

Shire

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

No. 652 - May 2026 www.shire.org.uk 5,000 copies monthly

Have you got a job that needs doing? Go to YOUR LOCAL TRADESPEOPLE section on pages 16-18 to find a local business who can help.

Sea Mills
Flower and Craft
Show
Sat 9th May -
St Edyth's Church
- See page 5.

Shirehampton Action
Events
- See page 8.

Spring into Action!

Shirehampton Action offers something for everyone this spring.

Spring truly started for Shirehampton Action with our first market of the year on 2nd April. Our *Community Development Officer, Ash*, and our volunteers have spent the run-up to spring getting ready for a very busy season. We have had ideas coming out of our ears – which is exactly what you would expect. Shirehampton Action is your local charity that is all about connecting and supporting people who have great ideas to make Shirehampton (even) better for everyone!

Sara has been buzzing around ordering the right plants for our pollinator gardens, and even has plans for a pond. Sara heads up **Bee Happy Shire** – a group of volunteers anyone can join to help local nature thrive. Cee and Jelena have been walking around nature sites to identify nature clues for our **Nature Detectives** activity on the last Sunday of every month. Families and individuals can join Cee, Jelena and others to spend an hour in nature, seeing how it changes with the season.

Kathryn, Katherine, Reece, Neil, Colin, Helen, Sheralee and many others help run the monthly **High Street Market** every 1st Thursday of the month at the **Methodist Church** on the High Street (just opposite the job centre). I really enjoyed popping in on 2nd April – I bought a great selection of greeting cards and chatted with friends and neighbours over jerk chicken and a chocolate brownie.

Nick has planned our third **Big Clean** for **Sunday 17th May**. This time he is aiming for even more volunteers (we reached 60 last year) to join at one of our two litter-picking hubs for the day: the **Cotswold Centre** and the **Shirehampton Social Club**. This two-hub approach allows us to do a big spring clean of as much of Shire as possible. It is a good team-building



Shire Pride Brunch

© Kathryn Courtney



Bee Happy Shire

© Kathryn Courtney



Nature Detectives

© Kathryn Courtney

Continues on page 8.

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'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

Distribution: distribution@shire.org.uk or 0117 982 0478

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Artwork: Iain Chaffey of Crimson Goose Design

Photographers: Kathryn Courtney, Bob Pitchford

N.B. To meet the deadline with our designer, 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'.

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REGULAR EVENTS IN SHIREHAMPTON

SHIREHAMPTON PUBLIC HALL REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

| | | | |
|------------------|--|--|---|
| MONDAY | Twyford Art Club (Except August) Yoga | 10am-12noon 6.30-7.30pm | Main Hall Main Hall |
| TUESDAY | Jolly Melodies (Term Time) Line Dancing Community Living Room Elevate Dance (Primary School Children – Contemporary) (Term Time Only) Bereavement Support (1st Tues) Puppy Training | 10am-12noon 2-3pm 3-5pm 3.30-5.30pm 5.30-7pm 6-8pm | Main Hall Main Hall Library Main Hall Library Main Hall |
| WEDNESDAY | Healing Rooms (2nd Weds) Over 75s Exercise Extraordinary Links (Term Time) Women's Fellowship (2nd and 4th Weds) Shire Stitches (3rd Weds) | 10.30am-1.30pm 2-3pm 3.30-5.30pm 7-9pm 7.30-9.30pm | Main Hall Main Hall Main Hall Main Hall Main Hall |
| THURSDAY | Shire Social Group Healing Rooms Tai Chi Family History Group (2nd Thurs) Pregnancy Pilates Pilates Model Railway Club | 10am-12noon 10am-1.30pm 2-3pm 6-8pm 6-7pm 7-8pm 7-10pm | Bradley Room Main Hall Main Hall Library Main Hall Main Hall Club Room & Basement |
| FRIDAY | Shire Stitches (1st Friday) Chair Yoga Yoga | 10am-12noon 11-11.45am 12noon-1pm | Bradley Room Main Hall Main Hall |
| SATURDAY | (Private and Public Functions) | | |
| SUNDAY | Church of Grace Meditation Group | 11am-4pm 9-10am & 10-11am | Main Hall & Springfield Main Hall then Library |

The Hall is also home to Shirehampton Action and Tandem Arts.

Notice to Our Readers and Contributors

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.

SHIRE ADVICE SERVICE

Free Advice Sessions

Shirehampton Health Centre, Pembroke Road,

Shirehampton

Tuesdays from 10am

To make an appointment call 0117 9515751

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

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS FROM AS LITTLE AS £7.95 PER MONTH!



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Dursley Road, Shirehampton,
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Email: cotswoldca@gmail.com
Phone: 07943-401575

PLANT SALE

Saturday 16th May • 10am-Midday

Regular Events at the
Cotswold Community Centre

| | |
|------------------|---|
| MONDAY | Pilates 9.30-10.30am Kettlebells 2pm-3pm 5:15-6:15pm 6:30-7:30pm |
| TUESDAY | Over 70s Exercise Class 2pm-3pm Community Choir 3:05pm – 3:50pm (Alternate weeks) Film Night 7:30pm (1st & 3rd of month) |
| WEDNESDAY | Keep Fit 10:30-11:30am Kettlebells 5:15-6:15pm Pilates 6:30-7:30pm |
| THURSDAY | Welcome Space 10am-Noon Bingo 2pm Kettlebells 5:15-6:15pm 6:30-7:30pm |
| FRIDAY | Happy Space 2pm-4pm (3rd of month) |
| SATURDAY | Coffee Morning 10am-11:30am (2nd of month) Bingo 7:30pm |
| SUNDAY | Cotswold Christian Community Service Songs of Praise Café 4:45-6pm (2nd of month) |

Come along and join in the fun

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

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The *Shire* Community Pages

New Project Coordinator for Shire Hub

The JTE (Jobs, Training & Enterprise) Hub has now become the *Shire Hub*, and with previous organisers Darren and Kirsty having moved on to new adventures at the end of December, *Mary Page is the new Project Coordinator* for this community hub. "It gives us more control and provides us with the ability to give better specialised advice in a controlled way," said Mary.



© Kathryn Courtney

"We are open **Monday, Tuesday and Thursday** each week. On Monday we are open from 9.30 until 12.30 with **Clean Slate**, a charitable organisation who help with debt and money advice, and **Housing Matters**, who give advice on social housing, council housing and support with any housing issues you might have. We also run our **Job Club** from 10am till 12.30, and I can give general advice and support people in signposting them for more complex issues, for example applying for a blue badge. If they don't have a computer themselves, I can show them how they can access that information on a computer or on their smartphone here at the hub."

"We cannot provide legal advice as we are not qualified to do so but I usually can find an organisation that is reputable and reliable that people can go to. I can refer people to **North Bristol Advice Centre** and **Foodbank** for example."

"Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoon we open from 2pm until 4pm with our **'Warm Welcome'** and have a cup of tea and a chat, or you just might not want to chat which is OK. It is a safe space to relax. You can also do crafting and arts with **Rebecca** and chat with her about gardening, sewing and other hobbies."

"Tuesday morning, **Community Learning** is here from 9.30 until 11.30 with English as a Second Language. Anyone can come along, you can register by turning up or register online. It is available for anybody who's using English as a second language or wants to improve their English. The course is free."

"Every other week we have a **councillor drop-in session**, where the three local ward councillors are available to talk to about any matter pertaining to the council and they will try and help you. Please check beforehand as other commitments may mean they are not available on some weeks."

"Thursday morning, we have an open session from 10am until noon, this includes surplus food that's been given away by a local store through the fair share



© Kathryn Courtney

and food rescues. So we pick up stuff that is close to or just on its sell by date and we will then give that away."

I asked Mary about future ambitions for the hub. "We'd like to have better connections with local employers, businesses and offer a space for recruitment. We also want to reach out more to the local community and provide a space for ideas and activities. And bring back that hope into a community that sometimes feels like it's forgotten. People come in here at their lowest depth and will never be judged. This is a safe place to be."

Shire Hub is open 9.30am-12.30pm and 2pm-4pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at Shirehampton Methodist Church, Penpole Avenue, BS11 0DY.

You can contact Mary via projectcoordinator @jtehubshire.org or call 07305 066 478.

—Kathryn Courtney

Charity Bake-Off At The Public Hall

This year's *Great Charity Bake-Off Bake-A-Wish* event will be held on *Saturday 30th May* at Shirehampton Public Hall. All proceeds from the event will go to the *Make-A-Wish* charity.



Bakers can enter any cake of their choice into one or more categories. The 3 categories available are **Most Delicious, Best Decorated** and **Under 12s**. A trophy will be awarded to the winner of each category.

The cakes for Best Decorated will remain intact for display, while the others are cut into "taste" size pieces.

Anyone can come along and help raise funds for this very worthwhile cause – all while eating plenty

of cake! The entry cost will be £5 on the door, and each visitor will be given 5 tickets and a voting slip. With their tickets, each person can choose 5 cakes to taste. They can then use their slip to vote for their favourites in each category.

To enter or for more information about the event, please text 07554 642440.

—Daphne Llewellyn

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It's Show Time!

Sea Mills Flower and Craft Show

Saturday 9th May 2026

St Edyth's Church,
Avonleaze, Sea Mills

The time has flown by, we're finalising all the stalls (a fantastic range!) and entertainment, checking our volunteers can all do what we think they can, and generally getting ready for what's going to be an absolutely marvellous day out. Oh, and we've started talking about 2027 already, but enough of that for now!

Have you seen our Schedule of Classes? **Entries need to be in by 4pm on Wednesday 6th May**, so don't delay! And if you haven't seen a paper copy, you can email seamillsflowershow@gmail.com or download one from bit.ly/SMFCSSchedule. Definitely worth a look, even if you've never seen anything you wanted to enter before. Hopefully the plants have enjoyed some sunshine after all that rain. Really looking forward to friends from all over BS9 being represented in the classes.

Now, a plea to those coming, please leave cars away from the church! There are multiple buses running through Sea Mills, we're not far from the train station, and we seem to be well served by those Dott scooters and e-bikes. There is unrestricted parking, but



The Lord Mayor and local councillor Henry Michallat at the 2025 show.

Avonleaze is a small residential street, and we don't want to upset the neighbours.

Don't forget we've got Henry Michallat, Councillor for Stoke Bishop and current Lord Mayor, opening the Show for a second time. Plus we've got local Social Media Influencer @The Food Guy66 attending, and judging the Sausage Roll category.

Not too late to offer to volunteer: many hands make light work! An hour or so on Friday evening, Saturday morning, or Saturday afternoon is all it takes, so do get in touch if you can help.

We'd love to hear from you if you want to know more!

—Sue Hazelden on behalf of the Sea Mills Flower and Craft Show Committee

seamillsflowershow@gmail.com

Facebook: Sea Mills Flower & Craft Show

Instagram: seamillsflowershow



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 £7.95

PLEASE NOTE:

Any submitted Personal Announcements or other Notices to the paper may incur a charge and must be accompanied with the submitters contact details or we will not be able to publish the submission.

DARBON Beatrice

10.9 1924 - 20.03 2026



Mum, you have only just left us and we both miss you already – but in leaving us we are glad that you have been released from pain.

Sleep tight.

Barry and Kathy Darbon



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

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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.

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After School Club at St Bernard's Catholic Primary School

St Bernard's Catholic Primary School has been through some amazing changes in the last academic year. We introduced our After School Club last September, which provides parents with a solution to childcare issues around the school day. We already had a very successful Breakfast club, so the ASC was a great addition to our wraparound care.

Our ASC is run by **Mrs R** and **Mrs Carlon**, and the children enjoy a range of activities. These include an hour of outside unstructured play; we use the new loose part play equipment, which is stored in our sheds (many local residents may have noticed the changes in our small playground). This loose part play encourages creativity, fun, expression and collaboration.

We then head inside, where the children are able to create their own healthy snack and enjoy a more creative hour, painting, colouring, building and playing board games until parents return to pick them up.

The **OPAL** equipment that we now have on offer for the children during their break times and during ASC includes trikes and scooters, crates, boxes, balls, wooden planks and an amazing sensory shed. The children are able to use their imagination during their playtimes and have worked together to make some amazing creations. We have made dens, forts, cars, trains, concerts and even a palace.

OPAL has made a massive difference to our day at St Bernard's. Here is some feedback from the children about the ASC:

Auri - *I love junk modelling.*

Jase - *I like playing with the Play-Doh.*

Arabella - *I love drawing.*

Raffy - *I love the games.*

Serafina - *I like having snacks.*

Laia - *I love being active.*

—Mrs R



© St Bernard's Catholic Primary School



© St Bernard's Catholic Primary School



© St Bernard's Catholic Primary School

Avonmouth Sea Cadets Complete First Aid Training to Help Build Safer Communities

Avonmouth Sea Cadets have successfully trained a new cohort of young people in essential first aid skills, equipping them to provide immediate assistance in the event of injury or illness.

The training forms a key part of the Sea Cadet experience, giving cadets the confidence and practical knowledge to respond effectively in emergency situations. Cadets learned how to assess incidents, provide basic life-saving care, and offer support until professional help arrives.

However, the value of the training extends well beyond the unit. Avonmouth Sea Cadets emphasise that first aid is not just a skill for cadet activities, but a life skill that cadets can take back into their homes, schools, and wider community – helping to create safer, more resilient communities.

A spokesperson for Avonmouth Sea Cadets said:

“By training our cadets in first aid, we are empowering young people to step forward rather than stand by. These skills give them the confidence to act in real-life situations and potentially make a life-saving difference in their communities.”

The first aid programme also supports the cadets' wider development, reinforcing responsibility, teamwork, and leadership, while encouraging young people to be calm, capable, and compassionate in challenging situations.

Avonmouth Sea Cadets remain committed to providing high-quality training that benefits both their cadets and the community they serve.



© Avonmouth Sea Cadets



© Avonmouth Sea Cadets

THE ARTS IN SHIREHAMPTON

Review: The New Yorchestra

On Friday 27th March, *The New Yorchestra* played a concert at Shirehampton's Public Hall. With a varied choice of music from pop to musicals to classical, the evening showcased the versatility of musicianship, led by *Rachel Woollatt*.

The opening bars led into music from *Frozen 2* with an arrangement by **Johnnie Vinson** that was well played and set the standard for most of the evening. *Habanera* from *Carmen* followed and the brass section kept everyone in time with this one. I rather enjoyed it.

I did get lost with the selection of songs from *Wicked* because I have not seen the musical as yet and I will admit it their rendition didn't appeal to me. It does need some extra work before they perfect it.

Next up was **Pharrell Williams'** *Happy*, which drew the audience in, encouraging them to clap along. It lifted the atmosphere with the orchestra back on track.

Songs by **Stevie Wonder** and **Taylor Swift** followed with solos by **Hannah Flanders** and **Natalie Parkes** as well as guitar perfectly played by **Matt Woollatt**. The first set was rounded off with a medley of songs made famous by **Bruno Mars**. There were certainly foot-tapping moments with these performances.

The second set opened with *Dance Of The Knights* by **Sergei Prokofiev**, better known to many as the theme tune to the TV show *The Apprentice*. It was a rather dramatic performance, whilst *Just the Way You Are* provided a touch of jazz.

Never Enough from *The Greatest Showman* was a highly commendable performance by all and one of the highlights of the show for me. Then it was the turn of the *Grease Medley*, and this was the biggest highlight overall – the audience thoroughly enjoyed and clapped along to it.

We were treated to some music from *Swan Lake* by **Tchaikovsky** which showcased some dramatic moments, and the concert was concluded with **The Monkees** song *I'm A Believer*, ending on a high – and the song lyrics were provided if you wanted to sing along.

Overall, The New Yorchestra gave a sterling performance. There may have been one or two mistakes along the way and some timing issues but put that aside, you will find a great collection of musicians who love what they do. If you get the chance to see them play, do so. It is a community orchestra brought together by Rachel Woollatt who is also their conductor.



© Kathryn Courtney

You don't have to be a professional musician to join The New Yorchestra. You can find out more about them on their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/TheNewYorchestra

—Kathryn Courtney



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Spring into Action!

Continued from page 1.

activity too! Then, to stop items going to waste, **Annelies** and other volunteers staff the **Repair Cafe** one Saturday a month at the **Public Hall** on Station Road.

For the summer, Ash is starting to plan a **Shirehampton Community Forest Picnic** on **Sunday 7th June** to coincide with **Bristol's Festival for Nature**, and **Rosie and I** are planning Shirehampton's second ever **LGBT+ Pride** on **Saturday 4th July**, sponsored by the **Bristol Port Company**. For now – hold the date for these two events, and get in touch if you'd like to volunteer or have other ideas that Shirehampton Action could support you to deliver.

If you are inspired by what you've read, do join us at our **Annual General Meeting** on **3rd June** (7pm, Public Hall), where you can help us shape the year ahead. All our events are free! Find out more at shirehamptonaction.org.uk/events or email chair@shirehamptonaction.org.uk

—Ludo Tolu, Shirehampton Action co-chair

Notice of AGM

Shirehampton Action (formerly Shirehampton Community Action Forum) will be holding its AGM on Wednesday 3rd June 2026 at 7pm at Shire Public Hall, Station Road, Shirehampton, Bristol, BS11 9TU.
Everyone Welcome



© Kathryn Courtney



The Big Clean

Our Events

shirehamptonaction.org.uk/events

High Street Market
9am - 2pm
Thursday 7th May
Shire Methodist Church

The Big Clean
drop in for an hour
10am - 4pm
Sunday 17th May

Collect litter picking equipment from the Cotswold Community Centre, or from the Shirehampton Social Club

Shire Community Forest Picnic
11am - 2pm
Sunday 7th June
Kings Weston

Shirehampton LGBT+ Pride
Sat 4th July



Scan for more!

Annual General Meeting
7pm - 8pm
3rd June
Shirehampton Public Hall



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An Update from Darren Jones MP, Bristol North West

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Bristol North West has a rich heritage of schools that provide support for children with additional needs, including being home to one of the first schools for blind children. (Please visit darren-jones.co.uk/about-bmw for more on this history.)

Flash forward to now, and I'm delighted to share that we've secured government funding for a **new state-of-the-art specialist school in Bristol North West** that will help children across the constituency with a wide range of additional needs to thrive.

The new **Trym Valley Academy** will be built on Greystoke Avenue in Southmead on the former site of the **Elmfield School for Deaf Children**, which had already relocated its primary school to Horfield and currently has a new secondary school under construction, also in Southmead.

The purpose-built school will offer specialist education for 164 local pupils aged 4 to 19 years with a range of additional needs: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD); Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs; Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD); and Cognition and Learning (C&L) needs.

The announcement is part of a landmark £3.7 billion investment by the Government to create 60,000 specialist places in mainstream schools and in new specialist facilities, like this one.

Alongside this investment, this government is also reforming **SEND provision**. The 'Every child achieving and thriving' white paper has just been published and outlines important changes this government is proposing so that children can get the

right support earlier, closer to home – and, importantly, without a fight.

The reforms include introducing a legal duty for all schools, nurseries and colleges to create digital **Individual Support Plans** for any children with SEND and increasing specialist support within mainstream schools to make them truly inclusive.

For example, this government is investing £1.8 billion over 3 years to create a bank of specialists in every local area, including SEND teachers and speech and language therapists, which schools can access on demand, regardless of whether a child has an education, health and care plan (**EHCP**). And the government is also investing more than £200 million into training to make sure that every teacher knows how to support children who have additional needs, not just specialist staff.

EHCPs will stay in place for children with more complex needs – no child will lose the support that they need.

All children in specialist schools and those aged eight years or older will keep their existing EHCPs until at least the age of 16. For children in a mainstream school who are seven years old or younger today, an assessment will be made in three years' time – following significant investment in making mainstream schools



© Darren Jones/Houses of Parliament

more inclusive, as detailed above – of whether their needs can be better met with an Individual Support Plan.

Now, there's a lot to digest here, and I don't have enough column inches to get into the nitty gritty of the white paper. But if you have any questions, please do contact me.

There's also a wealth of information available online in the public consultation on the reforms. You can contribute to the SEND reforms consultation at consult.education.gov.uk from now until it closes on **18th May 2026**.

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

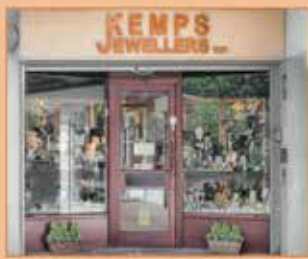
Email: darren.jones.mp@parliament.uk

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Climate Emergency Briefings

At the end of March, *Shirehampton Action* held a workshop on Severe Weather Preparedness. We know that parts of Shirehampton will be at risk of flooding as sea levels rise, so people living on the Cotswold Estate near the river were interested in flood defences and in what emergency measures they might take if the neighbourhood was flooded.

We had fun imagining the serious question of what to have in a Grab Bag, ready to carry out onto a waiting rescue boat along with the cat or dog when the waters rise. But we also acknowledged the reality and seriousness of the threat and tried to assess our capacity to meet it. At the end of our discussions we recognised our greatest strength was in community, our willingness to help one another.

Then at the end of April, the **Shirehampton Climate Emergency group (SCEG)** organized a screening of the **People's Emergency Briefing Film**.

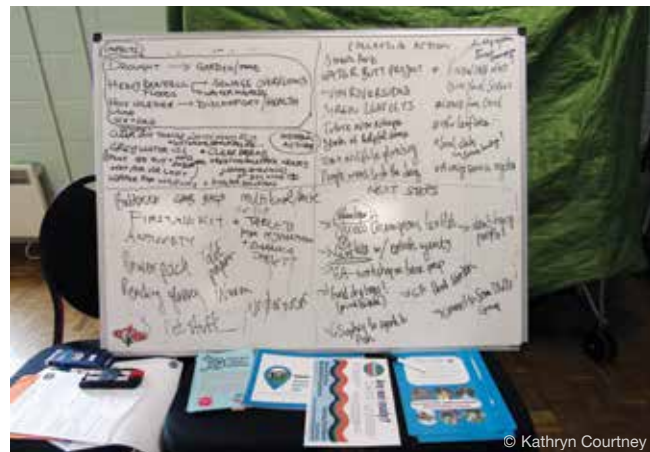


© Kathryn Courtney

The film "presents the national implications of climate and nature breakdown [and offers] credible, positive responses." The screenings aim to bring local communities together to hear the evidence on how climate change will affect our lives. Our local screening was followed by tea and cake before a facilitated discussion of the implications for our daily lives and how we can respond to our new and changing environment.

Some of you will have seen the film by now, but if not, you can find venues where it will be shown on the screening map: www.nebriefing.org.

—RS



© Kathryn Courtney



© Kathryn Courtney

Nature Notes



© Bobbie Perkins

Squirrel Spotting

A very suitable visitor for me to spot, after an absence from writing to the editors of Shire (with humble apologies, as I was unable to spot anything suitable for a while). I feel I may have found a way back into readers' good books with this lovely wee creature!

It was just 2 days ago as I walked through the village by St. Mary's Church, chatting to a friend and neighbour, that my friend quickly pointed out this busy and obviously hungry squirrel!

As you will guess, I almost always fly into a silent and over-hasty panic trying not to frighten any of nature's wonderful creatures as I rummage through my pockets and buried items in shopping bags to get a perfect picture!

This lovely squirrel has eased my way back into our prestigious newspaper I hope, so here's to more of the same.

Happy nature-watching, folks!

Bobbie

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Allotment Diary May 2026

March, April and May are busy months on *Myrtle Hall C Allotment*. Allotmentees wander down, sometimes in sunshine, often in pouring rain and blustery gales, to prepare for spring and summer. One sunny day in March, a lovely new neighbour was busy digging her overgrown beds and putting in early potatoes. You too can have a go, as early potatoes grow in garden beds, grow bags, containers, raised beds or allotments. And they're ready to harvest about 10 weeks after planting.

“Life begins the day you start a garden” ~ Chinese proverb

Slow Worms

While preparing for a vibrant herb garden to enjoy the beautiful scents and buzzing bees that herbs such as lavender, rosemary, comfrey and mint attract, a fantastic surprise awaited me. Beneath some black plastic, I found two slow worms (probably juveniles) that quickly wriggled away towards the compost heap to find a new home. Legless lizards, or slow worms, grow to about 50cm long and are found around most of Britain. Mainly nocturnal, they hide in warm places, under flat stones, logs, in soil or long grass, and then hibernate in underground burrows from mid-October to early spring. Females produce eggs that develop and hatch inside their bodies. They give birth to 6-12 live young (each 6.5-9cm long), in August or September. Slow worms shed their skin about 4 times a year, can break off their tail (which usually regrows) to escape predators, and eat slugs, snails, spiders, insects and earthworms – perfect for an allotment.



Slow worms.

Flowerings

Early fruiting strawberries are a favourite of allotmentees in spring. Flowering between February and May, they are a bright and cheerful addition to remind us that the weather is improving. Mulching around them is helpful to retain moisture in the soil and to deter slugs.

Another flowering beauty is the plum tree, set to produce its edible bounty in the coming late July to early September. Homegrown plums are very tasty!

Things to plant in May

Outdoors: Seeds: carrots, runner beans (mid to late May after last frosts).

Indoors: Seeds: chili peppers, leeks, more tomatoes.

This allotment diary is written by a relatively new allotmentee, and gardener, learning through experience and from fellow plot holders. Anyone else out there is also welcome to write in to Shire and add your own experiences, knowledge or opinions.



Broad bean flower.

Welcome to
Myrtle Hall C Allotments

© Diane



© Diane

Plum tree flower.



© Diane

Rosemary.



© Diane

Chitted early potatoes.

Anyone wishing to join the growers at **Myrtle Hall C allotments** can fill out an allotment form online from **Bristol City Council website**, email: allotments@bristol.gov.uk or phone the **Site Rep** on 07779 734101. As always, we look forward to welcoming lots of new members!

—Diane

Join the High Street Market on Their New Adventures

The first High Street Market of the year opened on Thursday 2nd April, giving market traders and customers a first look at their new home. It has moved to *Shirehampton Methodist Church/Hub* on the corner of the High Street and Penpole Avenue.

Occupying most of the building space plus the car park, you could find 20 market stalls, 4 community stalls, the Market Kitchen and a crafts activity being run by a couple members of *Shire Inspire*. The next event will have some additional stalls added that will see the market being run to its full capacity.

New stalls included *Wardy's Waves*, *Hens Tooth*, *ChocSmith*, *Paul The Woodworker*, and *All Sweets*. Regular favourites included *Homemade At 54*, *Encanto Designs*, *Katz Kitchen*, *Roseness Handmade Crafts*, *Proper Job Productions* and *Food By Sophie*. The market traders gave their full approval whilst customers felt it was the perfect venue. *Steve Yabsley* from *BBC Radio Bristol* came along, and his report was broadcast on *Easter Monday's Breakfast Show*.

Some of the feedback for the first market included:

"You meet interesting people. When you start talking to them, you really get to build up a rapport."—*Kat from Katz Kitchen*

"It brings people together. This is a good community market and it's good atmosphere."—*Nathan from Proper Job Productions*

Customers were also complimentary: "It keeps the community alive. You can get something different. You can meet the people that are on the stalls, friendship, and you get to support people that do things locally rather than maybe going to the big stores in town."

"It's old-fashioned values really, traditional values, and it's nice to see them still existing together."

Future markets will include the new **Arts, Crafts, and Conversation** activity held in the **Kitchen Community Room**, where people can bring along their own arts/crafts or take part in a provided activity, open to all ages. Why should the children have all the fun?

They also plan to have some acoustic music sessions at some markets to add ambience and provide the opportunity for local musicians to expand their audience, build confidence and perform their own songs.

Ash, Katherine and *Kathryn* would like to thank *Neil, Emily, Paul, Reece, Helen, Sherralee, Grant* and *Ludo*, as well as *Miriam* who has made *Shirehampton Markets* welcome, the *Methodist Church* team for allowing use of the venue, *Steve Yabsley*, the market traders and of course customers. All were a great support for the reopening.

The High Street Market takes place the first Thursday of each month, 9am-2pm, at *Shirehampton Methodist Church/Hub*, High Street/Penpole Avenue, BS11 0DY. The next High Street Market takes place on Thursday 7th May.

For more information and market updates, go to: www.facebook.com/shirehamptonmarkets or www.instagram.com/shirehamptonmarkets1. Email: shirehamptonmarkets@outlook.com

—*Kathryn Courtney*



© Grant Tooze



© Grant Tooze



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Easter in Shirehampton

We were lucky to have good weather and plenty of sunshine over Easter, and there was plenty of tradition and fun.

It was good to see shops closed for **Easter Sunday**, something that needs to be respected.

The **local churches** celebrated Easter with their services. Creativity was apparent with the old tradition of Easter Bonnets, with members of **St. Mary's Church** congregation taking part.

Ruby Jeans The Parade was open for a special Easter Sunday Roast, a tradition that tends to bring family together in the same way Christmas does.

Meanwhile, the **Port of Bristol Sports and Community Hub** had an Easter Egg Hunt, and there was plenty of chocolate to be found. The Easter Bunny had hidden the eggs but soon disappeared. Guess he was a bit camera shy, but I found his footprints!

—Kathryn Courtney



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Churches in the Shirehampton Area

Global Community Buffet



There was plenty of food on offer at *St. Mary's Church* on 21st March with their Global Community Buffet. There was a great selection of food that people dropped off to the church and it gave people a chance to taste something new.

There were Scottish neeps and tatties as well as veggie haggis. Cornwall was represented with saffron cake and clotted cream, the Cook Islands with pink potato salad, and food from India included basmati rice with lemon, herb and mushroom. Greece had baklava, Italy saw pasta salads that included pomodoro, tomato and herb and pesto, and the food selection didn't end there. For England, food included sausage rolls, fairy cakes and caramel tart. There were Danish pastries for Denmark, watermelon for Costa Rica and plantain chips that represented Columbia. There was so much available and plenty of people came along to taste something new.

This event will be happening again in the future and I for one will be happy to provide some traditional food that represents the Republic of Ireland and see what recipes I can get from my Welsh cousins. It's a great idea. This event brings together the community as well as the chance to try traditional cuisine from around the world.

You can find out about community events being run by Shirehampton's St. Mary's Church via their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/stmarysshirehampton

—Kathryn Courtney



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Shirehampton Baptist Church News

Contact: www.shirehamptonbaptistchurch.co.uk

I am often asked, where is your church? Probably because it is not on the High Street, but past the post office on Station Road. You will see a modernised building with a car park area. When you enter the building, you will find a lovely set of rooms and a warm welcome.

Rock Steady will start meeting again after the Easter break. This is a club for primary school children which meets every Thursday during term time at our church building, Station Road, 3:30-4:30pm. The children enjoy games, drama, music and craft. Parents are welcome to stay. If interested, contact us.

The **Songs of Praise Café** meets on the second Sunday of the month. It is run by the **Cotswold Christian Community**, which consists of Christians who live on the Cotswold Estate, but anyone reading

this is very welcome. We have very interesting talks by people of all walks of life and enjoy some favourite songs and poems, always followed by tea and cakes. Do join us at the Cotswold Community Hall, 4:45-6pm on May 10th.

Our **Life Café** is well worth a visit. The next one will be on May 28th, 10-11:30am. We meet in our lovely Church building on Station Road, on the last Thursday of the month.

We meet for a service every Sunday at 10:30am. At the moment we are going through the process of choosing a new Minister. However, we have been blessed by some excellent preachers and a good leadership team who make sure our sick folk are not forgotten. On Sundays those who are unable to meet with us can join on Zoom. All are welcome.

On **Sunday May 24th**, we celebrate **Pentecost**. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended with power on Jesus' disciples, filling them with power to take the Christian message to all people. You can read about it in the book of Acts chapter 2, which is in the New Testament. Do join us on this joyous day at 10:30am.

Until next month. Love and prayers from all at Shirehampton Baptist Church.

St Mary's Church

No main article this month from St Mary's, but here is a list of their regular activities.

www.stmarysshire.org

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------|--|
| 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 |

Hello from Shirehampton Methodist Church



© Kathryn Courtney

We hope you all had a joyful Easter. We are very excited to be celebrating the **150th Anniversary of our Methodist Church** in Shirehampton this May. To celebrate we are holding a special eco event on **Thursday 28th May from 12-4pm**. There will be 'Wraps to Wrap' (& eat!); recycled materials to get creative with; herb planters to pot up; a Toiletries Tombola to raise money to twin our toilets; energy advice from Bristol Energy Network, the Centre for Sustainable Energy, the Cheese Project and Resnet; and representatives from some of our local environmental groups, including Bee Happy and Shirehampton Climate Emergency Action. This is a free, fun event with something for all ages.

Our **Worship Services** continue on Sunday mornings at 11am. Our usual pattern is a service on the first Sunday in each month led by a minister or local preacher; on the second Sunday, **Jo** leads a service appropriate for all ages; on the third Sunday, we have a service of Holy Communion, usually led by our own minister **Rev Martin Slocombe**; and on the fourth Sunday, we have Coffee and Conversation, where we discuss a topic together.

On **Sunday 31st May** there will be **no service** at

Shirehampton Methodist Church as we will be joining with all the other Methodist Churches in Bristol at the **Circuit Assembly at Withywood Ecumenical Project**, 10.30am-2.30pm.

You are very welcome for Church Services, our Celebration events and in our Hub. We are an inclusive church welcoming and affirming every person.

May God's peace and love be with you all during May.

From everyone at Shire Methodist.

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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Wool and Wine at Kitchen 44

The *second Tuesday evening of each month*, you will find Wool and Wine at Kitchen 44 on Shirehampton's High Street. This is a family-run business, and I met with co-owner *Xanthe* and her sister *Eden* who were busy making hot drinks, serving wine and cooking dirty fries.

I asked how the Wool and Wine evenings started. "It was brought to us as an idea by a friend of our mum's and it was either you crochet or knit. You come along and you can do your own projects and chat with other people. It's really a community event and we serve a range of alcohol, hot drinks, cold cans, as well as Dirty Fries or charcuterie boards during the evening."

"It's a way of getting people together, that's what we wanted. It's something the village needs. It's a night out, it's fun and everybody's making new friends, it's a real social thing."

"You don't have to buy anything, you can just sit down and have a chat and you can leave whenever or you can pop back in, but a large wine and a larger portion of dirty fries is £15 and we go from there."

That April evening there were a great group of ladies sat around the large table in the middle of the room and as I walked through the door, I got a warm welcome. There was plenty of chat, food, wine and hot drinks. One person was knitting a snood, another crocheting a blanket. **Julie** and **Alicia**, who I know, were making a handbag each. Some had only met that evening and yet you'd think they'd been friends for a long time. I asked people what they enjoyed most about their evening together:

"I don't have to cook and it's a chance to make new friends." "I come along for the wine" raised some

laughs. "It's the company and making new friends." "It's nice to be away from screens, enjoying talking to people and using my hands for crafts." "It's a welcoming atmosphere."

I have to say that the Wool and Wine evenings will continue to grow from strength to strength and I enjoyed my time with everyone.

Wool And Wine takes place the second Tuesday of each month 7pm-9pm at Kitchen 44, High Street, BS11 0DJ. You can find out more at Kitchen 44's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/AJSBISTROBS11 (this will eventually change to Kitchen 44).

—Kathryn Courtney



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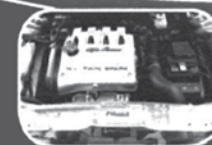
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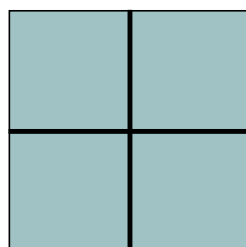
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Sport and Activities IN SHIREHAMPTON

Ladies – Come and Learn to Play Cricket

This is an exciting time for *Twyford House Cricket Club women's team*. The team has just won the winter *Women's Bristol Indoor Cricket League* and is now looking forward to the summer season, when the team play both softball and hardball cricket.

All of our team members started out playing the softball format, which is great for beginners and is filled with a lot of fun. Why don't you give it a try? Age is no barrier, and all cricket equipment is provided.

Twyford House Cricket Club is based at Shirehampton Recreation Ground at the top of Penpole Lane. Outdoor practice with taster sessions is held from 6.30pm each and every Friday throughout the summer, starting from May 1st.

Contact kellyarmfield83@gmail.com to register your interest, pop on your training shoes (or your daps!), and we look forward to welcoming you.

—Gary Ball, Chairman, Twyford House Cricket Club



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The Shock of the Past

Looking back can be a shock sometimes. When I began fencing only men could fence epee or sabre; women were limited to foil. In the words of the otherwise brilliant *Bob Anderson* (Olympic coach and fight choreographer for the early *Star Wars* films), “foil is suitable for both sexes, whereas only men can cope with the other blades.”

That was written in 1970.

Women first fenced epee in World Championships in 1989 and the Olympics in 1996. For sabre, the dates were 1999 and 2004 respectively.

Now women excel at all three weapons, in a sport that is more about technique, stamina, timing and wit than brute strength.

For men and women, girls and boys, it's about taking one's limits as a challenge, not a verdict.

Fencing sets a practical problem – to hit without being hit – but in the process the fencer learns to control and channel their emotions, to hold themselves in terms of posture, to break the feedback loop of stress, and to read the intentions and emotion/physical state of others. All this at high speed and high exhilaration.

It's a circuit breaker for anxiety and a training ground for self-management.

There are other sports that are similar but I don't think any of them have the immediacy, intensity and



© Matthew Blandford

comprehensiveness of fencing. In a small space, a short time and face-to-face, fencing stresses, shapes and tests, our fitness, wits, skill and courage in a format that is fun.

That anyone ever thought the full range of fencing shouldn't be open to women, is just one of the many shocking things that were put up with in a past that is still living memory.

—John Rohde

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Avonmouth Rugby Club Minis Tournament

“Enjoying the day with a fair dollop of mucking about!”

Our headline quote, taken from *Larne RFC's* Facebook page, sums up the excitement and joy of mini rugby. The opportunity for children to begin their rugby journey comes at the age of four, with Tots rugby, but in school year 2, at the age of seven, they move into the “minis phase”, beginning with tag rugby and developing passing, running and dodging skills.

On Sunday 12th April, hundreds of children from clubs across Bristol and the South-west gathered at Barracks Lane for a joyous celebration of mini rugby. Our photographer, **Bob Pitchford**, was there to capture the atmosphere for you; thanks Bob.

Aside from giving your girl or boy the opportunity to have loads of fun in a safe and nurturing environment, why should a parent consider enrolling their child with a rugby club?

1. All children are welcome, of all shapes and sizes.
2. There are huge health benefits, helping to increase strength, endurance, flexibility and bone density.
3. It boosts confidence, character, resilience and self-esteem.
4. It teaches the values of teamwork, respect, discipline and sportsmanship that are the bedrock of relationships in the wider world.
5. There are positive role models in abundance, in older children as well as the coaching staff.
6. It gives children a sense of belonging, friendship and community, where bonds are forged that can last a lifetime.
7. It's loads of fun!

Watching a game of mini rugby sometimes seems like watching joyous, organised chaos, as the kids grow their minds and bodies and gradually get used to the rules and discipline of the game. As **Jonathan Davies**, the legendary **Wales fly-half/centre**, remarked: “I think you enjoy the game more if you don't know the rules.”

I'm going to finish with a quote from a young lad encouraging a friend, who had said as he sobbed:

“They're all older than me, everyone's bigger than me...”

“No, listen to me, trust me. I'm the shortest kid here, listen, it doesn't matter if you're short, it doesn't matter if you're young, it doesn't matter if you're tall or fat... you are a **BRILLIANT** rugby player, do you understand that? You are **INSANE**, you are actually **INSANE**, come on, give me a hug... Come on, let's play!”

(Quote taken from a video on the **@SPORTbible TikTok** page, Inspiring Young Lad Encourages Nervous Friend in Rugby Game.)

If you would like to know more about what mini rugby can do for your child and how they can give it a go, contact Simon Johnston at your local community club, Avonmouth Old Boys RFC.

Email: simon.johnston@blueyonder.co.uk

Mobile: 07804 793015

—Paul McMillan



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YOUTH FOOTBALL:

U16 Port of Bristol v Longwell Green, Avon Youth League Cup Final

On Sunday 15th March, Port's u16's contested the Avon Youth League Cup Final. The opponents were Longwell Green, sitting 2nd in the First Division, so it was going to be a tough match. So it proved, Longwell Green running out 3-1 winners. The Port lads fought every step of the way though; this is what Van Papontoniou, coach and Chair of Port of Bristol Youth F.C. had to say:

"The boys have had a great season in the cups; semi-finalists in the Gloucestershire County Cup and reaching the League Cup Final for the 3rd season in a row. It was disappointing to lose this final but no complaints from us; the lads gave everything for us on the night and the best team won, unfortunately for us. Looking forward to finishing the season with this talented bunch of players and we will see what next season brings in U18s football."



Momin, the #44 and scorer of Port's goal, prowls on the edge of the box.



Tarren closes in to tuck the ball away, but the offside flag ruled it out.



Congratulations!

U15 Avon Youth League; Shire Colts Panthers v Shine Saints, 29th March 2026

There was a lot to play for in this Division 2 fixture; a Shire win would take them top of the table; a victory for Shine, would help secure another season in Division 2.

Shine kicked off with the wind at their backs and Colts struggled to make progress. On 20 minutes a Shine break put them ahead, 0-1. Seven minutes later, they extended their lead when a downward header from a corner was scrambled over the line. 0-2 at half-time, but still all to play for.

Injuries forced Shire into a change of goalkeeper and Shine scored again on 50 minutes, following a good run down the wing and a smart finish from the cross. 0-3.



Shire Colts u15 Panthers with Iain Macfarlane (l) and Pete Belmore (r)



Goalscorer Harry is down and out of the game.



Shire's #9 Harry beats the keeper. 1-3

It was Shire's #9, Harry, who struck back, weaving his way from the left wing to the centre, to finish superbly. Unfortunately, he was injured in scoring, so Shire had to play with 10 men.

Another from Shine made it 1-4, but Shire didn't give it up and Owen pulled another back in the last 10 minutes. 2-4. A missed opportunity to go top for Shire, but Shine deserved the win.



Owen beats the defender and "nutmegs" the keeper.

Shire Colts are looking for new youth players for next season, with the emphasis on having fun and keeping active. We have teams playing on Saturday and Sunday from U7 up to U16, and links to adult football at Cribbs FC. Training is on Saturday mornings and weekday evenings (older age groups) during term time. So, whether you're a beginner or destined to be a future star, find out more or by visiting: pitchero.com/clubs/shire.

—Iain Macfarlane, Secretary, Shire Colts

—Photos: © Paul McMillan

Footnote:

In the week leading up to the Easter weekend, Iain accompanied six of the Shire Colts U15 Panthers squad to Spain, to represent North Somerset RTC in the East Mallorca Cup. For the full story visit the news section of the club website. Here's the link: www.pitchero.com/clubs/shire/news

Avon Derby: Shirehampton F.C. v Avonmouth F.C.

On a bright *Easter Monday* afternoon, the Shirehampton and Avonmouth faithful gathered at Penpole Lane for the return derby match; Shire had snatched a 3-2 away victory on February 17th, so Avonmouth would be keen to regain BS11 bragging rights. Sadly, Shire could not be present for the match but *Charlie Birleson*, Shirehampton's media man, was kind enough to send us a couple of photos.

The Avonmouth breakthrough came after only 6 minutes, **Tom Cheeseman** opening the scoring. Here's a quote from the club's X account: "The Cheeseman with a screamer!!!!!! 6 mins in we lead 1-0."

As the battle raged in the second half, Shire's chances of levelling took a hammer blow when, with 15 minutes to go, **Thomas Lewis** was dismissed for a second bookable offence. Despite this, Shire held the line, so 0-1 is how it finished. Here's the reaction from Avonmouth on X: "Win win win win win!!!!!! BS11 is black and white!!! Get in there!!!!!!"

Since then, Shirehampton have recorded a thumping **4-0 home win** against **Longwell Green** and are guaranteed to play next season in the **First Division**. Avonmouth are looking towards the **Premier Division**; on Saturday April 11th, a **1-0 win** over **Sturminster Newton United** secured a promotion play-off spot. Here's a message to the club from the NonLeagueHQ X account:

"Congratulations to @AvonmouthFC who have secured a Play-off place in the @_Western_League_Div1 with a 1-0 win yesterday."

Congratulations also, from all of us at Shire, to the prolific striker **Josh Pearce**, whose winning goal against Sturminster was his 30th of the season.

Avonmouth were drawn away to **Wells City** in the play off, the game ending **0-0**, Avonmouth then losing **4-2** on penalties. Club chairman **Dave Rowley** commented:

"Avonmouth had three good chances in first half and hit the post in the second half but Wells had more of the game, with no fire power up front! **Ash Bennett's** target was the play offs, which was achieved."

—Paul McMillan, with grateful thanks to Shirehampton F.C. and Avonmouth F.C. for their input. Photos © by Charlie Birleson.



© Charlie Birleson

Monday 6th April 2026



0 - 1



Shirehampton FC

Avonmouth FC



© Charlie Birleson

Twyford House Cricket Club's Season Opening Friendly

The club's Facebook page tells us that this was the Twyford's first warm up fixture in the *West of England Premier League 2*. The WEPL is one of 33 cricket Premier Leagues, organising the highest standard of amateur cricket in the West of England.

We managed to make the trip to **Brislington** for this friendly fixture. With **Twyford House** well set on 144 for two off 24 overs, with squally rain and gusting winds, a strong gust blew over a sight screen, prompting my departure to Brislington Park and Ride for a #9 bus back to Shire! Despite the dismantling of the sight screen to avoid a repeat, the game obviously continued, "The House" recording a good win marked by half-centuries from **Parikshith Shetty** and **Elliot Bevan**, **Alex Quinn's** debut and **Curtis Blakemore's** return to the club.

Shire wishes the club every possible success in an exciting season to come; we will be following you as and when our limited reporting resources allow.

If you are a fan of cricket or of other sports, you have some spare time and you enjoy writing, why not join our team? You can contact us at sports@shire.org.uk. If you can take a decent photo too, even better, but not essential.

"Up the House!"

—Paul McMillan & Photos © Paul McMillan



Time for me to "head for the hills!"



One of Brislington's fast bowlers "sends one down."



Parikshith Shetty fends one off.



Bowled!
Twyford's first wicket falls!

Shirehampton Sailing Club Sets Sail

On Saturday 11 April, we had three Wayfarers set sail, accompanied by the safety boat crewed by *Vice-Commodore Tina and Rachel, our Membership Secretary*. It was forecast Force 5 and we had three experienced helms and two or three people in each Wayfarer. We also double-reefed to cut the sail area down. Despite this, one of the Wayfarers capsized. We understand they also nearly towed a fishing line, so if the fishermen got any pictures (sweet revenge??), we'd love to see them!

A textbook exercise then followed up by the M5 motorway bridge, with **Harry** standing on the centreboard and pulling on the jib rope, Rachel inside the Wayfarer ready to be scooped into the boat, and the safety boat pulling the bow into the wind so that when the Wayfarer righted it was pointing head to wind with the sails flapping. As both of the sailors were getting cold, we towed the Wayfarer back to the slip so they could get warmed up in the clubhouse.

Meanwhile, our **Commodore Angus** was taking out our two new guests today, in his own Wayfarer, up and down the Avon until it was time to get back to the slip before the tide went out too far.

In other news, work progressed on mending a Mirror dinghy with a wooden patch cut to fit and plenty of epoxy with filler, and our **Bosun Brian** bought the club a brand new Karcher patio washer to deal with the

algae that has been steadily spreading on the slipway. It took an hour or so to put together and we had a good half hour of using it up and down the slip.

We are sailing on the following dates in the next two months:

- Saturday 9th May, start 9:30am for High Tide 12:22, finish 2pm.
- Saturday 23rd May, start 10:15am for High Tide 13:16, finish 5.15pm.
- Saturday 30th May, launching at high tide 07:30am, going downtide to Portishead Marina, returning by High Tide 19:39.

—Tina Biggs, Vice Commodore, Shirehampton Sailing Club

info@shiresc.co.uk • www.shiresc.co.uk



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Shire Sailors Saturday 11th April 2026.



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Avonmouth Bowling Club's Season Gets Under Way

On 5th April, *Avonmouth* opened the 2026 season with a friendly away to *Olveston*, winning 3 out of 5 rinks. However, *Olveston* triumphed overall, winning with an overall score of 83-72.

Honours were evened up though when Avonmouth hosted the return match on Saturday 11th; **Simon Johnston** reported that Avonmouth triumphed 94-63, **Dave, Shelley, Andy** and **Julie** contributing a MASSIVE win on their rink with a couple of 7s and a perfect 8. He also said that "The tea was quite nice too." A perfect day in the sunshine and showers at **Barracks Lane**.

It is not too late to join this super friendly and good-humoured local club, either as a playing or social member. Bring a sense of humour with you and you'll fit right in.



Avonmouth Bowling Club's piece of "this blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England" (John of Gaunt, in William Shakespeare's *Richard II*.)



Members enjoy a break on the sun-soaked terrace as they prepare the club for the new season.



There's a roll-up every Tuesday evening from 5pm (weather permitting), where new members can give it a try with expert and friendly help.

Our Open Day is on Saturday May 23rd, 11am to 5pm. Come along and give it a try with free expert coaching from members. Tea and coffee available and the cosy clubhouse and bar will be open.

If you are interested in getting to know more about this event or the club, please email avonmouthbowlsclub@outlook.com or call 07804 791855.

—Paul McMillan

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