

Shire

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

No. 646 - November 2025 www.shire.org.uk 5,000 copies monthly

Have you got a job that needs doing? Go to YOUR LOCAL TRADESPEOPLE section on pages 18-19 to find a local business who can help.

Autumnal
Christmas Fayre on
Saturday 22nd November
at Shirehampton Public Hall
from 10am until 3pm & meet &
greet with Father Christmas and
Janet The Elf

Shirehampton Big Clean
& New Deliverers Urgently
Needed to Help Deliver
Shire - See page 4.

Santa Dashes to Save Shire Illuminations

by Paul
McMillan

You may be surprised to learn that our village Christmas lights, which do so much to brighten our lives, are entirely the work of a group of around 10 volunteers who fundraise and organise the installation. There is no funding from the council; in fact, they charge for a licence. This year, the volunteers have faced serious challenges and now, more than ever, they need the support and help of the community to make sure that we can continue to enjoy our illuminations in the years ahead.

Here is what two of the volunteers, **Louise White** and **Julie Watson** said about the situation:

“As the festive season approaches, we find ourselves needing to replace old lights that have brought joy to our community. Unfortunately, some of these

lights have been vandalized, and we are also faced with additional costs such as license fees and storage expenses. We are incredibly grateful for the support we receive from local businesses and community members

Continues on page 8.



Scan this code to open Shire Illuminations JustGiving page or open JustGiving in your browser and search for Light Shire Village.



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Shire

We hold regular monthly meetings on the first Monday of each month at 6pm in Shirehampton library. All welcome!

Official address: The Library, Public Hall, Station Road, Shirehampton, Bristol BS11 9TU.
Please contact Shire on: chairperson@shire.org.uk

‘SHIRE’ Contact Details
Web address: www.shire.org.uk
Submit articles: editor@shire.org.uk
Sport & Activities: sports@shire.org.uk or 07981 927787
Advertising: adverts@shire.org.uk or 07742 804737
Finances: treasurer@shire.org.uk
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Photographers: Kathryn Courtney, Bob Pitchford

N.B. To meet the deadline with our typesetters, all written copy should be submitted by email or to the Library by the **10th of the month** before it appears in print, or it may not be included in the next edition. **While advertisements in this paper are accepted in good faith, readers are advised to make their own enquiries and assessment.** We request that all adverts are supplied in the correct format and size or there may be a charge should you require artwork to be created. Price on application. Unless otherwise stated, all material appearing in SHIRE is the copyright of SHIRE Publications. Please ensure photographs submitted with articles are cleared for use and permission sought especially when featuring individuals including children. The Shire cannot accept responsibility if photos are published in error where permission for use has been not sought. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Shire. All information correct at time of going to press to the best of Shire’s knowledge.

EDITORIAL POLICY

We welcome contributions for publication in ‘SHIRE’ but reserve the right to edit any copy received. Articles should not exceed 450 words. Any material published is at the editor’s discretion and may also be included on our website www.shire.org.uk unless the copy is clearly marked ‘not to be included on the world wide web’.
Contributions submitted to: editor@shire.org.uk
For our current privacy policy visit our website at www.shire.org.uk/privacy_policy

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REGULAR EVENTS IN SHIREHAMPTON

SHIREHAMPTON PUBLIC HALL REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

MONDAY	Twyford Art Club (Except August)	10am-12noon	Main Hall
TUESDAY	The Jolly Melodies Music Company (Term Time) Line Dancing Community Living Room Bereavement Support (1st Tues) Puppy Training	10am-12noon 2-3pm 3-5pm 5.30-7pm 6-8pm	Main Hall Main Hall Library Library Main Hall
WEDNESDAY	Healing Rooms (2nd Weds) Over 75s Exercise Extraordinary Links (Term Time) Counselling Women’s Fellowship (2nd and 4th Weds) Shire Stitchers (3rd Weds)	10.30am-1.30pm 2-3pm 3.30-5.30pm 6.30-7.30pm 7.30-9.30pm 7.30-9.30pm	Main Hall Main Hall Main Hall Springfield Main Hall Main Hall
THURSDAY	Shire Social Group Healing Rooms Tai Chi Family History Group (2nd Thurs) Model Railway Club	10am-12noon 10.30am-1.30pm 2-3pm 6-8pm 7-10pm	Bradley Room Main Hall Main Hall Library Club Room
FRIDAY	Shire Stitchers (1st Friday)	10am-12noon	Bradley Room
SATURDAY	(Private and Public Functions)		
SUNDAY	Church of Grace	11am-4pm	Main Hall & Springfield

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

Avonmouth Ladies Club

We meet on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday at
Avonmouth Community Centre
2.30-4.30pm
(But not in January & February)
A warm welcome awaits
For information contact Julie on: 07814 183976

SHIRE ADVICE SERVICE

Free Advice Sessions
Shirehampton Health Centre, Pembroke Road,
Shirehampton
Tuesdays from 10am
To make an appointment call 0117 9515751

Notice to Our Readers and Advertisers

We really appreciate and look forward to receiving your articles for our paper.

Please keep your articles to max 450 words (or consider less if submitting with a large number of photos). Photographs need to be of good quality and resolution for printing.

It really helps keep our community connected. Please note however that the deadline for receiving your articles or advertisements is the *10th of each month.*

Do you have some spare time that you are looking to fill?
Looking for a rewarding local community group to join?
Enjoy finding out the news before it happens?

SHIRE NEEDS YOU!

Why not join the Shire newspaper committee!

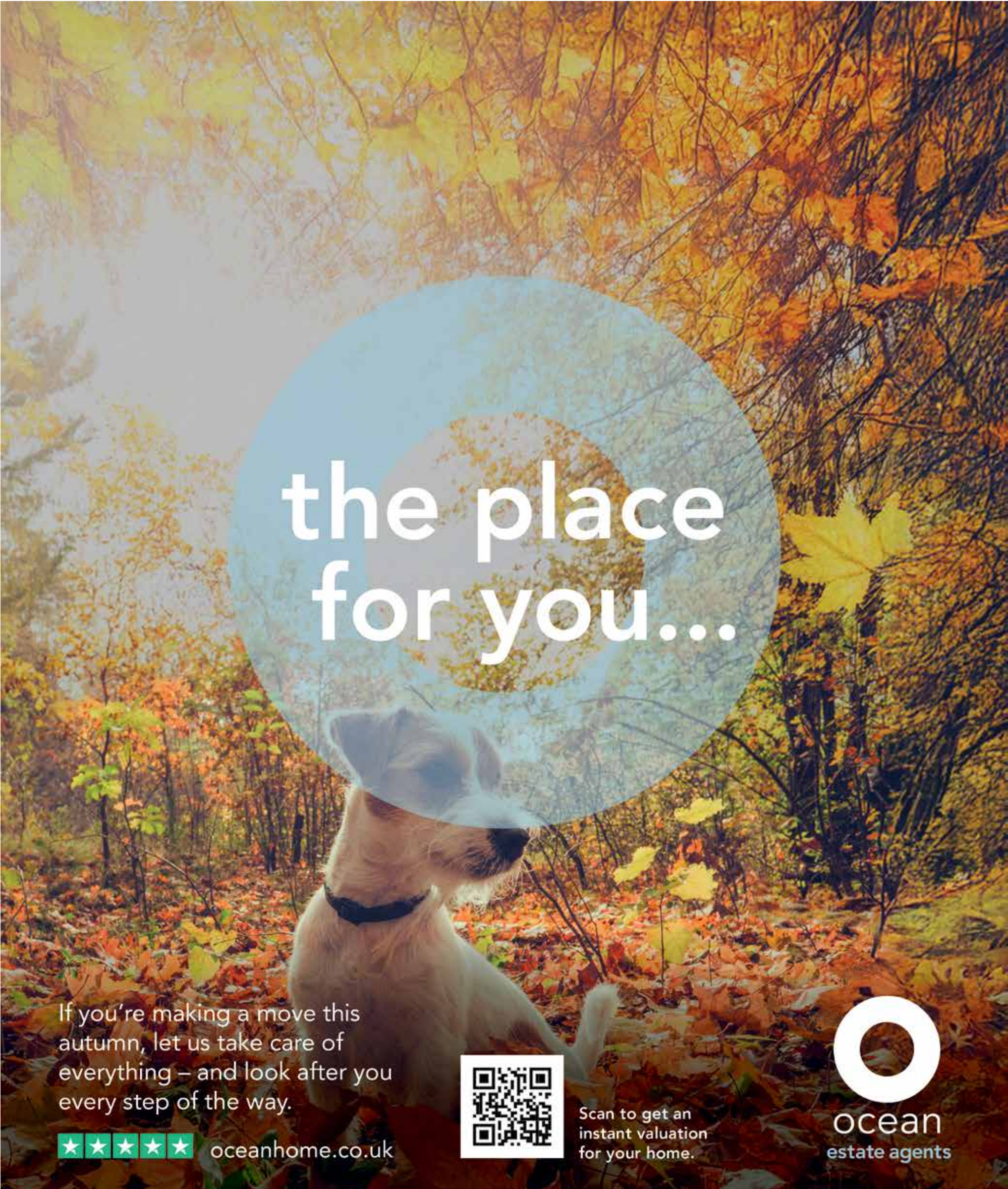
We’re a relaxed, supportive and friendly team working to bring an interesting and useful community newspaper to Shire.

We have lots of tasks and activities you can get involved in – editing, distribution, reporting, advertising – the list is endless.

We’re always open to new ideas on what we should be including and reporting on too – so if you have things you want to share please get in touch.

If this sounds like your thing, and you’d like to get involved please reach out to the chairpersons mailbox (chairperson@shire.org.uk) or pop along to one of our monthly meetings on the 1st Monday of each month at 6pm in Shirehampton library.

Come on, join us, you know you want to!



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The Shire Community Pages

Shirehampton Big Clean

Attention All you wonderful Litter Pickers. Shirehampton Action are planning another Shirehampton Big Clean.

- 1. Please save the date: Sunday 23rd November 10-4pm.** (More Information and a reminder will be sent nearer the time.)

2. Spread the word: Please spread the word and encourage as many people as possible to join in. I will be emailing a poster shortly so please put it up everywhere and anywhere so we can get as many people as possible. If there are groups or societies which would appreciate a personal visit then please let me know.

3. FixMyStreet: Use the **FixMyStreet** app to report any areas of fly tipping so **Bristol Waste** can clear those areas as they appear.
- 4. Ideas:** If you have any ideas of way to make *the Big Clean* more successful then please do not hesitate to let me know.

Reminder: Normal Litter Picking - Thursday 16th October meeting at the Shirehampton Public Hall at 10:30.

Many thanks for your support and look forward to see you in November.

Nick Mortell, Treasurer, Shirehampton Action

The Shire Needs You!

We urgently need new deliverers for the following routes in SHIREHAMPTON:

- **PORTWAY TO START OF WEST TOWN RD.** Nos 500 to 634. (67 papers)
- **PORTWAY FROM RIVER SIDE OF WOODWELL RD - TOWARDS THE STATION** (30 homes)
- **OLD BARROWHILL HILL— BOTH SIDES** (50 papers)

Please contact Bobbie, on 07811 385 385 if you are free on the last Friday and weekend of each month, please consider volunteering to help these residents receive their “Shire”.



Have you heard of Space4Makers? If not, read on!

Part of the *Social Justice Hub at St Andrews Church in Avonmouth*, Space4Makers is a wood workshop which runs daytime sessions for adults, Monday to Thursday. Set up in 2021 and funded by local business, the workshop is fully kitted out with a wide range of hand tools and wood working machines as well as a laser cutting & engraving system.

Space4Makers is a relaxed and welcoming place for local people to come and learn new skills, brush up on old ones and meet new people. Sessions are given free of charge to those living locally so that anyone can get involved. Participants make a wide range of projects from coaster sets and pen holders to more involved projects such as a bedside cabinet or jewellery box. No prior experience of woodwork is needed; our skilled team of tutors and volunteers will work alongside you

to bring your ideas to life or provide some inspiration if you are not sure where to start!

Get in touch today to find out more and to arrange an informal visit to see for yourself. Visit our webpage at www.bristolnorthwestfoodbank.org.uk/workshop or email space4makers@bristolnwfoodbank.org.uk.

Clare Milne, Administrator - Space4Makers Workshop

Shire-doku & Shire Kids' Corner

Puzzle compiled by Jack Jefferies.

								1
2			1					
	3		5	2			6	
	9			4		7		
8		1		7		6		
							5	
	7					5	1	
	4		3				2	
6		3						

Children's Quiz

1. What goes up but never back down?
2. What runs around the back garden but never moves?
3. What can you catch but never throw?
4. What has many rings but no fingers?
5. What kind of lion never roars?
6. What has a bottom at the top?
7. What has a head and tail but no body?
8. Why are teddy bears never hungry?
9. What has hands and a face but no arms or legs?
10. Grandpa went for a walk and it started raining. He didn't have an umbrella or hat. When he got home, he was soaking wet but not a hair on his head was wet. Why?

Solutions on page 6.



Do you have you catering qualifications?
Do you enjoy helping people who have learning difficulties?

We have a vacancy for a chef/trainer in Shirehampton, Tuesdays, £14.50 ph.

Email info@alfacc.org.uk or phone Chris on 0794 1580 802 to discuss.

Closing date for applications 17th November.



New Chairman at Shirehampton Model Railway Club

Many will know *John Yorke*, long-term Chairman and original member of SMRC which was founded in 1992. After many years John is stepping down and *Andy Bird* is taking over. Andy has been Secretary for the last ten years and has been instrumental in modernising the club. John continues as exhibition manager.

We meet Thursday's from 19:30hrs at Shirehampton Public Hall, 32 Station Road, Bristol BS11 9TX. New members are always welcome. See our website shirehamptonmrc.com for more details.

We wish Andy and John every success in their new roles.

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ABTA **ATOL**

COTSWOLD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
DURSLEY ROAD, BS11 9XH

Christmas Craft Fair

Saturday
15th November
10am to 1pm

Tea/coffee and bacon and egg rolls

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We especially enjoy spreading community news and we love to hear from all our readers. Please, send in your letters and stories to editor@shire.org.uk or deliver to The Library at The Public Hall.

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

Many thanks.

Personal Announcements

Do you wish to announce a personal or family celebration, marriage or death?

To book contact: adverts@shire.org.uk
Prices Start from £7.50

Phyllis Weston



Passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on 27th September 2025, aged 92 years.

A much-loved Mum, Nan, Great-Nan and Great-Great-Nan. She will be deeply missed by all who loved her.

Rest in peace.

Happy Diamond Wedding Anniversary to Bill & Lynn Constable



As you celebrate 60 years of marriage.

All our love on your special milestone from Donna, Tim, Lottie and Flossie xxx

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

I am a local Shire resident and a Personal Trainer who can help you to achieve your goals without the need to attend a gym. Whatever your age or ability I can help:

- Improve health and fitness level
- Improve muscle tone and bone density
- Improve mobility and coordination

Strongfirst Kettlebell Instructor.
Specialist wellness coach for perimenopausal and beyond females.

Individual programme to suit you, your goals and your level of fitness. Hope to see you soon! *Linda x x*

Weekly classes - just come along - no need to book:

- Kettlebells are Monday 5.15 - 6.15pm and 6.30 - 7.30pm, Wednesday from 5.15 - 6.15pm and Thursday from 6.30 - 7.30pm at the Cotswold Community Centre. Message for 1:1 technique session.
- Bootcamps: Monday and Wednesday 6.15-7.00am. Please message for details.

f SHIRE STRONG

SHIRESTRONG WITH LINDA

For a free initial consultation in your own home or mine. Telephone: **07875 054 292**
Email: **t.linda1206@gmail.com**
www.shirestrong.co.uk

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CPR and Defib Training at the Cotswold

We had two sessions in September in how to perform CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and how to use a Defibrillator. *Simon Brookes*, a retired Marines instructor, is passionate about having as many defibrillators with 24 hours access as possible in the community. He has raised funds relentlessly and there are now 57 installed around Bristol, thanks to him and his charity Defibs4Bristol.com.

We had two sessions, a daytime one, for those not at work, and an evening one. Both were extremely well attended and gave over 50 people an opportunity to understand the simple techniques needed to possibly keep a person, who may have had a cardiac arrest, alive in those vital minutes before an ambulance arrives. Several of the audience had a go at practising compressions on a dummy, while the rest of us chanted along to the **Bee Gees** “**Staying Alive!**”.

There are several Defibrillators in Shirehampton, at the **Lamplighters pub**, outside the **Public Hall**, the **George Inn** and the **Co-op** in the High Street. There is also a **Bleed Kit** outside **Paul Wood Butchers**, also in the High Street. If you see any CPR training advertised, I'd highly recommend attending, it could be a family member, a neighbour, or a passer-by, who's life you might help to prolong.

John Hastings



The Sun Shines for Sea Mills Flower and Craft Show

This year's Flower And Craft Show was held on Saturday 6th September and moved to a new venue, St. Edyth's Church. It was a perfect place for what the event had in store.

Lord Mayor of Bristol, **Henry Michallat** officially opened the event with a short speech. "Thank you for attending the **Sea Mills Flower and Craft Show**, which I've been told has been sort of an on-and-off event for Sea Mills for nearly 100 years. I think it just shows how powerful events like this are, and any profits made today are going to maintain planters across Sea Mills and going into the local community."

Jane Wiltshire, Chairperson and also one of the volunteers, showed the Lord Mayor around the exhibits in the main church, nearly 200 items from house plants, flower arrangements, fruits, vegetables, jams, cakes, photography, to a wide selection of crafts from old and young alike. Even I would have found it hard to choose winners of each category, however one certain winner was **Aniket Sardona** who won several prizes in the vegetable and flower categories, which included a very large marrow. My friend **Mary** took the photo I wanted as I wasn't able to stay around for the presentations.

There was entertainment in the main hall that included a **Ukulele Group** and the **Shynnee Ladies** with their belly dancing. Local stalls were selling plenty of gift ideas in the main hall. There was plenty of refreshments on offer and a large selection of cakes to cater for everyone including gluten and dairy free choices.

"I think the Lord Mayor was a great attraction and weather was good. There were lots of different people and the time flew by. It's been such a fun event. The bit I hate is having to speak into the microphone but the presentation of prizes makes it all worthwhile. The money raised today will go back to help local groups. Although I can't wait to go home after such a successful day I am already looking forward to next year's event." said Jane.

It was certainly a memorable day all round and a great community event for all to enjoy. Here's to next year.

For more information check out Sea Mills Flower and Craft Show Facebook page: www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064316607065



Kathryn Courtney & Photos © Kathryn Courtney

Puzzle Solutions

If readers wish to submit any other Sudokus, Crosswords or other puzzles for inclusion in future editions of Shire, please send to editor@shire.org.uk

4	5	6	7	8	3	2	9	1
2	8	7	1	9	6	3	4	5
1	3	9	5	2	4	8	6	7
3	9	5	6	4	1	7	8	2
8	2	1	9	7	5	6	3	4
7	6	4	8	3	2	1	5	9
9	7	2	4	6	8	5	1	3
5	4	8	3	1	7	9	2	6
6	1	3	2	5	9	4	7	8

Children's Quiz Answers

1. Your age.
2. A fence.
3. A cold.
4. A telephone.
5. A dandelion.
6. A leg.
7. A coin.
8. Because they are stuffed.
9. A clock.
10. Because he's bald.

24 Shirehampton High Street, Bristol, BS11 0DL

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Local Wallace & Gromit Fans Raised Much Needed Funds for The Grand Appeal

Pat and her sister Karen, who both attend the Cotswold Community Welcome Space spent many an hour travelling and collecting for the Wallace & Gromit Appeal. They travelled to all the sites before the public visited to get photos of the well-loved characters on their own before the crowds turned up, sometimes visiting the sites early in the morning or late at night over a 3-week period.

Once they had printed all the photos they turned them into an album. With this in hand, and with permission and recognition from the **Grand Appeal Charity**, they then visited many sites to collect. They would like to thank the following places who gave them permission to collect on their premises. **Morrisons, Cribbs Causeway; The Blaise Inn; The White Horse, Westbury on Trym; Lime Kiln, College Green; The Lamplighters; The Clyde, Redland and the Wellington, Horfield.** Also, their family, friends, and the **Pioneer Medical Group Well-being Walk** on Saturdays at Blaise Castle and many of the shops in **Westbury on Trym Village** (forgive us if we have omitted anyone). They were also invited by the Appeal Fund to attend the opening of the exhibition at **Cribbs Causeway**, where they were presented with

a certificate acknowledging their effort and a print of them on the "red carpet".

Great work Girls! They collected £578.28.

Jill Williamson



An Update from Darren Jones MP, Bristol North West

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

It was more than two hundred years ago that the lane connecting Kings Weston and Henbury was converted into a turnpike road – the road we now know as Kings Weston Road. Since then, the horse-drawn carts travelling on the road have been replaced with not only cars, but also Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and double-decker buses.

I'm thankful the **Kingsweston Iron Bridge** reopened last year to offer a safe crossing point, but I still don't like to see HGVs heading down this narrow road. The road was never built for such big and heavy vehicles, which should instead use the **Portway** or the **M5** to reach the **Avonmouth industrial estate**. And many of you will recall that it was a series of collisions involving HGVs that caused the damage to the bridge. The bridge was raised as part of the repair works to allow HGVs to comfortably pass underneath, but there are other safety concerns with HGVs using this road, as well as the potential for a lorry to end up getting stuck and blocking the road. We saw this happen a few months ago, with **Kings Weston Lane** blocked for many hours by an HGV and a double-decker bus on a corner by **Kings Weston House** that was too tight for both vehicles to pass. Just like **Kings Weston Road**, this section of Kings Weston Lane up the hill is also ill-suited to HGVs. Several constituents commented on Facebook posts about this incident, saying they thought there should be a weight limit on

this road. However, there is already a 7.5-tonne weight limit in place for this section of Kings Weston Lane, from the roundabout where Kings Weston Lane crosses **Long Cross** up the hill to where it joins Kings Weston Road. But given how HGVs are sometimes seen on the road, I can understand if people were unaware of this! My team has been in touch with **Councillor Don Alexander** about improving the weight limit signage. Enforcing the weight limit is, of course, a police matter, and I plan to raise this with **Clare Moody, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon & Somerset**. In addition to this, I'd like to see sat nav devices display a warning to drivers that Kings Weston Road and this section of Kings Weston Lane is not suitable for HGVs. I have contacted the companies **TomTom** and **Garmin** about this, which I understand are popular navigation devices among HGV drivers. I'll keep you informed with how this progresses.

In other news, I shared in last month's issue that I'm launching a new series of **'In conversation with...'** events in the constituency. The first event is about



opening up arts and culture opportunities for the many not just the few, and this event will be held on the afternoon of **Saturday, 8th November (please note the date change)** at a venue in or close to Shirehampton. You can book a ticket at darren-jones.co.uk/events or by calling my office if you're not online.

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

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

Your Councillors are:

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

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

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

Labour Members' Services Office: 0117 922 3827

CONTACTING YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Shirehampton is in the Bristol North West Constituency

Darren Jones Phone: 0117 959 6545

Email: darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk

Website: www.darren-jones.co.uk

Santa Dashes to Save Shire Illuminations
Continued from page 1.

during this time. Your generosity has always played a crucial role in helping us cover these costs. This year, our goal is to raise **£1,000 through a fundraising page**, contributing towards the **overall £10,000+ needed to ensure our lights shine brightly for everyone to enjoy**. Any donation you can make will be greatly appreciated! If you feel inspired to organize a fundraising event or a sponsored activity to help us reach our target, that would be wonderful! Together, we can continue to light up our community and spread joy during this special time of year.” (Louise White)

“Despite the amazing support from **Shirehampton Park Golf Club** and local companies, we are still short of paying the bill to get the lights on. We have held fundraising events but have not yet raised enough to pay for the repairs and the licence from Bristol City Council.” (Julie Watson)



Shirehampton
Christmas Light Up
Night

Friday 21st November
6pm

Terrace at the Post Office

Christmas Music.
Food. Drinks
Sweets & Novelties



So, what can you do to help?

Firstly, you can donate via the “**JustGiving**” page. *See page 1 for the QR code and website details.* Secondly, you can sign up to the **Shire Santa Dash**, starting from the **PBA** and circling the village. The QR code and website details are beneath the photos to the right. Thirdly, you can attend the “**Switch On**” event on **Friday November 21st**, from 6-8 pm on the terrace at the Post Office (*see the poster*). There’ll be Christmas music, food and drink and novelties. You’ll be able to pick up light sticks here, which will look spectacular if everybody brings them along to Shire’s well-loved **Carols on the Green** event in December.

The great thing about Shirehampton is the pride that people have in the village and the way in which Shire folk support each other in so many ways. Here’s another opportunity to show what Shirehampton folk are made of. Please get behind your Shire Illuminations committee and help to ensure a bright Christmas for the village.



Sign up for the Santa Dash by scanning the code or here’s the link:

entrycentral.com/shire-santa-dash





NEW RESPIRE DAY CENTRES

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BUY SELL REPAIR TRADE

Shirehampton Primary Children Visit France

Five children who represented Shirehampton Primary School (and Bristol!) did us all proud. They were fantastic ambassadors during our time in France and made lot of new friends while we were there.

Bordeaux is a beautiful city and the people there are extremely proud of the strong links to **Bristol** (they have been official twin cities since 1947). It's quite

similar to Bristol in some ways and very different in others. It has a great tram system, which we certainly made full use of!

We flew out on the **Monday** (after school) and didn't arrive at our hostel until around midnight.

On the **Tuesday** - we went climbing in a forest (which was great fun!), took part in some lessons in a **French school** (very interesting), had a short boat ride (it's a big river!) and finished off with some pizza (delicious!) at the twinning association.

On the **Wednesday** - we had an open top bus tour (which was fascinating), played football with French children at the training ground next to the '**Stade Atlantique**' (the main stadium in Bordeaux) and then visited the **City**



© Shirehampton Primary School

Hall (a beautiful building), before finishing with some fun in the '**Water Mirror**' in the city centre.

We flew back to Bristol on the **Thursday**, arriving back at SPS just after the end of school (very tired indeed!).

In a few weeks time, all children from the five different schools who went to France, will have a final get together and see the first preview of the film made of their trip.

Michele Daniels, Office Manager



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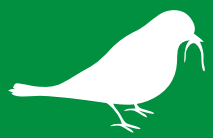
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Walking Into The DARK

November, and the Celtic season of Samhain – a time of moving into darkness as the sun sinks lower and lower in the sky and the nights grow longer and longer. It's a time to hunker down and lie low till the sun begins to return. Samhain is a time for 'getting rid of dead wood', for letting go of what no longer helps us and waiting for things to change. But will changes in our everyday world be for the better?

The **Climate Crisis** as an issue having been pushed off the front pages and instead we see headlines suggesting politicians and corporations are considering abandoning carbon cutting projects. Yet we also see headlines about more and more damaging wildfires, stronger and more destructive storms. We prepare for floods and downed trees in our own streets and gardens. As we gather fallen leaves perhaps we ask ourselves again what change is needed now to help preserve and protect the natural world. *What else can I do?*

Well, **Shirehampton Action** supported work on the **Community Garden in Pembroke Avenue** in early October with boxes of plants for volunteers to plant out. Everyone is welcome to help build and maintain the garden. Shire Action also organized a free foraging hedgerow walk with **Steve England** in October. Steve is a specialist in the natural food resources on our doorstep and shows us how to recognize plants that are edible or have medicinal uses. And Shire Action has planned another **Big Clean** for **23rd November** (see page 4

for details) where we all can help keep Shirehampton welcoming and attractive. The next **Climate Repair Cafe** will be on **Saturday 15th November**. The Climate Cafe offers help to repair, repurpose, upcycle, or swap clothes to make your fashion more sustainable. It also offers a space where you can meet and talk with other people who are concerned about global warming and what we can do to repair the damage we humans cause to our world. You are all welcome because we each have a part to play.

RS



Nature Detectives Appeal

A new community nature project is launching in Shirehampton this January – and it needs your help.

Nature Detectives will run once a month and offers a chance to slow down, explore, and discover the natural world right on our doorstep. The sessions are free, family-friendly, open to all ages, and no experience is needed.

The idea came directly from **Shirehampton Action's Climate and Nature Plan**, which highlighted the need for more family-friendly nature activities in the area. The project has been set up by **Cee MacDonald** (pictured). Cee is part of **Avon Wildlife Trust's Wildlife Champions programme**, which encourages people to help their communities enjoy and connect with nature. Cee explains: "I wanted to create something relaxed and informal, where people can take time to notice the wildlife around them and feel connected to the changing seasons." Starting in midwinter, **Nature**

Detectives will give local people the chance to witness Shirehampton's natural spaces coming to life.

The project is currently looking for donations of nature ID guides and binoculars to help families get the most out of the sessions. If you have any to spare, please get in touch with Cee at ceemacdo@gmail.com

Nature Detectives is part of Shirehampton Action. For more information, visit shirehamptonaction.org.uk/detectives



Nature Notes

A very dear friend and neighbour had this super visitor of a Ring-necked Parakeet to her garden recently! And on two days in succession! Obviously growing very appropriate forage! I am so pleased she was able to get as close as she did for this shot....and very jealous!



The best offer of an unsuspecting visitor **Jeff, me and Russ the dog** could manage, was a wayward magpie a couple of weeks ago!! Why do these intelligent, self protecting creatures flap and flutter hysterically around the conservatory in every corner except the one where the wide open door is!??? Happy to report that the panic soon passed and said bird was unhurt!

Another of my neighbours recently asked if I had seen the pair of woodpeckers that he'd noticed a matter of yards away from me as I strolled along the path just along from home with Russ. "No" says I. (Sigh). Another chance missed.

Happy nature watching folks! Bobbie

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KINGS WESTON ACTION GROUP NEWS

Working Party at the Lily Pond

There were some herculean efforts put in over the last couple of months from a crowd of volunteers, over a dozen, and we managed to make serious restoration progress on the historic lily pond on Napier Miles Road. There were two objectives: firstly, the cutting down or rotting up of trees and vegetation that has grown to suffocate the pond and to enable a clearer survey of the condition of the pond walls and bottom.



Even after a long dry summer, it was a surprise to find no open water at all in the pond tank! The vegetation has acted to soak up much more water than would be usual and the group was relatively firm across the whole area.

The target to cut and remove the vegetation was only just met by the end of the day, the hot conditions

meaning volunteers tired quickly despite the great turnout. The waste was lifted to the pond edges and stacked in existing piles of debris up and away from the water line. Sadly, there was little sign of any of the 49 individual native pond species recorded here in 2012 as part of our **Bioblitz**. There were two types of reeds, sporadic water lily plants, some froglets and



an invasion of sallow trees, but nothing that indicates a thriving environment.

Initial review showed the original hydraulic lining applied to the pond walls has dried and begun disintegrating, allowing water to leak away around the edges. We dug a small trial hole to establish the depth and condition of the lining of the pond. Digging down through an astonishing 18 inches of black sloppy rotting organic matter, we encountered the original clay bottom of the pond. In the area inspected, this looked to be in a decent wet condition, but where areas dry out in the summer, any cracked clay base or root damage will also be letting the water leak away. The hole we dug filled with water during the afternoon, showing that even though it looks like a field right now, the water is still close to the surface.

A quick calculation suggests there are around 350 cubic metres of mud needing cleaning out to start restoration of the pond lining. This could equate to about 340 tons of black gunk that need removing from the pond!

We're grateful too for the incredibly positive reaction to this work and the kind words of support we've received: more than for any other project we've undertaken on the estate.

Kings Weston Action Group



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History On Our Doorstep - Kings Weston Roman Villa

On Saturday 27th September I took the opportunity to visit Kings Weston Roman Villa in Lawrence Weston. It was a family open day and it was some years when I last visited.

I noticed there was work ongoing and the old mosaics that had been made by local school children that were on display had crumbled away due to the weather elements over the years.

I met my friend **Grant** who had been involved in a local school project around 20 years ago and on the information display boards, was one of several students in the photographs. The mosaic floor inside the wooden building was just as I remembered it and the sandstone walls continued to be well preserved. Imagination took over to how it would have looked in Roman times. I met with **Kate Iles, Senior Curator of Archaeology for Bristol Museums** to find out what work was being carried out to preserve the site. "It's quite exciting actually because we have just begun our first major bit of conservation since it was discovered in 1947. It was conserved in the early 50s when the Roman walls were set with cement so that it could be left on open display, but we are now finding that this cement is so hard, it's driving the water and the weeds through the Roman stone. We are working

with a specialist conservator team called **Clifton Conservation** and they are helping us to remove the 1950s cement so that we can replace it with a much softer mortar that will help the stonework breathe and replacing that mortar with some of the original Roman stone mortar that we have in store. "The stonework inside is not subject to the same issues of the weather as outside. The mosaics inside were sent to a specialist mosaic repairing company not long after discovery. They were set in modern cement and put back into the floor and that's how you see them today. "It's really important to preserve history. This is the only surviving Roman villa in Bristol and it's an amazing resource, so we're really keen to preserve it for now and also for future generations. If we don't it will be lost forever". Said Kate.

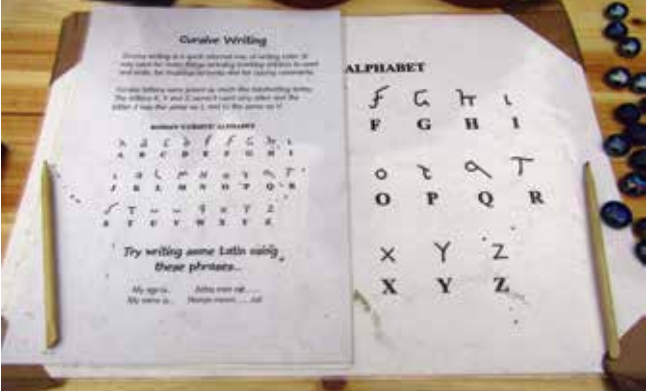
There was plenty of activities to take part in, stories to be told and a mulsum drink to try. There were plenty of visitors too, fascinated by their surroundings and stories being told of Roman life.



Kate Iles and my friend Grant Tooze who was involved in a school for the villa about 20 years ago.



Mosaic making & Roman Alphabet (below) taught in schools.



Roman kitchen playtime.



The next open day will be sometime in Spring 2026 and the Roman Villa is overseen by Blaise Museum. Check out the latest blog: www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/blog/kings-weston-roman-villa-re-opens-ready-for-some-summer-fun/ and basic information updates: www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/blaise-museum/whats-at/kings-weston-roman-villa/

History Galore!

Mid-September saw a couple of fascinating history-themed events in the Shirehampton area. First, *Bristol's Brilliant Archaeology Day at Blaise Castle* on Saturday 13th September was a wonderfully entertaining celebration of local history, organised and attended by a variety of the region's clubs and societies, including the *Spelaeological Society* (for cave-explorers), *Bristol and Avon Archaeological Society*, *Cotswold Archaeology* and the *Young Archaeologist's Club*, all eager to recruit new enthusiasts.

Panels summarised some of the knowledge we have gained from these groups' activities, for example on **Iron Age** sites on **Blaise Hill** and **Roman** life around the **Severn Estuary**. Outside on the lawns were demonstrations of weaving, pot-making and medieval music as well as stalls displaying cooking implements and typical food and drink during the **Middle Ages**. Meanwhile warriors in period costumes re-enacted swordfights and youngsters could try out their archery skills. There was much to be learned and plenty of laughter.

A torrential rainstorm on the following Sunday didn't deter people from flocking to **Kings Weston House**, which opened to the public as part of Bristol's annual

Open Doors Day. It was a rare opportunity to look inside this unique 18th-century **Georgian mansion** on **Shirehampton's** doorstep, crammed full of elegant antique furniture and historic paintings. Guides from the **Kings Weston Action Group (KWAG)** led informative and well-attended tours of the ground floor throughout the day, narrating the history of the house and pointing out some of its noteworthy features.

Highlights included the picture gallery and the monumental staircase. If you missed this event, there will be another opportunity at Open Doors next year.

Rob Andrews & Photos © Rob Andrews



House tour (Above) and Kings Weston's monumental staircase (Below).



A royal frog and classical statuary at Kings Weston.



Guess the skull?

Top left: Young archers; Top right: Swordfighting in medieval dress;
Bottom left: Medieval music at Blaise; Middle: Food and drink as it used to be;
Bottom middle: Period costume; Bottom right: A medieval craftsman at Blaise.

Churches in the Shirehampton Area

The Methodist Church Celebrate Their 150th Anniversary *by Kathryn Courtney*

www.shiremethodist.org • www.facebook.com/shiremethodist

July 2025 marked the 150th Anniversary for *Shirehampton's Methodist Church*. They held an anniversary service on 20th July and on the 22nd July held a two hour exhibition on it's history in the village. There was also a free barbeque and cream teas. The church itself had displays exploring the church history and there was an ongoing arts and crafts activity too.

One visitor was **Toby Stride** who's family had a long association from the 1870's with the building of the church and attending services on a regular basis. "I was at Sunday school from the age of three or four and one of the things I got was to do the collections for the **JMA**." (The Junior Methodist, Junior Missionary Association.)

"You'd get a little book and get various relatives and friends to sign up to pay you weekly fixed amount, a penny or threepence or sixpence occasionally, a share. It was collecting money for missions abroad and you would go round on a Sunday morning collecting your money and hand it in on Sunday. At the end of the year they'd tot up how much you'd collected and if you collected more than five pounds in a year, which is quite a lot then, you'd get a medal for your first year and then you'd get a bar in the subsequent years. So I had bars for 1966/67/68. When you filled up your medal you'd get a new medal and could start again. I did that for a number of years."

Toby no longer lives in Shirehampton but met **Dot** who had one of the medals he spoke of. "It's been lovely to see the exhibition and the building, see the changes. I left before they'd sold off the land at the back for development. I remember the old cinema seats that were very comfy with a very particular feel to them because they were all velvet with brass handles at the end of the pew which would go up and down. It was a much grander set of church buildings when I was here but generally much more basic. All the floors were plain pine wood and it's nice to see the changes."

There were old photos of Christenings and Weddings, historical photos of the church, events held, people, how the church has become eco aware and dementia friendly.

Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Andrew Varney was a guest at the event and like many visitors that day, enjoyed his time there. Thank you to everyone involved in making the exhibition a special event.

Here's to the next 150 years.





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St Mary's Church News

www.stmarysshire.org

November is another busy month for St Mary's, so there are lots of opportunities for you to come along to a service or event here - we'd be pleased to welcome you.

We have 2 services on **Sunday 2nd November**. At 10:30am we have **Sung Eucharist**, given it is the first Sunday of the month. Then at 4pm our **All Souls' Service** takes place when we remember lost loved ones. You are most welcome to this very moving service. If you would like your loved ones' names to be included in our prayers, please call into church to pick up a form or send us an email with the relevant names. Our email address is office@stmarysshire.org

Goldies meet on **Wednesday 5th at 10:30am**. It's another opportunity to get together and listen to music from the past and maybe sing along too - it's a lovely group for social interaction.

Our **Remembrance Sunday Service** starts at the earlier time of **9:45am on Sunday 9th**. This will allow time to process up to the War Memorial ahead of the

11am commemoration and we are expecting lots of the uniformed organisations to join us. Following this, you are welcome at **Shirehampton Cricket Club** as they have kindly agreed to open for Tea and Coffee afterwards - we are really grateful to them for this kindness. Please note that **Mary's Munchies** will not be taking place that morning.

Our **Pop Up** event is on **Tuesday 18th 3:30-5:30pm** when **Family Board Games** will be on the agenda - it's sure to be a fun afternoon. If you'd like to find out more, just get in touch and we'd be happy to give you more information.

Advent Sunday falls on **30th November** and we will have our **Christingle service** at **4pm** that day. This is a special service including carol singing for all the family where you can find out what the symbols of the

Sundays	8:30	Rise & Shine on 2nd and 3rd Sunday of the month
Sundays	10:30	Holy Communion Service Worship for All on 4th Sunday (including baptisms)
Monday	10:00-12:00	Coffee Morning
Tuesday	10:00-12:00	Coffee Morning
Wednesday	10:00-12:00 10:30	Coffee Morning Goldies (1st Wednesday of the month)
Thursday	11:00	Holy Communion
Friday	10:00-14:00	Coffee Morning to midday. Welcoming space with hot food from midday to 14:00
Saturday	10:00-12:00	Coffee Morning

Christingle mean. Treats and drinks will be available after the service and a collection will be made in aid of **The Children's Society**.

We will have our usual Advent events during December and will let you know all about in next month's Shire.

With best wishes from St Mary's Shire.

Greetings from Shirehampton Baptist Church

www.shirehamptonbaptistchurch.co.uk

The Bible sometimes refers to the Church worldwide and local as a family sharing each other's joys and sorrows. We have experienced both in the last few months. In August we said a last goodbye to our minister **Paul** and his wife **Katy**. They are already being missed but we are glad they are starting a new phase in their lives and spending more time with their family. However, we are grateful to our Church leaders and many members who carry on the good work.

On **4th October** a service was held to celebrate the life of **Beryl Roylance**. Beryl and her husband **John** have been members of our fellowship for many years and serving in several rolls. Again, Beryl will be missed but remembered for her strong Christian faith. We send our love to John and family.

Rock Steady is a club for children of Primary School age and meets every Thursday, term time at our Church building, Station Road from 3:30pm to 4:30pm. They enjoy drama, music and craft work (See our website)

The next **Life Cafe** will open on **November 27th from 10:30 to 11:30 am**. Come and enjoy tea, coffee and cake and meet friends.

The November **Songs of Praise Cafe** will be on **November 9th at 4 45pm**. We are a group of people from various churches who meet in the **Cotswold Community Hall**, Dursley Road. Do come and enjoy a varied programme of songs, hymns and talks from people of various walks of life.

Like other churches and organized institutions, we will be remembering all who lost their lives in the two world Wars and sadly other wars past and present. We invite all to join us.

Love and prays from Shire Baptist Church.

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

Don't miss this opportunity to drop in between **11am and 1pm** at the **Shirehampton Public Hall, Station Road**, to be prayed for in the name of Jesus. AS IT WAS IN THE GOSPELS! We have many stories of healing on a daily basis.

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“The Women Who Built Bristol” – Author talk at Shirehampton Public Library

In September, we were very privileged to have the author, *Jane Duffus*, visit us to give a talk at the Public Library about the second volume of her book “The Women Who Built Bristol”.

This concise book details briefly the lives of **250 women of different backgrounds from the 17th century to the present day who shaped life in Bristol and for those around them.** The book is not only about women who achieved great things such as pioneering engineers and doctors but also includes the extraordinary, ordinary women who most of us can relate to. It is about women who have any tangible connection to the city whether they were just born, lived or died here but the criteria to be included in the book is that they must be dead!

So many extraordinary women have been hidden from history and nameless, such as the 19th century authors having to use a male pen name to have their work taken seriously - **Mary Ann Evans** who published under the name of **George Elliott** comes to mind. I particularly like that the author has named ‘real’ ordinary women who have shaped people’s lives, even in the smallest of ways. I loved hearing about a young factory worker who had taught herself to read and write. When she went to the cinema to watch the silent movies, she was able to read out the on-screen texts to help the people around her who were unable to read understand the films! The author has also shown a round picture of society and included the not so good in society too, who fortunately are a few - that somehow shaped Bristolians’ lives and society – such as a serial baby killer, whose legal case changed the law concerning baby farming and adoption.

The book has beautiful illustrations of some of the women and it is a lovely book to dip into—and **Shirehampton** gets a mention too! Through the lives of the women, we learn of how Bristol developed from the 17th century to the modern day.

I recommend!

Vanessa Evans

North Bristol Foodbank

On Saturday 25th August St. Andrews Church in Avonmouth held a fundraising event for the Bristol North West Foodbank. There was a stall selling new items for the home, kitchen, pet care and children's toys. In another room there were a number of stalls with plenty to choose from including additional homeware, books, toys and accessories that were colour coded from £1 to £7. Cake and refreshments were on hand.

The Food Bank was originally set up in 2011 by **Emma Murray** who continues to manage it. "We have grown a lot since we first opened where we had two small cabinets. The **North West Food Bank** is massive now and we're helping about 9,000 people at year with emergency food. We now have five food bank outlets that we serve from here. **Hotwells, Henbury, Severn Beach, Lawrence Weston and Avonmouth.** We manage all the volunteers and we provide all the food and toiletries so people can pick up their food from there. We have a clothes bank on site for adults and children and shoes as well for every age."

"We have two full-time advice workers who are working to deal with people's issues and the root causes of why they might be coming to the food bank. We're also able to refer them on for debt help. We do food bank cookery courses and budgeting too, a couple times a year. We also have 'Space for Makers' woodworking workshop which is doing courses for adults and for children from our most deprived areas that we serve". Emma added.

I asked Emma where she sourced supplies. "Food donations come from the public in the main through Supermarket collection points. Businesses also have collection points giving us food all year round. Supermarkets also give their surplus food which is still able to be used and schools give at harvest time too. We're also very thankful to **Hovis** and **Warburtons** who give us fresh bread every week."

Things have definitely changed over the years. "During COVID we helped nearly 13,000 people. The cost-of-living crisis has just meant that we've got this ongoing need. It's not just people who are on benefits or low incomes. It's people who might have run their own businesses and then things go under. It might be



people who are on zero hours contracts, or have no back up or support, even domestic abuse. Whatever walk of life you're from, the food bank's here for you when life sends a curveball your way." said Emma

The Foodbank has been facing some funding issues where a few serious staffing changes have had to be made. **St. Andrew's Church** decided to hold a fundraising event to help them.

You can call the Foodbank office for all voucher and client enquiries on: 0117 923 5343. You can also call the Local Crisis Prevention Fund on: 0800 923 0101 or Help For Hardship Helpline on: 0808 208 2138.

Kathryn Courtney & Photos © Kathryn Courtney



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Shirehampton Social Club

You may have noticed that Shirehampton Workman's Club has undergone a number of changes. Gone is the workman's club old image including the men only bar that was prolific with many in years gone by and its name has been revamped to 'Shirehampton Social Club'. A new image is now underway and is open to all including children, with many family orientated events being created including sports, entertainment and more. They are also community minded too having community events such as village fayres and private functions taking place.

I chatted with **John Scanlon** who is a Trustee and a Committee Member for Shirehampton Social Club to find out more.

"Times have changed and we have to change with the times too. Many of our original members have gone and there are new generations of people moving into Shire, many with families. We are trying to shake off our old image and create a more social, community-based environment where wives, daughters and children are welcome. Providing a venue that Shirehampton needs. A lot of businesses are closing down, there is the cost of living crisis too and challenges being faced by many".

"Of course, some people can sit in the bar for a nice quiet drink and have their own conversation and it is no longer a 'men only bar.' This is now a community club for people to socialise in. We have a large concert room where our entertainment nights happen usually on Saturday where talented singers and groups play. There is a dance floor in front of the stage so you can the night away".

"To a certain degree we are a family venue but children must be under parental guidance. It's mainly the concert hall we use for family events such as Hallow'een and Christmas for example. You can hire out the hall for christening's, wedding buffets, family parties, birthday

parties, and more. Many have been organised by club members and their families. Ideas are always welcome especially if it benefits the local community."

"We have a skittle alley, we have a snooker room and dart boards so if anyone wanted to get a team together for any of these we have the facilities you can use".

"Unfortunately, we are unable to serve hot food. We have looked into this but we don't have the space to make it viable let alone the costs involved, however we are very competitive with our drink prices. Even if you are not a member of the social club 10% is added to your bar bill. However, a year's membership is only £5 per adult which pays for itself and a Saturday Night is only £2.50 per person for a sociable entertaining night out".

I spent the evening with a friend of mine watching singer **Jodie Payne** entertain the audience. It was a great evening, very sociable and welcoming. The dance floor was in full use and during the break a fun game of bingo too. Definitely gets my recommendation.

You can keep yourself updated with events, activities and entertainment with Shirehampton Social Club FaceBook page: www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100083250461144

Kathryn Courtney & Photos © Kathryn Courtney



Jodie Payne Captivates Her Audience

Shirehampton Social Club. - Saturday 20th September 2025.

I have seen singer Jodie Payne perform before as a solo artist as well as being a member of tribute bands for **Bananarama**, **ABBA** and **The Corrs** so I knew she would perform a great show that night.

Her song catalogue knows no bounds and she has the versatility to change each set to suit her audience. Jodie's vocal range is also far reaching and she can adapt her sound with great professionalism.

Opening with a sixties set that included "*Love Me With All Of Your Heart*", "*Lipstick On Your Collar*", and **The Beatles** version of "*Twist and Shout*" where the audience joined in with the aahhh's vocals. Jodie also sang "*Rock Around The Clock*", "*Dance The Night Away*" where the crowd joined in the timed claps at the end of the song as well as that **Emmerdale** favourite "*Hill Billie Rock*" with the audience clapping along and shouting a few yeeha's. By this time Jodie had captured everyone in the room to be concluded by a theatrical rendition of "*I Know Him So Well*" from the musical 'Chess' that she belted out superbly as a solo and met with huge applause at the end.

Jodie moved on from her sixties set with great ease singing favourites from 1970's and 80's. There were some true classics such as **ABBA's** "*The Winner Takes It All*", **The Monkees** "*Daydream Believer*", **Fleetwood Mac's** "*Don't Stop*", **Blondie's** "*Heart Of Glass*", **Status Quo's** "*Rockin' All Over The World*" with a bit of air guitar and "*We Are Family*" originally recorded by **Sister Sledge**. When "*Under The Moon Of Love*" was sung dancers on the dance floor started doing the '**Showaddywaddy**' dance steps. Jodie performed throughout with energy and plenty of smiles".

With two sets successfully performed by Jodie the show came to an end, enjoyed by many sharing a good night out with friends and family. And with that, time for Jodie to pack away her set and make her way home until her next gig.

Kathryn Courtney



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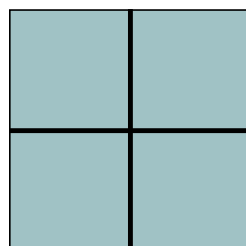
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Sport and Activities IN SHIREHAMPTON

Yeovil Ladies vs Avonmouth Claire's Ladies – 5th October 2025

On Saturday 5th October, Avonmouth Claire's Ladies travelled for their first away fixture of the season in their new NC1 league. Spirits were high as the team arrived to a warm welcome from Yeovil Ladies, a well-established club boasting two women's sides and plenty of experience at this level.

Kick-off came at 2:30pm, and **Yeovil** wasted no time making their mark. The home side's physical carries and structured play saw them cross the line early, putting Avonmouth on the back foot. Despite this, the visitors showed real determination throughout, responding with strong defensive sets and some promising attacking phases.

Avonmouth's hard work was rewarded with a well-earned try from a set piece off the scrum, a glimpse of what this squad is capable of when their structure clicks. Unfortunately, that would be the only score for the visitors, as Yeovil continued to apply pressure and add to their tally.



While the final scoreline didn't reflect the effort on display, Avonmouth's relentless defence, improved organisation, and commitment to the contest were clear positives. With this being their first step into a new league structure, the team are still finding their rhythm but there's no doubt about the potential and promise within the squad. The focus now turns to building on these foundations ahead of their next fixture, a home game against **Winscombe** on **Saturday 19th October**.

Lucy Souch, Ladies Lead, Avonmouth OBRFC.





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Wells City v Avonmouth F.C.

At the start of play, Avonmouth sat 6th in the table, on 21 points. Wells City were 3rd on 24 points, having played three games more. It promised to be a finely balanced game.

The early stages saw intense pressure on the Avonmouth goal, keeper **Kyreese Johnson** doing well to hang onto a powerful low drive. At the other end, the Wells keeper did equally well, diving to his left to turn away a goal bound effort. The next 15 minutes saw Wells piling on the pressure, Kyreese saving low to his left twice in three minutes. The tide then began to shift and Avonmouth forced the Wells keeper into a fingertip save to turn the ball over the bar.

Four minutes later, Wells nearly took the lead, a low shot across goal flashing just wide. Almost immediately Avonmouth broke away, an acrobatic lob from **Mitch Wise** flying over.

As half time approached, Kyreese Johnson saved a powerful header, low down on his left-hand post. Three



Kyreese Johnson saves at the feet of the Wells centre forward.



Wells' keeper tips over.



Gerlando Parrinello heads off the line.

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minutes later Avonmouth fired narrowly over then, just before half time, a powerful header from the Wells no. 4 was destined to fly just inside the post, but **Gerlando Parrinello** headed magnificently off the line.

With the first half in added time, Kyreese Johnson pulled off another stunning save to send Avonmouth into the break level.

It had been an epic first half, with high winds making it difficult for the keepers, but both had performed heroics to keep the game at **0-0**. It was going to take something special to break the deadlock.

The first 10 minutes saw action at both ends, with Avonmouth's **Charlie Aldom** a tower at the heart of the defence. Sporadic, heavy, driving rain was now making it more difficult for everyone, but the breakthrough



Mitch Wise lobs just wide.



Kyreese Johnson pulls off another miraculous save.



Josh Pearce.

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Wells City

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Avonmouth FC

finally came in the 57th minute. This is how **Club President Dave Rowley** describes the moment:

“**Josh Pearce’s** goal was as a result of a superb through ball and using his pace to evade two defenders, round the keeper and slot home into an empty net.”

6 minutes later, Kyreese Johnson was in action again, turning a fierce drive around the post and with four minutes remaining, he tipped spectacularly over the bar.

Wells pressed forward, but Avonmouth held firm for a well-deserved victory, moving them up to 5th, 6 points behind leaders Devizes but with a game in hand. **Devizes** happened to be Avonmouth’s next opponents, at home on **11th October!**

Paul McMillan and Photos © Paul McMillan



Kyreese Johnson again.



Charlie Aldom rises in the wind and driving rain to clear Avonmouth's lines.

STOP PRESS RESULT:

Avonmouth 1, Devizes Town 1.

Avonmouth led with a goal from the prolific Josh Pearce in the 32nd minute but conceded a late penalty. All the other teams in the top 6 won, so Avonmouth slip to 6th. Another committed battling performance though that promises much for the rest of the season.

Avonmouth Rugby Club Avengers Squad

Two years ago, the *Bristol Bears Community Foundation* initiated a project that aimed to make rugby accessible to children who, for various health and other reasons, could not train or play with squads of their peers. *Avonmouth Old Boys* was one of the clubs who partnered with the foundation in the project and thus was born "Avonmouth Avengers." The squad is made up of youngsters ranging from 8-16 years from Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset.

Attendance at sessions varies from 6-20 and focuses on skills training and fun activities. Sessions are non-competitive and it was noticeable how supportive the children were of each other, shouting encouragement and sharing fun and laughter. Although the squad does not play competitive matches, there are two other similar squads in the area, one in **Kingswood** and one in **Cheddar**, so there is a seed of a plan to get the squads together to maybe play a friendly game towards the end of the season.



After stretching and warming exercises, the coaches, **Lucy O'Brien** and **Mike Templar** set up some fun drills using cones, tackle bags and a crash mat and there was passing practice.

Here's what some of the squad members had to say about the sessions:

- **Sharaat** said he liked the kicking, passing and catching practice.
- **Annie-Shea** said she liked everything but especially liked it if the after-training meal in the clubhouse happened to be chicken nuggets and chips.
- **Charlie** said that he liked all the activities.
- **Flynn** said "It's just fun. It gets you out and you make new friends."
- **Aidan** said he liked the warm-up exercises and the kicking and passing.



It was a heart-warming experience to watch the children having so much fun in a supportive and happy environment. Hats off to those people who sought to give these youngsters the opportunity to be active and to socialise with each other. The vehicle for the sessions is rugby, but the project is about much more than that; it's about spreading happiness and joy to youngsters who have more than their fair share of life's challenges.

Paul McMillan & Photos © Sylvie Dunn



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Shirehampton Sailing Club Defies the Mud – Will You Join Us?

In our small club-house near the Lamplighters Pub, there hangs this photo. Recognisable to club members are *John Coxhill*, one-time Commodore, *Bob Hayes* the long-time Secretary, and *Ken Darters*. They are doing what passers-by will see every Saturday morning, rain or shine, summer, and winter – Slip Crew, 9am-12pm with a break for tea – hosing down the slip and using brushes and our *Big Bertha* to do the ultimately futile, pushing the mud back out to sea for another week of sailing.

The boaties among you will know that the **Severn Estuary** has the second-largest tidal range in the world, the highest range being in **Newfoundland in Canada**. Spring tides can be up to 14.5 metres in height, with neap tides still around 9 metres. For comparison, the **Solent** is 4.5 metres and **Falmouth** is a mere 1.4 metres. The reason for this is the shape and size of the Severn Estuary. Twice a day, the double tidal bulge races round the planet, which means that when the tide is incoming, the Severn Estuary has to fill up completely with water in six hours from low tide to high tide. The Severn Estuary however narrows very quickly, so the same volume of water which just rolls along the **English Channel** between **England** and **France**, entering the **Bristol Channel**, the narrowing into the Severn forces the water to rise much higher. As the tidal bulge passes, the water then must completely empty out again in the next six hours before the second, slightly smaller, tidal bulge, making the Severn Estuary fill up again.

So, at our little slip at **Shirehampton**, the water covers the slip with mud twice a day. Over the course of a week, the mud layers build up, so by the next weekend, there is a good foot depth of mud to clear away, so that sailors and canoeists and rowers (and local kids) can stroll down the slip without slipping over.

The other photo shows **John, Ken and Bob** on a day when we trialled a jet-washer and decided that on fuel grounds alone, operating a jet washer would be too expensive (£600 a year to be precise) to operate – even before the insurance.

So, this is where you come in. Would you like to join us in defying the mud? Maybe once a month you could come down, perhaps helping initially on our very powerful hose, or brushing mud, or wading out on the bank to shape a channel so that the mud can drain naturally and not pond up. The company is good – this is our happy place after all – and you get to come inside the club house and enjoy a proper tea break with cake.



© Shirehampton Sailing Club



© Shirehampton Sailing Club

If you like sailing, we will take you out for free, or perhaps you'd like a go in our rowing gig, or borrow one of our canoes.

All welcome on any Saturday morning!

Tina Biggs, Vice-Commodore, Shirehampton Sailing Club

The Mystique of the Mask

One of the peculiarities of fencing is the mask. Outside of motor sport and ice hockey goalkeeping, it's unique. Ancient Egyptian wall painting show fencers using sticks and wearing what look like wicker masks, but masks came into European fencing in the late Eighteenth Century. The early versions were flimsy, but the conventions of fencing were strict and foil fencing was becoming, increasingly an art and less a training for combat.

As a reaction and to meet the needs of prospective duellists, epee came along. Heavier weapons and stiffer blades needed stronger masks and with the military sabre - a cutting weapon - more padding was needed.

The modern mask, safe, comfortable and all-encompassing gives a particular aspect to fencing. It gives a kind of anonymity and takes away a lot of the animosity from what was once a sort of fight.

Many of us, who might feel inhibited about being out on the fencing strip ("the piste"), don't feel that way, cocooned in our masks. A couple of decades ago, there was a move to introduce transparent masks; to show the fencer's face for TV and improve visibility. It didn't last.

We like the mask. Perhaps we like the distance that gives a dream quality to the match or maybe, like music, it creates a medium between the outer and inner worlds, blurring the difference.

John Rohde, Bristol White Eagle Fencing Club



© John Rohde

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Kingsweston House Primary and Junior School

Whilst having a clear out, our much-missed former editor Fiona Grinham found this photo of a class of 10-year-olds dating from 1960. As Fiona had a copy, it may have appeared in a previous edition of Shire, probably many years ago. Fiona thought that it was worth asking if anyone can shed any light?

Do you know anyone in the photo? Do you appear in the photo? Does anyone know either of the teachers? Does anyone have any memories of the school?

If you do, the editor would be pleased to hear from you: editor@shire.org.uk

Paul McMillan (article and scan of photo)



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