Planning applications



The Paddock, off Bishops Walk. Castle Green have submitted an application to build 8 dwellings below the Paddock on the slope above the fields by the river. This is on land identified in the Local Development Plan. In response to local recommendations, the plans includes keeping the footpath which has been used by local residents for many years to get to the fields, the riverside walks and the Co-op. At the time of writing, there are 31 letters objecting to the development. Details of the application can be found by searching Denbighshire County Council Planning, and then inserting *The Paddock*



The Gemig Roberts Homes Ltd of Ruthin have applied for planning permission to build 9 dwellings on the patch of ground between the Gemig and the back of the Kentigern Arms. This site has remained as wasteland for many years, though there have no doubt been buildings there for centuries. Archaeological aspects of the development will no doubt be interesting. The details of the application can be found by searching Denbighshire County Council Planning, and then inserting *Gemig*

Elwy Solar Farm rejected by Welsh Government

The Welsh Government have turned down an application to build a 156 acre solar farm at Gwernigron, to the north east of the A55 roundabout, and behind the Talardy and Plas Coch.

A spokesperson for Statkraft (the company involved) said: “We felt that this was a really good project and we were really pleased with the support locally and from the Council.”

“The decision lies with the Welsh Government – the position of Liz Truss and some of her Cabinet Members caused concern within the energy industry, but I don’t think we can draw a link in this case. The main reason for rejection is likely relating to the inclusion of a fairly small area of land that falls under the “best and most versatile” classification. In March this year, the Minister for Climate Change, Julie James MS issued a letter to planning officers on this matter instructing that *when considering a solar PV array development, considerable weight should be given to protecting best and most versatile land from development, because of its special importance.*”

The spokesperson went on to say that the company are looking at the “next steps.”



Fox-checking?

This cool fox wanted to observe the gardening contractors in the Business Park, no doubt to check they were doing a tidy job. Remarkably tame—perhaps being fed locally?

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Your Local Library, and More!

St Asaph Library is one of Denbighshire's One Stop Shops, providing a range of Council Services under one roof. Please call in to the library for services such as:

- Paying Council bills, fines, and invoices (payment by cash, card or cheque are all accepted)
- Applying for or renewing a parking permit
- Collection of food recycling or dog waste bags
- To arrange collection of a bulky item
- Purchasing a RADAR key
- To make an appointment for assistance in applying for a Blue Badge
- Advice on other Council Services

Warm Place Scheme: The library is designated as one of the County Council's "warm places" for people to visit and spend time during the day!

Please bring all relevant documents and details with you so that we can deal with your enquiry as efficiently as possible.

General queries regarding council services can also be made via the Customer Contact Centre on 01824 706000.

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St Asaph Cathedral – a thumbnail history

Mike Parry-Jones

Although the religious settlement here is believed to have been founded by St Kentigern (also called St Mungo) the name we have is of his disciple Asaph. In Welsh we are Llanellwy of course and neither of these two saints is named and the river takes precedence. The date of the founding of the church and monastery is somewhere between 560 and 573, but this is based on "The Life of St Kentigern" written by a monk of Furness Abbey around 1180. St Kentigern is known for the finding of a gold ring lost by a queen in a salmon he caught; a representation of this can be found by the riverbank on the Common. St Asaph's fame was through the miracle of being able to transport burning coals in his cloak without any loss of either the cloak or his skin.



The first bishop was consecrated in 1143 but it was not until the second bishop was created in 1152 that a cathedral was built. The 12th and 13th centuries were uncertain times as it was proposed by Edward I to move the cathedral to Rhuddlan and this may have been in part a desire of the Bishop (Anian II) to have protection from Llywelyn ap Gruffydd. Damage to the cathedral was also caused by the very soldiers whose task it was to protect it.



Around 100 years of rebuilding followed in the years 1284 to 1392. This explains the different types of stone some of which came from quarries in Cefn (the limestone) and some from Flint or Talacre (sandstone).

Having been at odds with Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, the cathedral later found itself in the same predicament with Owain Glyndwr whose rebels caused considerable damage to the cathedral and the Bishop's palace. The repairs to the cathedral were carried out in a couple of phases under subsequent bishops around 1420 and 1480.

A notable event occurred in 1714 when a violent storm blew down the tower and this is the explanation of the different stone we see in the upper courses, the battlemented parapet was added in 1806. The clock is dated 1794.

The same architect who built the Elwy bridge (Joseph Turner of Chester) was employed to remodel the choir following the removal of the Chapterhouse in 1779. In the 19thC further work was executed by Sir George Gilbert Scott (of St Pancras railway station fame) and this is much the way we see the cathedral today.

Should you wish to find out more about the cathedral, there are excellent history panels at the back of the cathedral by the West door, and also free items of literature available.



A statue for Lady Charlotte Guest?

John Barr

Denbigh and District Probus Club members enjoyed a good lunch at the Oriel hotel recently followed by an excellent talk on *"Lady Charlotte Guest – another suggestion for a statue of a woman in Wales"*, from the Ven. Bernard Thomas.

When he became Rector of the Parish of Dowlais in 1976 he was greatly inspired by one of the heroines of that place who succeeded in establishing herself as a formidable contributor

to many aspects of life in mid nineteenth century Britain, Lady Charlotte Guest. He told of her marriage to widowed industrialist and MP for Merthyr Tydfil, twenty-seven years her senior, John Josiah Guest whose father had started iron making in Dowlais and how John Guest had built it up to be the iron capital of the world.

Lady Charlotte bore John Guest ten children, five boys and five girls and their names are immortalized in the street names of Dowlais, streets which under the encouragement of Lady Charlotte were renovated and re-named to improve the lot of the workers.

She also began to immerse herself in the local culture and decided to learn Welsh, making rapid progress. Just a month after arriving in Dowlais she penned her own translation of part of Mark's gospel.

Her other achievements included the translation of the Mabinogion (the earliest British prose stories compiled in Middle Welsh in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries) into readable English, a version that remains the official and received translation of this enormously important part of Welsh culture and literary tradition.

She also learned about the intricacies of the steam engine through a detailed examination of a static engine used to emboss the railway line pieces with the

letters DIC. She learned about iron making with the hot air blast process, apparently becoming more of an expert than anyone else in this.

Following her husband's death, Lady Charlotte set about running the iron making business herself and it prospered even more. She obtained lucrative contracts the world over to supply railway lines, and vastly improved the water supply to the works and to the community, virtually ending cholera outbreaks.

Poor eyesight in her later years made it difficult for her to maintain her daily diary entries which she had done unbroken since the age of ten. Her precious beautifully crafted diary writings are in the National Library in Aberystwyth, including many favourite poems and sonnets of her favourite authors written in her own hand, many in Italian with her own translations.

Lady Charlotte died on the 15th January 1895 at the age of 82. Members were certainly convinced that she deserves a statue in Wales - perhaps outside the Guest Memorial Library in Dowlais and maybe it will depict her holding a copy of the Mabinogion!

Denbigh and District Probus Club welcomes new members to join our group for monthly meetings (held at the Oriel House, St Asaph) where we enjoy lunch, friendship and a stimulating guest speaker. For further information contact Gareth on **07881 783 735** or julmwilliams1974@gmail.com



Lady Charlotte Guest



The Ven. Bernard Thomas

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Llanelwy WI

Denise D'Albertson

One of the WI campaigns is No More Violence Against Women and at our October meeting we were given a heartfelt and informative talk by Police Sergeant Mike Taggart MBE, Strategic Domestic Abuse Officer with NW Police. Mike was able to share his story and be open with us about his own traumatic childhood and the tragic death of his mother. In the UK 1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence.

Mike has been with the Domestic Violence Unit for the past nine years and was awarded an MBE last year for his excellent work with victims of domestic violence. During lockdown he organised

NO MORE

violence against women

online seminars for hairdressers and beauticians who may, through their work, come into contact with victims and worked with supermarkets and food banks to include support leaflets in food deliveries and handouts. He has worked directly with victims offering safeguarding advice and support.

Our other speaker was Katrina Jones, Information & Support Officer with the NW Women's Centre, Rhyl. Katrina works with women who have suffered domestic violence and signposts them to a refuge or a relevant organisation that can help them. The Women's

Centre offers emotional support, help with their financial needs and empowers women to build up their lives again. Members of Llanelwy WI and the Co-op in St Asaph donated toiletries etc to the Women's Centre, for which they were extremely grateful.

We welcome visitors to our meetings which are held in the parish church in St Asaph on the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm. For more information about Llanelwy WI, email stasaphwi@gmail.com



Katrina Jones and Mike Taggart

Women's Aid Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000247
Bilingual Live Fear Free Helpline (Wales): 0808 8010 800
The NW Women's Centre: 01745 339331

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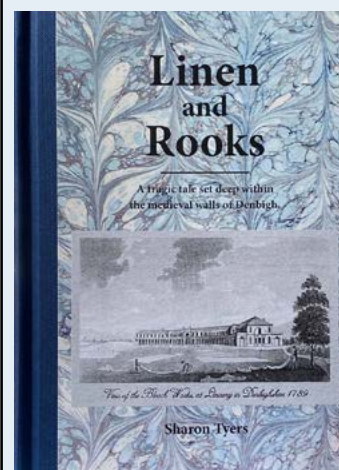
Sue Scott

The cost of living is prompting people to take a closer look at their finances to reduce outgoings. One way is to review your broadband costs. If you are on a low income or benefits such as universal credit, pension credit, income support etc from the Department of Work and Pensions you may be eligible for a discounted price.

Search for **Broadband Home Essentials** on the internet. This will give you information on companies offering the Broadband Home Essentials package for example BT, Virgin, Vodaphone, Sky and many others, and also comparison sites to compare prices. **You can access the internet at the library** if you need too. Always compare the options offered by the Broadband companies to make sure you get the best deal that suits you and your pocket. Ask the provider if there are any additional costs you may incur to ensure the plan is affordable for you. Note the monthly charge varies across the Broadband providers, so always make sure the plan is affordable and suits your needs.

If you need help to apply for the Broadband Essential package the library may be able to assist you. You will need your National Insurance number. This allows the checking of your eligibility for the discounted price. If you are eligible, you will get Broadband Home Essentials for a year even if you come off benefits. After 12 months another eligibility check will be required to see if you still qualify.

www.moneysavingexpert.com gives an overview of the companies offering Broadband Home Essentials.



Linen and Rooks

A local author has recently published a historical novel set in the 1830s in the Vale of Clwyd, centred around the massive Llewenni Bleachworks, and at the time of the devastating cholera outbreak in Denbigh. This is Sharon Tyers' debut novel, and ideal for reading curled up in front of a roaring fire at Christmas! Sharon left the NHS and studied English as a mature student at Bangor University, subsequently teaching English at the Blue Coat school in Liverpool. After retiring, she settled in Denbigh and became fascinated by local history.

The book is available at local libraries, at the "Snow in Summer" shop in Denbigh, and in Oriel Glasfryn in Caerwys. There will be a "Meet the author" event in Ruthin library on December 15th from 10-12 am, open to all.

Sharon also runs creative writing workshops and can be contacted at tyerssharon117@gmail.com



Christmas Church Services

Various Carol services at the cathedral—see diary of events on page 22

Sunday 11th December 6pm Candlelit Evensong followed by mulled wine and mince pies at the Cathedral

Sunday 18th December 6pm Carol Service at St Mary's Cefn

CHRISTMAS EVE:

Christingle & Crib Service 4pm at the Parish Church

Christmas Vigil Mass 6pm at St Winifride's RC church

Nine Lessons and Carols 7pm at the Cathedral

Midnight Mass 11.30pm at the Cathedral

CHRISTMAS DAY:

9.30am **Christmas Day Eucharist** at the Parish Church;

11am **Christmas Day Eucharist** at the Cathedral



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How good are you at spotting fraud?

Ben Ross

Released in July 2022, the latest Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) compares the volume of reported crimes in 2021-22, with the same period (pre-COVID) of 2019-20. There are a few stand-out statistics:

- Physical theft offences have decreased by **20%**.
- Instances of fraud have increased by **25%**.
- Computer misuse offences (that's hacking and unauthorised data capture) have increased by **35%**.

Most of us have an increasingly digital life, so these figures highlight the importance of being fraud aware. No-one wants their personal information and hard-earned cash to fall into the hands of a criminal.

Common scams and types of fraud

Phishing – email scams are very common. From cliché appeals from Nigerian princes, to seemingly urgent messages claiming to be from your bank, HMRC, or other organisations. Always click with caution. *Don't open links* if the email looks dodgy—such links can trigger malware access to your computer.

A totally unconvincing e-mail!

Our Names are Frances and Patrick Connolly and our foundation is donating (£1.5 Million Pounds) to you. Contact us via my email at (xxxxxx) for further details. Best Regards, Frances & Patrick Connolly, Copyright ©2022 The Frances & Patrick Connolly Foundation All Rights Reserved

Vishing – scammers might phone you, pretending to be from a legitimate company or organisation, aiming to tease sensitive information from your lips. If calling about “*suspicious activity on your bank account*”, they might invite you to check them by ringing the number on your bank card—but beware, they may still be on the line and pretend to be your bank.

Smishing – also be cautious of text messages requesting information, including links to potentially dodgy websites, or a direct phone number

to scam central.

Advance-fee fraud – this is characterised by someone asking you to provide bank details to make a deposit, allegedly unlocking a hefty reward. From the estate of a long-lost (likely fictional) relative, perhaps.

Safe account scams – posing as your bank or building society, you could be contacted by someone claiming that your accounts have been compromised and that you need to transfer your money to their ‘safe account’.

There are many other elaborate and alarming tactics used by criminals, so arm yourself with knowledge.

Take Five to stop fraud

Backed by UK Finance, the Take Five campaign offers practical tips and information, urging you to:

- **STOP** Take a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information.
- **CHALLENGE** Could it be fake? It's ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.
- **PROTECT** Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud.

Always remember: If you're ever uncertain, get in touch with the company an offer or message is claiming to be from—but just make sure you do that in a way you know is legitimate and secure. If an offer sounds too good to be true, there might be something fishy going on, so beware! And don't be embarrassed to report if you have been scammed.

Want to learn more? Check out the websites below. Hopefully you found this useful and informative. Stay safe out there, folks!

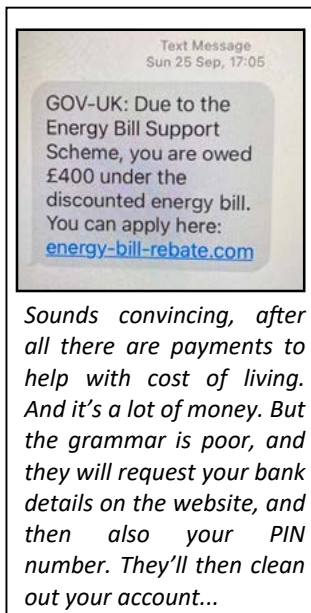
ActionFraud
National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre
actionfraud.police.uk

 National Cyber Security Centre


Improving later life

Cold calling: We should be very cautious about people knocking at our door and asking us to donate to a charity. It is easy to make a lanyard and badge with a photograph, and so a badge does not confirm that the caller is genuine. It is also easy to sound concerned and convincing. You may wish to put a sign up at your door stating that you do not want cold callers.

(But if you hear a loudspeaker playing Christmas carols, and see a brightly lit float going round just before Christmas accompanied by men of a certain age in Santa costumes with yellow buckets, you can relax. It will be St Asaph Rotary!)



Visit www.ageuk.co.uk and select the scams and frauds section. There is excellent advice and tips to spot all sorts of scams

Uptown Girl!

There's a new salon on the High Street offering Aesthetics, Hair, Beauty, Nails and Cosmetics. Welcome to the team: Sandra, Amy, Christina, and Sam who will be joining us. We pride ourselves in offering treatments that are not just the everyday salon visit.



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Immersive theatre on our doorstep Ben Ross

In the run-up to Halloween, 'The Drowned' offered drama-lovers a seasonally spooky theatre experience courtesy of EA Productions, who are based right here in North Wales.

At the press night, a gaggle of local reporters and influencers gathered outside Llandudno's Tabernacle Chapel... a sense of trepidation in the air. After being whisked inside, we were assigned roles as paranormal investigators, tasked with unlocking clues and helping a group of tormented spirits to finally arrest their peace.

It really was a unique experience, navigating the creepy nooks and crannies of this Victorian gothic-revival chapel, while the actors pierced the atmosphere with chilling screams and dramatic interludes.



The sense of unease was, at times, truly palpable.

Quoted in the North Wales Pioneer, creative director Eleanor Appleton commented:

"I want participants to get totally involved in the experience and find their own personal journey, whether that be listening to the characters and their stories or spending their time rummaging through boxes, reading clues and exploring the space."

Once the sleuthing was complete and the spirits freed, we had an opportunity to enjoy a drink at the bar and chat to the cast – in costume, but out of character. Much less scary.

Another project is in the works for EA Productions, based on the children's book, 'The Little Blue Planet Needs You', by Frances Bella. The research stage of this has been granted funding by the Arts Council of Wales, creating opportunity for local creatives, and the promise of more quality entertainment for audiences.

Watch out for news about upcoming productions, coming soon.



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DIARY OF EVENTS Activities listed are correct at time of going to press. For listing in the Diary of Events in the December issue please submit items to editorsact@gmail.com before the deadline shown on page 2.

Regular weekly events

Day	Time	Details
Monday	7.30pm	St Asaph Choral Society from 9th Jan., rehearsing Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony in Parish Church. Contact Kath Mitchell-Dawson 07711 675076 or e-mail kath-b@btconnect.com
Tuesday	10am 2-3pm 3-4pm	Aros a Chwarae . Free toddler group for preschool children and their parents/carers. Meet at Llanelwy Community Church on the High Street. See Facebook page @stayandplayllanelwy. Tai Chi at the Parish Church. Contact Ann Sim on 07852 321502 Qigong at the Parish Church. Contact Ann Sim on 07852 321502
Wednesday	6pm 6-7pm 7-8pm	Informal running group ; meet at the Cathedral car park. 5k run, wear high viz gear. Contact Ian Jones on 07775 684171. Exercise with Liz in Parish Church: Facebook Rhuddlan Clubbercise and Fitness with Liz Pilates with Liz in Parish Church: Facebook Rhuddlan Clubbercise and Fitness with Liz
Thursday	1.30pm 2-4pm	Cash Bingo at Llys y Felin community room. Eyes down 2pm Forget-me-not Afternoon in the parish church for people living with dementia. Contact Janet Cameron 01745 583770
Friday	9pm	Live music with local talent at The Plough. Details: www.ploughsa.com @ploughsta

Regular monthly events

1 st Monday	12-3pm	PROBUS club in the Oriel Hotel. Contact Keith on 07388084361 or kl@6fl.net
3 rd Sunday	3-5pm	T Club at the Parish Church. Details on church website. Contact Marion on 01745 590960

One off events

December		
Sunday 4th	11	Messy Church service in the Parish Church
Saturday 10th	10am 7pm	Coffee morning at the Parish Church Handel's Messiah performed by St Asaph Choral Soc. in the Cathedral. Details page 8
Tuesday 13th	9-12	Oasis of calm in the Parish church. An hour or two of peace and quiet for parents and young children, with refreshments.
Saturday 17th	10-12 10-12 7.00	Christmas coffee morning at Neuadd Owen Village Hall, Cefn. Live entertainment, local produce & stalls, Father Christmas. Tel: 540345 Advent Adventure – Llanelwy Community Church. Free Family Fun event with Advent crafts and activities. Refreshments available. Côr Y Penrhyn and Only Boys Aloud Carol Service in Cathedral—details page 8.
Sunday 18th	7.30	Côr Meibion Trelawnyd and Côr Cytgan Clwyd Carol service in the Cathedral Tickets £12 Ring 01745 332708
Friday 23rd	3.30	Christingle making and Christmas crafts in the Parish Church for children and adults
Sunday 18th	6pm	Carols by candlelight in St Mary's Church Cefn. All welcome
Saturday 24th	4pm	Crib and Christingle service in the Parish Church
Saturday 31st	7.30	New Year's Eve Party Neuadd Owen Village Hall, Cefn. Live band, supper, licenced bar. Tickets £25. Booking essential Tel: Karin 07899 840804 or Lorna 07795 422802
January		
Wednesday 4th	10-12.30	Messy Church Holiday Club in the Parish Church
Sun 8th & 29th	11am	Messy Church service in the Parish Church



New Auctioneer of the Year Award

Fiona Shand

Many congratulations to Siôn Eilir Roberts on his recent success in securing the Farmers Guardian **New Auctioneer of the Year** award. Siôn works at Jones Peckover livestock market in St. Asaph and had no knowledge that he had been nominated for the title by local farmers. His interest in stock was nurtured on the family beef and sheep farm at Llandrillo, Corwen, running a commercial flock of 1500 Texel and Welsh mountain breeding ewes and a commercial herd of 50 Limousin cows.

Siôn took an interest in 'live sales' and this enthusiasm was encouraged by the Young Farmers' Federation, where one activity in which Siôn participated was a competition where he was challenged to value ten general items, having to sell one of them before an audience.

After completing his schooling at Ysgol Brynhyfryd, Ruthin, Siôn attended Llysfas College before graduating in 2017 from Aberystwyth University with a degree in Agriculture. Siôn's auctioneering career commenced at Welshpool, where he remained for nearly four years. When the

opportunity arose to return to his native county, Siôn joined Jones Peckover as a senior livestock auctioneer.

During his time with Jones Peckover, Siôn has re-established the cattle section and has since sold nearly 11,000 cattle. Not an easy task in the middle of the Covid pandemic! He has also re-established sales for breeding ewes, selling over 15,000 breeding ewes and lambs to date.

The current edition of Farmers Guardian Magazine quotes Chris Dodds, executive secretary of the Livestock Auctioneers' Association (LAA) as stating, 'These achievements, in such a short space of time and with such a strong focus on serving his farming community, clearly demonstrates that Siôn richly deserves this recognition'

On October 20th, Siôn travelled to the Vox Conference Centre in Birmingham, where his efforts were deservedly recognised.



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Coming soon to St Asaph - the "Community Fridge"!

Marion Hughes

What is it? It offers **free food** from supermarkets which is end of line or is close to its sell by date.

Why do supermarkets supply it? There are 300 "Community Fridges" nationwide, aiming to reduce the amount of food being wasted in landfill. Up to 30% of all food currently is wasted and generates a substantial amount of CO2 and greenhouse gases when it is sent to landfill. It is an environmentally friendly project.

Is it a food bank? No, No, No!

Who can use it? Anyone - no vouchers or referrals are needed. You don't even have to live in St Asaph to use it. Just bring a bag with you!

Is it too good to be true? No it is real -no catches. Check out www.hubhub.org.uk/the-community-fridge

Will it reduce my food bills? Well, yes, because it is free, but we can't promise to supply specific items each week, as it will depend on what is available in the supermarkets for collection by "fridge volunteers".

Where will it be based? In St Asaph Parish Church. It will open once a week for 2 hours initially, and hopefully, start in December. Watch social media and for a poster on the church railings for more details. If it is used well, we'll open twice a week next year.

If I can afford to buy food, can I still use it? Yes, of course because you will be helping the environment, but you might want to make a donation towards the running costs of the project each time. Project money will be managed independently from church funds.

How will it work? Just come when it is open, and if you have to wait your turn, you will be offered a hot drink while you wait. You will be asked a few questions for project records which will not be used to identify you—no names or addresses for example. When you leave, we will weigh your bag so that we can tell project organisers how many tons of food St Asaph has prevented from going to landfill.

How do I find out about it? There is a St Asaph Parish Church Community Fridge facebook page which will be used once we are about to start.

Can I volunteer to help? Contact us via the facebook page or pop down to the church when we are open to find out more information

Hope to see you soon!

Retailers redistributing surplus food across the community fridge network include Co-op, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Waitrose, Costa, Marks & Spencer, Riverford Organic, Spar, and many local businesses. www.hubhub.org.uk



Some of our community fridge volunteers

Stamp Collecting

Alwyn Evans

I have been collecting Queen Elizabeth II fine used stamps on and off for several years and in that time have acquired lots of duplicate commemoratives. I'm sure that there are many people in St Asaph in the same position in which case swapping stamps makes sense and it wouldn't cost anything. I have my duplicate stamps listed and sorted by Stanley Gibbons catalogue numbers (I don't know of any other accepted way) and we could exchange lists by email. I would then select the stamps I would like from the other person's list and they could then choose the same number of stamps from my list (or vice versa.) The number of stamps requested by both parties could be negotiated. We could then either post the stamps to each other or meet in



a mutually agreed place to exchange the stamps. If there is more than one person showing an interest, I would, with the respective owners' permission, circulate the email addresses to all interested parties. I have not concerned myself with phosphors or watermarks. If this is of any interest to you, please email alwynevans@btinternet.com with a list of your swaps.





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Wot no bridge?

John Oliver

A large number of protestors recently gathered on both sides of the former Llanerch bridge to draw attention to the lack of progress in rebuilding the bridge, which was washed away over 22 months ago. Despite wet conditions, the crowd were in good voice, singing a variety of protest songs including the memorable "We're on our way to Trefnant, we're on our way to Trefnant, oh no we're not, oh no we're not!" But behind the songs was a serious concern. Stuart Irvine, a local resident and prominent supporter of the recent protest explained his views to the City Times:



"Following the protest at the Llanerch bridge to highlight lack of progress by DCC on replacing the bridge we have had no response from DCC, which is very disappointing. The DCC proposal for a much larger bridge than the one that was swept away does not reflect the views of the local community. We are calling for a like for like bridge, the old bridge was single lane but DCC are proposing a two lane bridge which will be more expensive. Proposed compulsory purchase for the enlarged bridge will cause further delays and it is unacceptable that our communities on both sides of the bridge are disadvantaged by further delays that could take years. It has been nearly two years since storm Cristoph and we are no closer to having a replacement bridge. We feel that DCC are not taking the wishes of the local community seriously and this seems to be confirmed by their lack of response to our protest. If DCC think we are going to go away and accept the status quo they are sadly mistaken. Further events are being planned and, if necessary, we will embarrass DCC into meaningful engagement with communities on each side of the bridge with our publicity campaign."



After several requests for a response, a spokesperson for Denbighshire County Council said: "The Council fully recognises the frustrations that no replacement bridge has been put in place. However, this is a very complex project and we have moved as quickly as we can to try and find a solution that will meet the needs of the local community."

"We want to assure local residents that work is progressing to get business case funding in the background to find the best solution and we will keep communities updated of progress through a quarterly newsletter. The next issue is due to be published before the first week of December and will provide information on how we have progressed further with this project."

Tai chi and Qigong

Ann Sim

Every Tuesday afternoon a group of people meet in the parish church to learn Taiji and Qigong. Chen Taiji is a martial art which develops a healthy body and uses spiral energy for self defence. Chen taiji is the root of all the styles of Taiji; it was not until the 1990s it became known in the West. Working on the principle of Yin and Yang, it teaches good posture, relaxation of the body and calming of the mind.

Dayan Qigong improves health through gentle movements which improves the Qi (energy) flow. In time, it also improves your flexibility and co-ordination. In Qigong there are a wide range of movements which enables us to experience a deeper relaxation.

Both disciplines may appear slow, but we work on the principle that if you can do your movements clearly and slowly, it is then easy to do them faster once you understand how the movements work. The classes are ongoing to enable students to learn at their own pace with no pressure. All ages and abilities are welcome.



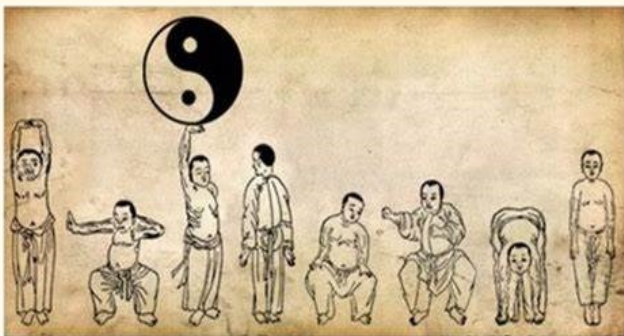
Some quotes from students:

"Qigong has given me good balance and posture as well as a positive attitude." Yve.

"I saw the classes as a way forward for me after recovering from a serious illness. It is a great way to relax in a calming environment. Each session allows time to focus on making me feel calm, ready to focus on work." Joanne.

"My flexibility and core strength has returned to the level of my climbing days. The classes are an ongoing mental work out. My balance and leg strength continues to improve." Chris.

For further details, contact Ann Sim on 07852 321502



Winter in the garden

Chris Jones

I look out of my window on a cold, wet and windy morning, the leaves are scattered everywhere, the last few rose petals are clinging on and the starlings are noisily chattering and gorging on the rowan berries. The garden is shutting down after a long, hot summer.

Work in the garden tends to quieten down but we can still enjoy its visitors. The swallows and swifts have long since flown to warmer countries but these are now replaced in winter by another set of visitors who come from the much colder areas of Scandinavia. Fieldfares and Redwings which are members of the thrush family often arrive in flocks in search of food. It has been an exceptional year for fruit and nuts, and beech mast (the fruit of the beech tree) is a favourite food of bramblings, small birds similar to chaffinches. This year we may see a "waxwing winter" which



Waxwing. Photo: Angela Tulloch

occurs every few years when the lack or failure of the rowan berry crop in Europe causes the birds to fly further in search of food. They are very striking looking birds and may appear anywhere, in parks, near rivers or even in gardens. This phenomenon is known as an "irruption".

Birds are our allies and by feeding them during winter we are rewarded by them eating unwelcome visitors in the spring that often plague the spring and summer blooms.

To encourage birds in the garden why not create a feeding station so you can watch all their activity? Make sure you keep the bird feeders full and also provide fresh water for birds to drink and bathe in. You could also make some fat cakes and hang them up to tempt the birds, this

provides much needed nourishment and you

may be rewarded by the spectacle of hungry birds flocking to your garden. Melt some lard in a saucepan and a mixture of breadcrumbs, oats, peanuts, dried fruit, grated cheese and bird seeds, mix it well until the entire melted lad has been absorbed. Then using some old yogurt pots or plastic cups make a hole at the bottom and thread some string or garden twine. Pack the mixture in as solidly as you can and put in the fridge to set overnight. When it is solid, remove the cup or yogurt pot, make a big knot at one end of the string and hang it up on a branch, small birds will love it. Thus you can cater for a variety of birds' feeding habits. Goldfinches love the black Niger seeds, blue tits perform acrobatics on the feeders and the bossy territorial robin trying to claim his feeding rights often ends up eating what is discarded on the ground. An ever changing live show to watch from the warmth of the home.

It's December and our thoughts naturally turn to Christmas and festive greenery. Although the summer colour is a distant memory, there are many seasonal shrubs that can provide colour and foliage which come to the fore at this time of year. Firethorn (*Pyracantha*) and Cotoneaster with their coloured berries are much loved by the birds and provide colour and structure in the garden.

The holly is traditionally used to adorn the home with festive greenery. Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) was also popular as a Christmas decoration; legend has it that the herb's purple colour is derived from the robe of the Virgin Mary. Pine cones and ivy can be collected, seed heads and nuts can be wired or tied for decoration.



Although many opt for a reusable artificial tree, the smell of a natural Christmas tree will evoke many a memory. To buy a suitable tree there are a few things to remember. The first thing is to take a good look at your tree of choice - does it look fresh and springy and is not already dropping any needles? All trees look small enough outside but don't be fooled and measure your space before buying. Most trees are netted so when you carry it home on your car let the top of the tree face backwards so as not to incur any damage by wind in transit. Give it a good soak in a bucket overnight as this helps it to keep its needles on. A stand which allows you to give it some water can be topped up whilst in the house, as it will still take up water. When Christmas is over it can be collected for free for recycling (St Kentigern have a scheme for this) or you can shred it and use it as mulch around shrubs and trees.



fieldfare



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Rotary Christmas Float itinerary

Look out and listen out for the Rotary Christmas float as it travels around. A busy programme for Santa and his elves!

3rd & 4th Dec – Sainsbury's (Rotary Club of Rhyl)
 10th & 11th Dec – ASDA Rhyl (Rotary Club of Rhyl)
 12th Dec – 6-8pm - Rhualt, Tai Cochion & Roe Park
 13th Dec – 6-8pm Bryn Elwy, Livingstone Pl., Clwydian Pk
 14th Dec 6-8pm Bishop's Walk
 16th Dec – 12-4pm Co-op St Asaph
 17th Dec – 10-4pm Co-op St Asaph
 18th Dec – Morrisons Rhyl (Rotary Club of Rhyl)
 19th Dec – 6-8pm – Llys-y-Felin & Mount Road
 20th Dec – 6-8pm - Heol Esgob & Llwyn Elwy



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Winter activities at St Asaph allotment

Lonely or isolated? Depressed or anxious? Want to learn something new?

A programme of weekly activities could be just the thing to get you out of the house during the winter months - and it could help you to maintain or regain good mental health.

Vale of Clwyd Mind runs an allotment project at Roe Plas Meadow during the Spring, summer and autumn months – but for now the growing season is 'on hold' until March.

Instead, crafts and other rural style activities are being held in and around the community building adjacent to the allotments every Wednesday from 10am – 12 noon. Why not join us to take part in Christmas activities such as making rag wreaths and making items to give as gifts such as painted bird feeders, pottery and pyrography. When the weather allows you could be involved in river walks, building an insect house, bench repairs or tidying the allotment.

All are welcome – and making new friends and learning interesting skills might just tempt you to join the allotment group when it reopens in March.

For further information and directions contact Jenny Bolton on 01745 351635 / 01745 812461

Christine Southern



Rotary Youth Leadership Award



Ysgol Glan Clwyd student Warren Howells receiving his certificate from President Gareth Rowlands after giving a presentation to St Asaph Rotary about his RYLA experience

The Rotary Club of St Asaph has a legacy of sponsoring students to attend this programme held at the Arthog Outdoor Centre, near Dolgellau in August each year. For many years the Club has been committed to supporting local young people to develop their skills and confidence in readiness for working life. The course involves a range of outdoor activities including orienteering, caving, canoeing, climbing and abseiling. There is syndicate work required in planning exercises and to prepare group presentations as well as short seminars. The course culminates with an all-day event with the teams competing in a set of tasks employing all the skills learned during the week.

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The Rotary Club of St Asaph

St Asaph Rotary will be holding its final club meeting in December after deciding to close. Like many clubs in the Rotary organisation it was hit by a perfect storm of Covid which meant it was unable to function properly for over two years - and a declining membership due to lack of newer younger members. The very popular Christmas float around St Asaph will still be going ahead and they are urging residents to donate generously for one last time.

Rotary President Gareth Rowlands said " Although this is a sad occasion, we are proud that over the last 39 years St Asaph Rotary has raised over £200,000 for more than 20 different charities including St Kentigern Hospice and Tŷ Gobaith. I'd like to thank both Rotarians past and present for all their efforts, and all the residents of St Asaph and nearby for their support."

The club started in 1983 when two Rotarians from the Rhyl club coached a group of twenty-eight business and professional men (men only in those days!) from St Asaph, and the surrounding area, in the intricacies of the Rotary movement. After several months, this group held an inaugural dinner in a St Asaph hotel on 1st December 1983. By 2nd of February 1984, they were ready to start work and a Charter Certificate was issued to THE ROTARY CLUB OF ST ASAPH. Over the next few years, the number of Rotarians grew to over forty, and the Club met in a local hostelry every week for a meal and to discuss the work programme for the months ahead. The Club frequently had an after-dinner talk by an invited speaker or sometimes by one of its own members.

One project which was adopted by the Club was Polio Plus. This is an international Rotary exercise in which funds are raised to eradicate polio worldwide and a group from the Club went on a Beaujolais Run to raise money for this cause.

In 1993 an intrepid quartet of St Asaph Rotarians embarked on the Arctic Auto Challenge, a motor rally through Northern Europe starting in Paris then via Vienna, Warsaw, the Baltic States and the Arctic Circle. Return journey was via Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Belgium, and France. The remainder of the Club operated a "Guess the Mileage" competition, selling entries all over the Rotary District, and raising over £5,500 for Hope House/Tŷ Gobaith.

The Club has also made donations to several international projects. Activities have ranged from supplying funds and support to Tamil Nadu in India, helping to finance the drilling of wells for clean drinking water in Africa and helping to build and equip a school for disadvantaged children in Nepal.

The Club engaged itself in community, youth, and vocational projects in the St Asaph area. Many local students have benefitted from participating in the Rotary Youth Leadership Award and "mock interviews" to help them later in life when seeking employment.

In 2012 the Club was pleased to change its name from The Rotary Club of St Asaph, to its present name, in recognition of the granting of city status to the town. The Club has continued to work to raise funds for the two local Hospices, St Kentigern and Hope House/Tŷ Gobaith. A number of St Asaph Rotarians have visited clubs in many other countries including Australia, America, Caribbean, Ethiopia, India and closer to home in Belgium, France, Germany, Malta and Spain where they invariably received warm welcomes from fellow Rotarians.

One major success for the Club has been the Summer Fayre held in the grounds of Llanerch Hall near Trefnant over a number of years. Family groups attended in good numbers and enjoyed a day out, with many types of entertainment, whilst making a significant contribution to Club funds.

The annual Christmas Float, which has visited all areas of St Asaph and surrounding villages, has been a popular local event, the joint objects being to give pleasure to small children and their parents while raising much-needed funds for the Club's charitable work.

John Carson



Rotary originals. Front row: Paul Evers-Swindell, Bob Hughes, Peter Williams, Ron Organ, Andrew Nicol, Dan Jones. **Second row:** Aelwyn Evans, Barry Seaman, Dewi Roberts, John Caterall, Ossie Blythin, Trefor Jones (TOJ), Carl Pierce, Tom, Alex Wilson. **Third row:** Malcolm Green, Gareth Rowlands, Denys Owen, Andrew Thomas, Phil Goodwill, Idloes Jones, Tom Hodgson. **Back row:** Bryn Jones, Clive Bickley, Colin Robertson.





VP infant school report

Kate Langford

Tinsel, fairy lights and glitter ... Christmas prep underway at the VP!

The children have been working extremely hard on their Christmas concert performances Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are all performing traditional Nativity concerts – we would like to thank the Cathedral for hosting our concerts this year. Nursery children will perform Christmas songs in school and have a Christmas craft morning with their families. We are all looking forward to sharing the magic of Christmas together as a school family.

Anti-bullying week, Be Bright Be Seen and Children in Need

The children took part in Anti-bullying week by wearing odd socks to school. We spoke about the importance of kindness and being a kind friend. The children learned about speaking out against bullying and how to keep safe.

We enjoyed wearing our brightest clothes for our Be Bright Be Seen event which taught the children about the importance of wearing bright or reflective clothing. In Autumn and Winter, it gets darker much earlier and thinking about what we wear can be important in keeping us safe.

As always Children in Need is a well-loved event at the VP and we would like to thank our families for their generosity. We dressed up in our favourite fancy dress costumes or something spotty to raise money for children less fortunate than ourselves.

Nursery applications for September 2023

A polite reminder to any families with children born between 1st September 2019 and 31st August 2020. Your child is eligible to attend Nursery class from September 2023, apply for a place at our Nursery using the Denbighshire website. The closing date for Nursery applications is 17th February 2023.



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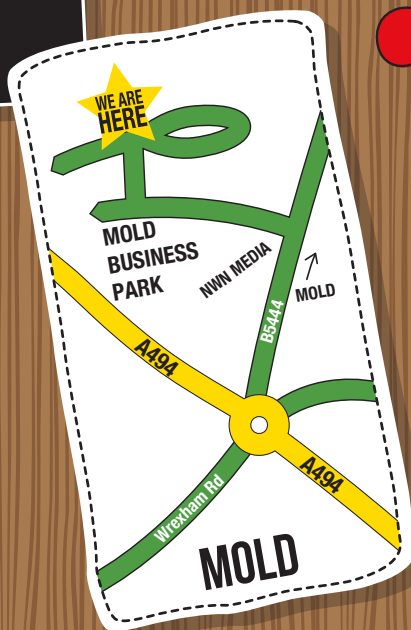
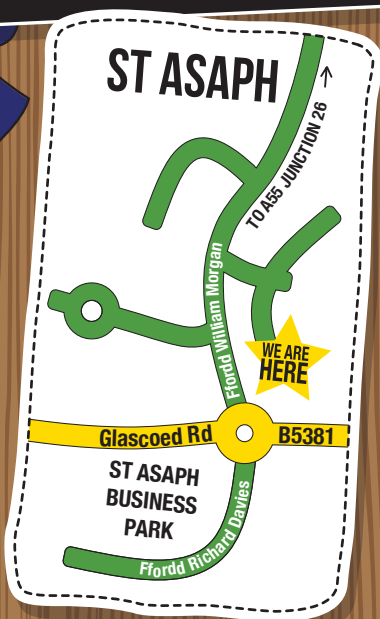
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Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog

Laura Martin

This term we have been involved in a wide range of activities and experiences! We have recognised Anti-Bullying Week by wearing our odd socks and doing what we can to 'reach out' to others with our youngest children baking and delivering cakes to the local community.

We also recognised Road Safety Week and spent time looking at areas of concern in our locality and discussed ways in which we could help. Our older children created videos to share with others about the importance of the Green Cross Code and driving safely around our school.



Two of our pupils represented the school beautifully at the Remembrance Sunday Service and both laid a wreath on behalf of our whole school community.

We have welcomed in a number of professionals this term to talk to our Innovators about their work as part of the class topic on the 5 ways to well-being. The children thoroughly enjoyed finding out more about Llaeth Y Llan, being a nurse and a paramedic as well as other really interesting jobs – a huge thank you to those who gave up their time to support us.

We are now fully in Christmas mode and are looking forward to sharing our concerts with families and friends! We have lots of fun activities planned over the coming weeks to ensure we are all in the festive spirit. Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas with loved ones and a safe new year.



Ysgol Esgob Morgan

Jodie Martin

CPR! CPR! CPR! This term staff at Esgob Morgan took part in defibrillator training. Thanks to Tomos Hughes, Welsh Ambulance PADS Support Officer for a very insightful session on how to use a defibrillator and highlighting the importance of administering CPR quickly to a casualty. All pupils will have the chance to take part in first aid training later on this term.



Sports back in action: It has been great to get back to competitive sport and our pupils have shown huge enthusiasm. Our girls netball team competed in the URDD at Ysgol Glan Clwyd, the boys football team competed in Ruthin against schools from across the Vale of Clwyd and 7 pupils across all year groups represented us in the Denbighshire Cross Country Event, with 3 pupils progressing to the finals. A special mention to Isla who finished 2nd overall for her age group.

Sponsored walk: All pupils took part in our annual sponsored walk back in October raising over £650 for our school. Thank you to everyone for sponsoring our pupils, our school parliament will be deciding how to spend the money very soon!

Autism awareness: Way back in 2016 we were very proud to be the first school in Denbighshire to become an autism friendly school, and once again all pupils and staff have taken part in autism friendly workshops with autism Wales helping to increase their awareness and understanding of autism. Everyone took their superhero pledge and received a certificate. Da iawn pawb!

YMA O HYD! Pupils are enjoying supporting Cymru in their World Cup journey, taking advantage of the learning opportunities across the areas of learning. Year 6 have enjoyed analysing team data using spreadsheets and year 3 have been identifying odd and even numbers used throughout the big games! Another exciting event was taking part in the URDD Jambori with the whole school enjoying singing along with other schools across Wales to celebrate the historic event of the World Cup.



Ysgol Glan Clwyd

Meryl Pierce

School Council have had a busy term so far. After the prefects gave a presentation to all pupils about the purpose and structure of the Council, classes proceeded to elect representatives. With almost 90 students elected to the Council this was an opportunity for a significant percentage of our students to contribute to the important process *The Student's Voice*. Four of the Council leaders travelled to Llangollen recently to participate in the county meeting of school councils.



Celebrate Reading Week. A week of celebrating reading was held to share with pupils the sheer joy of being engrossed in a good book. As part of the event, each pupil had been given a £7 book token as a gift from Welsh Government, and there was a chance to use it at a temporary bookstall. It was a week bubbling with activities, with staff members sharing their favourite book choices and their experiences as readers. The highlight of the week was an "In Character" day, when staff dressed up as characters from books, and were judged by pupils at dinnertime on their choice, and a vote was held to choose the best character!

The Riding Club. Members of the riding club had the opportunity to practise jumping skills with their ponies during a Saturday morning session at the pony-trekking centre in Hafod, Trefnant organised by the PE department. In a subsequent session, an inter-school riding competition was held when pupils from Myddelton College joined members of the school riding club in competition.



Open Evening. It was a busy whirl in every part of the school on October 6th when we opened the doors to Yrs 5 & 6 and their parents. Widely varying activities were offered by subject teachers, with the chance not only to get a taster of the lesson contents, but also to taste many delicacies as well, including cakes prepared there and then by Y10 in the technology department. One of the highlights was meeting a new-born calf in the Biology department!

Microbits Workshop Y7 pupils had the chance to take part in the Microbits Workshop EESW (Engineering Experience Scheme Wales). During the workshop, the pupils worked together to programme Microbits to control a robot's movements. Everyone was delighted to experiment with different methods of programming.



Nature Club It was good to see an encouraging number of Ys 7&8 joining the new Nature Club.

New members have been busy designing their badges and have been discussing plans for the year ahead. The Club has also been planning to hold a cake stall to raise money for Enfys charity, and also to finance their badges!



Cogurdd October 21st was an exciting day in YGC as the first round of the Cogurdd cooking competition was held. Lydia Jones and Tesni Jones from Y9 had to prepare a "Super-duper Salad" and Erin Plumb had to prepare a burger of her choice. The standard was extremely high and the food was both attractive and very tasty. Congratulations and best wishes to the three girls for the next round.

Thanksgiving Service It was good to revive one of the school's traditions, the Thanksgiving Service at the cathedral. We had lovely music and readings, including

original work by Ava Williams Y9, and the Y7 choir under the direction of Mr Gethin Morgan crowned the event.

Concert and workshop "Make a noise" All pupils in Yrs 7,8 &9 had the chance to attend a fun concert by the Co-operative Music Service of Denbighshire. There was an opportunity to enjoy a variety of music, with professional musicians live at the school theatre, along with a few familiar faces joining in. It was certainly a day to remember and a chance to celebrate and promote music. The school recognises that learning to play an instrument offers such a lot—developing confidence, exercising one's memory, and widening the social circles to name but a few.

Geography fieldwork Pupils from Y11 had geography field experience visiting Criccieth beach. It was a great chance to learn about embankments and flood walls and see in real life the processes that they had been taught about in class! A second successful day was spent in the Vale of Clwyd studying inequalities in access to services from Denbigh, Henllan, St Asaph and Prestatyn. Students studied environmental quality, pedestrian flows, the services offered and the accessibility of the area. It was great to undertake geography out in the field again!



Dressage success for Izzi and Lucy!

St Asaph-based dressage rider Isabela Gheorghiu has been selected for the UK national training pathway for up-and-coming equestrian athletes. Isabela (Izzi) is 17 and is currently studying for A Levels at St Brigid's School in Denbigh. She was selected to represent Wales on the British Dressage Wales Youth Team this year.

With her 11-year-old Welsh Section D pony Lucy (Gwallwy Gwawr) Izzi secured an individual 2nd place for Wales in the B+ level of Youth Inter Regional Championship in May 2022. They secured individual 9th place out of 39 national combinations at Elementary level in the Youth Home International championship in August, and their BD Wales 'Team Coch' secured Team 8th nationally.

Izzi was delighted to be selected for the British Dressage Foundation Academy. She is one of 45 riders in the UK – one of 8 in Wales – who are undergoing intensive training weekends with top national trainers to improve their performance as all-round equestrian athletes. The Foundation Academy is the training pathway for the National Academy where only 12 athletes are selected per year.

But Izzi is currently having to seek sponsorship support to help with training and development, because Welsh Sports funding currently excludes young equestrians, although riders in England and Scotland can get funding for the training pathway. 'I would be very grateful for sponsorship if there are any local businesses or organisations interested in helping me, as my training and travel costs are increasing as I progress along the development pathway,' said Izzi. 'The costs of the Foundation Academy this year are around £800. I am really disappointed that young riders are excluded from Welsh sports funding but we hope we might be able to change that for the future.' Izzi is very grateful to have already received an offer of support from **Denbighshire Leisure** who have offered her an Elite membership and training support for national athletes.

Izzi would be happy to promote sponsors on her dedicated Facebook page – *Izzi Gheorghiu Equestrian*. 'Getting sponsorship support would help me get to the next stage in my equestrian career,' said Izzi. "If I work hard enough and progress this autumn, I hope I might be able to be considered for the National Academy. It has been such a steep learning curve but I am so proud of what Lucy and I have already achieved this year alone."



Lucy and Izzi



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Mayor Colin Hardie presenting trophies at the presentation evening. Left to right: Ben Murphy, 2nd XI batting, Nathanael Scott, 1st XI batting, and Danny Ryan, 1st XI bowling.

Cricket Club Presentation evening.

Gareth O Williams, club secretary

Gareth Ryan, club chairman, commented: "the 2022 season has been another wonderful year for the Cricket Club. Whilst the 1st XI failed narrowly to successfully defend the Premier Division League title that they so superbly won in 2021, they nevertheless put up a quite brilliant performance by winning a remarkable 20 league games out of 22. However, they were just pipped at the post by Menai Bridge who only lost 1 league match all season when they fell to a 6-wicket defeat to the Saints in July.

Elwy Grove remains quite a fortress for the Saints senior side as they have not lost a home league match since back in the 2018 season. In 2022 the 1st XI entered the ECB Royal London National Knockout Competition for the very first time. Featuring the strongest club sides across England and Wales the Saints acquitted themselves with distinction and reached the final 32 before falling away to a Nantwich side that has reached the final in 2 of the last 3 seasons. A win at home to Shrewsbury and then a memorable win away to a strong Staffordshire based team at Longton CC were particular stand out moments.

During the season every member of the 1st XI played a part in their success, and it was very much a team performance with spirit across the side continuing to prosper. Once gain intelligently led by skipper William Ryan the team showed that they are a match for any team in the Country. A measure of how strong the team is can be seen by the number of the squad that gained representative honours during the course of the season. Jason Foulkes and Matthew Ryan gained full Welsh international honours whilst William Ryan, Danny Ryan, Duncan Midgley, Nathanael Scott, Dan Evans, Jason Foulkes and Matthew Ryan represented the newly formed Wales National County (North) side with distinction.

Meanwhile the Club's 2nd XI was once again well led by skipper Ben Murphy and whilst the results might have lacked some consistency, the team finished in a promising mid-table position in Division 2 where they played against some Club 1st teams. The main purpose of the 2nd team is to blood some younger players and help to give them an opportunity to progress to the 1st team at some future point in time. In the 2022 season this was very much in prominence as a number of the successful Under 15's team were given the chance to gain experience of senior league cricket, which bodes very well for the future.

Once again, one of the major successes of the season was the continued growth of the Club's junior section with the ECB All Stars Programme being fully subscribed. In addition, the age groups teams at Under 9's Under 11's and Under 15's acquitted themselves admirably throughout the season and fulfilled every fixture which is to be commended. Special thanks go to the Club's Junior Development Officer, Duncan Midgley and all the senior players and coaches who give up their time voluntarily to help out on training nights and providing quality coaching to all the junior members.

Any successful Sports Club is reliant on the hard work of those officers and members that work 'behind the scenes' to ensure that sport continues to prosper and grow. One only has to look at the superb facilities now on show at Elwy Grove to see how successful the Cricket Club is on this front. We are now the envy of most Clubs across the UK and everyone who has and continues to play their part in this success is to be congratulated.

As 2022 ends, it has been another successful year for St Asaph Cricket Club, both on and off the field of play. The Club continues to grow and to reflect this a 3rd senior team will be entered into the North Wales Sunday League in 2023 and this will give the up-and-coming juniors further opportunity to mix with some senior players and help them to continue their progression.



Will Ryan's phenomenal 151 not out guided Wales NC North to an unforgettable victory over Shropshire

Photo: Ray Hibbs



Saints vs Llandudno Junction



St Asaph Football Club

John Roberts

Both Senior teams are maintaining their fine run of form. The first team are still top of the the NWCFA Premier League and the Reserves lie second in the NWCFA Reserves League following an exciting 1-1 draw in their match with League Leaders Penmaenmawr Phoenix. The first team have also reached the semi final of both the Cookson Cup with an excellent 3-0 win over Llandudno Junction and the Intermediate Cup after a 4-0 over Mochdre Sport. It's also good to see more spectators coming to our home matches as the team continue their winning run. Both teams value the support they receive from our spectators.



Keeper Luke Jones goes for distance!

Both senior and junior football will have a short winter break between December 17th and January 7th. Our junior section continues to thrive and it's a pleasure to go down to Roe Plas on a Sunday morning when a number of the teams have home fixtures to see the place full of spectators supporting the young boys and girls enjoying their matches which bodes well for our senior teams in years to come. We have dedicated coaches who give up their time to train their teams more or less throughout the year and prepare them for their matches.



Captain Dan Williams with Alun Jones of the Barrow, and the sponsored track suit top.



Dreigiau



Llewod