Shire

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

No. 658 - November 2026 www.shire.org.uk 5,000 copies monthly

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Would you like to make a one-off donation in support of Shire newspaper? Use this QR code to reach our JustGiving page.

Every contribution helps us keep our community connected.

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.

Community Past, Present and Future – Public Hall Open Day

On Saturday 26th September, *Shirehampton Public Hall* hosted their open day. This building is one of the most important venues in Shirehampton, not only historically but also as a community asset.

The display boards were full of photos and information and they were fascinating to see and read, covering from the very beginnings and the opening of the hall and library on **29th September 1904**. It was the place where **Ralph Vaughan Williams'** *'The Lark Ascending'* was first performed in 1920.

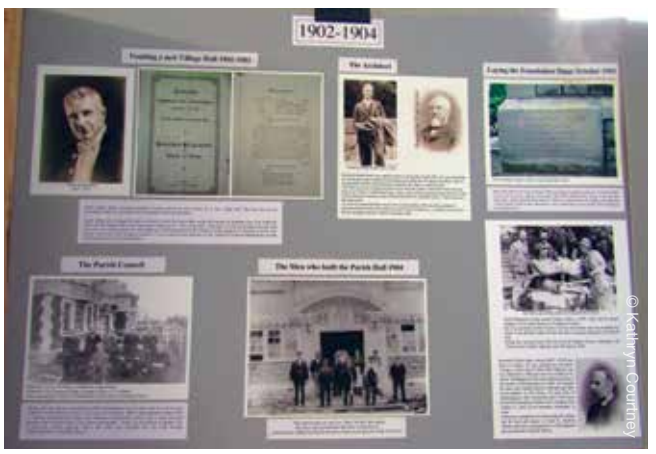
Through the decades, the Public Hall has seen plenty of events, including **Twyford Pantomime Society, Twyford Dramatic Society, The Shire Players, Grainger Players**, and the **BBC's** *'Any Questions'*. It was even featured in *'Casualty'* when the show was filmed in Bristol. There have been many celebrations, from birthdays to weddings, exhibitions, boxing, table top sales, fayres, community events and many dances held here. I spotted one photo that featured my **Uncle Bill** on double bass and my **Uncle Paddy** playing the accordion, both members of **Melody Maestros**.

When I arrived, **Ed Amphlett** was on stage about to update everyone on the improvements made and the future of the Public Hall. A lot of progress has been made with the help of **Trustees** and **volunteers** with more to follow. Ed also revealed that **Bristol City Council** started the process of a community transfer of assets of the running of the hall to the **P.H. Community Assoc**. This process will be completed by 2032, making the P.H. Community Assoc. fully responsible for the running and upkeep of the Public Hall.









Continues on page 6.

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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 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'.

Contributions submitted to: editor@shire.org.uk

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REGULAR EVENTS IN SHIREHAMPTON

SHIREHAMPTON PUBLIC HALL REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

MONDAY	**Twyford Art Club** (Except August)	10am-12noon	Main Hall
	Yoga	6.30-7.30pm	Main Hall
TUESDAY	**Jolly Melodies** (Term Time)	10am-12noon	Main Hall
	Line Dancing	2-3pm	Main Hall
	Community Living Room	3-5pm	Library
	Elevate Dance (Primary School Children – Contemporary) (Term Time Only)	3.30-5.30pm	Main Hall
	Bereavement Support (1st Tues)	5.30-7pm	Library
	Puppy Training	7-8pm	Main Hall
WEDNESDAY	**Healing Rooms** (2nd Weds)	10.30am-1.30pm	Main Hall
	Better World (1st Weds)	11am-1pm	Main Hall
	Over 70s Exercise	2-3pm	Main Hall
	Extraordinary Links (Term Time)	3.30-5.30pm	Main Hall
	Women's Fellowship (2nd and 4th Weds)	7.15-9.15pm	Main Hall
	Shire Stitchers (3rd Weds)	7.30-9.30pm	Main Hall
THURSDAY	**Shire Social Group**	10am-12noon	Bradley Room
	Healing Rooms	10am-1.30pm	Main Hall
	Tai Chi	2-3pm	Main Hall
	Family History Group (2nd Thurs)	6-8pm	Library
	Pilates	7-8pm	Main Hall
	Model Railway Club	7-10pm	Club Room & Basement
FRIDAY	**Shire Stitchers** (1st Friday)	10am-12noon	Bradley Room
	Chair Yoga	11-11.45am	Main Hall
	Yoga	12noon-1pm	Main Hall
SATURDAY	**(Private and Public Functions)**		
SUNDAY	**Church of Grace**	11am-4pm	Main Hall & Springfield

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

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

Regular Events at the Cotswold Community Centre

MONDAY
Pilates 9.30-10.30am
Kettlebells 2pm-3pm
5:15-6:15pm
6:30-7:30pm

TUESDAY
Over 70s Exercise Class 2pm-3pm
Sing For Fun 3pm-4pm
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

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

Notice to Our Readers and Contributors

We really appreciate and look forward to receiving your articles for our paper. It really helps keep our community connected.

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.

Please note: The deadline for receiving your articles or advertisements is the ***10th of each month.***

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 their submission will not be able to be published.

SHIRE ADVICE SERVICE

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The Shire Community Pages

Carols on the Green Celebrates 50 Years — Help Us Keep the Tradition Alive

This *Christmas Eve* marks a very special moment for Shirehampton. It is *50 years since local families first gathered on the Green in 1976 to sing carols together* – a simple idea that has grown into one of the village's most cherished traditions.

For half a century, **Carols on the Green** has brought neighbours, friends and generations of families together in the heart of Shirehampton. It's a night filled with carols, community spirit and the unmistakable feeling that Christmas has truly begun.

Shire newspaper has supported this event since that very first gathering, and we remain committed to helping it thrive. Each year, the Shire committee organises the band, invites a local resident to lead the service, and arranges the sound and lighting that make the evening possible. Many people give their time freely, but there are still essential costs involved in staging the event.

This year, as we celebrate the **50th anniversary**, we are inviting the community to help us cover those costs. If you are able to donate, your contribution, no matter how large or small, will help ensure that Carols on the Green continues to be a joyful, welcoming tradition for everyone.

We will be collecting loose change on the night, but online donations made before or after the event are especially helpful.

To donate, please use the QR code, or visit https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/shirecarolsonthegreen.

Any funds raised beyond the cost of the Christmas Eve Carols will go directly towards supporting the ongoing production of Shire in the coming year, helping us continue to serve the community we love.

Thank you for supporting this treasured Shirehampton tradition – and for helping us keep it going for the next 50 years.

The Shire Committee


© Bob Pitchford


© Bob Pitchford


© Bob Pitchford

Christmas Is Coming — Try Out the Shire Shop!

It's that time of year when the realisation hits that Christmas shopping needs to begin. If you're looking for gifts for local friends, family or colleagues, why not take a look at the Shire Shop?

Use the QR code or find it online here: **https://shirepublications.myspreadshop.co.uk/**

We have hundreds of Shire-branded items to suit all tastes and interests – T-shirts, tote bags, badges, mugs, aprons, babygrows and even socks!

And if there's something you've thought of that we haven't yet created, get in touch and we'll happily explore adding it to our range.



We know the items in our online shop aren't the cheapest options out there, but the quality has been consistently excellent. Everything is made to order, meaning there are no overheads for the newspaper, and delivery is quick and reliable.

The best bit? When you buy from the Shire Shop, you're not only choosing a unique Shire gift – you're also supporting your community newspaper. Every purchase generates a percentage of funding that comes straight back to us, helping keep the Shire newspaper running strong. It's a gift with a feel-good factor built in.

So if you're starting your Christmas shopping, why not begin right here in the Shire Shop?



Lend A Hand: Two Great Ways To Support Shirehampton This November

The Big Clean - Twice a year, Shirehampton Action organises The Big Clean events, where a day is set aside for the community to come together and do a litter pick in Shirehampton. If you can, please join us on *Sunday 1st November, 10am–4pm*.

Past events have been very popular with families and friends coming together to help, and all it takes is an hour of your time. Or you can of course stay longer to help if you want!

Meet and pick up your equipment at one of the collection points: **Shirehampton Social Club, High Street, BS11 0DG or Cotswold Community Centre, Dursley Road, BS11 9SH**.

Find more information at: https://shirehamptonaction.org.uk/events or www.facebook.com/ShirehamptonAction. You can also email treasurer@shirehamptonaction.org.uk


© Kathryn Courtney

Poppies on the Green - Volunteers are needed to help set up the annual Poppies on the green display on *Monday 2nd November, 10am–12.30pm*. If you can help, please come along on the day - meet on The Green, Shirehampton.

This display attracts a lot of attention and is very much a community event as the purple and red poppies have been painted by local people, and it continues to grow each year, remembering those who gave their lives and those who returned home. They are not forgotten.

Volunteers will also be needed to help take down the display. The date and time will be confirmed on set-up day, and the information will be available on the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/poppiesonthegreen


© Kathryn Courtney

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.

LEGO Club at the Library

A great activity for *children ages 4–11*. Come along to the *Shirehampton Library* for the Club's November session on *Saturday 7th November* or the December session on *Saturday 5th December* to have some creative building fun with your little ones! Both sessions run 10:30–11:30am. All children must be accompanied by an adult.



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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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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Community Past, Present and Future – Public Hall Open Day

Continued from page 1.

Keeping the Public Hall open for the community and future bookings is vital. If the Association is unable to keep the building open it would close, which is why they are asking for **new Trustees to join (see below), volunteers to help, contribute ideas and even fundraising ideas**. Shirehampton needs the Public Hall.

Miles led tours of the building, and he was full of historic information, answering people's questions in a clear, knowledgeable way.

I spoke to a couple of people about their thoughts on the Open Day.

"This is a hidden gem and more people need to come and discover it for themselves," said **Ellen**.

"It's been very interesting, it's a very beautiful hall, and a marvellous place for people to come," said **Diane**.

As part of the Open Day, **Bristol Energy Network, C.H.E.E.S.E, Retrofit South West** and the **Centre For Sustainable Energy** were set up in the Bradley Room, offering information and advice. Some have also been working with Public Hall with regard to energy efficiency.

For more information about the Public Hall, go to: http://shirepubhall.org.uk and www.facebook.com/shirepubhall

For bookings, email bookings@shirepubhall.org.uk or call 0117 9829963.

Kathryn Courtney





© Kathryn Courtney



© Kathryn Courtney

Shape the Future of Your Community – Become a Trustee for Shirehampton Public Hall!

Shirehampton Public Hall is looking for enthusiastic Trustees to join our team and help guide this essential community hub into the future. Operating from our historic building on Station Road, our Trustees work hand-in-hand with the local community. Our mission is simple: provide opportunities for residents to access education, promote physical and mental wellbeing, and support vital recreation and leisure activities.

As a Trustee, you will have a high-level overview of our charity. Your main responsibilities will include:

- **Strategic Oversight:** Helping shape the services and activities we offer to the community.
- **Building & Safety:** Ensuring our historic building is safe, compliant, and well-maintained.
- **Financial Stewardship:** Ensuring the charity remains financially viable and secure.
- **Staff Support:** Offering guidance and backing to our management team.

What We Are Looking For

You don't need prior board experience to apply! We welcome people from all walks of life who bring fresh perspectives, energy, and a commitment to our neighbourhood, and we provide a training course to help you settle in. You must be over 18 years old, and the minimum time commitment is to attend one monthly 2-hour meeting.

Why Join Us?

- **Give back to Shirehampton** and see the direct, positive impact of your choices on your neighbours.
- **Develop highly transferable professional skills** in leadership, governance, and strategy.
- **Work alongside a friendly team** of like-minded people who care about our community.

How to Apply & Connect

Online: Visit the Shirehampton Public Hall Volunteering Page.

Phone: Call our office on 0117 982 9963.

Facebook: Follow updates on Facebook (Shirehampton Public Hall).

Instagram: Check us out on Instagram (@shirepubhall).

X (Twitter): Tweet or message us at @HallPublic.

Olympic Sword Fencing In Shire!

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Oasis Academy Brightstowe -
www.bwefencingclub.com/find-us-shirehampton

Adults:
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Saturdays Junior Eagles (Sabre): 10am – 11:45am

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Firstly, an *apology* from the Shire committee: due to a technical issue, the QR code in last month's article may not have worked for you. Please try again using the new QR below to become a *Friend of Shire*. Otherwise, alternative means of setting up your donation are given below. All the details are also available on our website at *shire.org.uk*.

We have had an encouraging response to our new Friends initiative so far, and we're excited to continue building membership as a key part of our work in the community. **Here's a reminder of the benefits of becoming a Friend of Shire:**

1. You and every other household in our community will continue to receive Shire News free of charge, produced and delivered entirely by volunteers who live locally.
2. Your name will be listed in every edition as a "Friend of Shire" in our Friends Section, unless you decide to remain anonymous.
3. For every £1 of your regular monthly donation amount, you will be entitled to a 10% discount on up to 2 personal announcements (birthdays, anniversaries, funeral notices, etc.) and/or promotions of free community events per year.
4. You will receive an invitation to our annual volunteers and friends social, with free drinks and snacks.
5. If you are not able to support Shire as a volunteer, this is a great way to involve yourself in supporting and building our community. Make no mistake, despite our many problems, Shirehampton and the four villages are a special place to live, work and grow up. Please join us in our work to celebrate that.

You can set up a monthly standing order using the following bank details:

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Sort code: 30-99-38
A/c no: 01985368
A/c name: Shire Publications
Reference: Friends of Shire

If you want to know more about the work that Shire does to report on and celebrate the vibrant life of our community, here is a QR code to access our website with a "Friends of Shire" enrolment document. Alternatively, email adverts@shire.org.uk or call Paul on 07742 804737.

Here is our **current list of Friends**; please help it to grow by adding your name to the **role of honour**:

Paul McMillan, Renee Slater, Anonymous x 3
The Shire Committee

And They're Off! Fundraising Race Night

On Saturday 26th September, a fundraising night was held at the Cotswold Community Centre. "Honest" Tom and Leon hosted a race night on behalf of the Shire newspaper.

Around 40 people supported us by placing bets on some aptly named horses over 8 races. Most punters went away with "winnings" as well as something from the raffle.

The Shire committee would like to say a huge thank you to the following:

Woods Butchers for their kind donation of a meat voucher. All **committee members** who donated a raffle prize. **Tom Murray** and **Leon Franklin** for being our "bookies". **Debs Parsons** for the tasty sausage and chips. **John Hastings** for making sure things ran smoothly. And especially the **Cotswold Community Association** for allowing us to use the hall.

We raised over £250 to help fund the paper in these difficult times.

Jill Williamson & Photos © Sarah Biggs







Shirehampton Primary School PTA Urgently Needs a Treasurer

Despite advertising the role over recent months, we have sadly been unable to find a volunteer to take on the vital position of *Treasurer*. Without it, the *PTA* may be unable to continue organising events, including some of the much-loved activities that bring our school community together and raise important funds for the school.

Over the years, the PTA has organised a wide range of successful events, including the **Halloween Disco**, **Christmas Fayre with Santa's Grotto, Summer Fair, movie nights** and many other activities enjoyed by children and families alike. Funds raised have also helped provide additional resources and opportunities that enhance school life for our pupils.

The good news is that we have welcomed new PTA members who are enthusiastic, full of ideas and eager to help organise events and fundraising activities in 2027. We are excited about what we could achieve next, but we cannot move forward without a Treasurer.

If you have a child, grandchild, niece or nephew at the school and want them to make the most of their time at **Shirehampton Primary School**, please consider volunteering. Equally, you do not need to have a child at the school to take on the role. We would love to hear from anyone who cares about supporting local children and can spare a little time to help make a difference.

No previous PTA experience or accounting qualifications are required. Full handover, training and ongoing support will be provided by our friendly committee. All we ask is a willingness to get involved and help ensure that the opportunities and experiences our children enjoy can continue for years to come.

We know the right person is out there, and with their help we can continue creating memorable experiences for our children, bringing our community together and delivering exciting new events in the years ahead.

To find out more, please contact Shirehampton Primary School PTA at shireps.pta@gmail.com.

A small amount of your time could make a huge difference and help secure the future of our PTA, our events and our children.

SHIRE LIVES

Amanda Parsons

Amanda Parsons is a busy, busy woman—but she loves her job. *Manager of Shirehampton's Public Hall* since 2014, she is the longest-serving person to hold that post, though she had no intention of spending so long in the role when she first took it on, having previously worked in the *Shirehampton Library*. 'It's a delight to work with so many different cultures and age groups,' she says, 'but it's a struggle, too.'

Amanda does not live in Shirehampton itself, but her life revolves around the village, having seen each of her four children attending **St Bernard's School** across the road (where, she jokes, she was able to keep an eye on them in the playground), and her husband grew up locally. She considers it an honour to be working there and is dedicated to making the Public Hall thrive at the heart of the community.

And there can be no doubt that she has had great success, given the Hall's centrality in local life, offering space to **Pilates**, art groups, private events, the **Repair Shop**, the **Vinyl Club**, the **Family History Group**, the **ComUnity Festival**—the list goes on and on. But with success come pressures, too, and these have evolved over the years.

'My job has changed so much since I started,' she explains, 'now including responsibility for accounts, wages, social media and a load of other tasks that must be juggled.'

The biggest challenge of all is to make the Hall completely self-sustaining, an aim which it must achieve by 2032 to avoid being closed down. And to make that happen, she relies on the invaluable support of her hard-working colleagues—notably **Ash Bearman**—and the wonderful contributions of a loyal group of volunteers,without whom the Hall could not survive.

In the past, Amanda benefited greatly from the input of the late **Norman Routledge**, a former trustee of the Hall, and today one of the highest priorities



© Robert Andrews

is finding new trustees—ideally with a background and some expertise in HR, business and social media. She'd love to hear from you if you think you can help. After all, as she admits, it's hard work—but can also be immensely rewarding.

Robert Andrews

An Update from Darren Jones MP, Bristol North West

www.darren-jones.co.uk | fb.com/darrenjonesmp | @darrenpjones

Over the past few months my inbox has been flooded with emails from constituents concerned about the state of the water industry.

Many of you have called for water companies to come back under public ownership. But nationalising the water industry would mean the government would have to spend money like water, with an estimated cost of £100 billion.

Instead, the government has focussed its efforts since coming into office on tackling the core problems with the water industry, with tough reforms to clean up the nation's polluted waterways.

The upcoming **Clean Water Bill**, announced in the King's Speech in May, will deliver major reforms to the water system – improving water quality and tackling pollution at its source.

There are strong measures in the Bill, including the creation of a single, powerful water regulator that has teeth to act where the current regulator has not – something that often frustrated me during evidence sessions as **Chair of the former Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee** in Parliament.

The Bill also stipulates new MOT-style checks on water company assets and 'no notice' inspections – exactly what we need to rebuild public trust in our water industry.

And, at the end of September, it was announced that the Bill will also remove the limit on government ownership of shares in water and sewerage companies in England, which is currently capped at 1% to 3%.

Now, this isn't the first step to nationalisation of water companies – private sector investment will continue to play an important role. Frankly, it must. But the announcement gives the government flexibility to consider a wide range of possible future interventions and ownership models.

One ownership model that I'm particularly supportive of is the idea of mutually owned water networks for new towns – accountable to residents, not shareholders – as these can be more easily established from the outset, when infrastructure isn't already in place.

The Clean Water Bill builds on the reforms that have already been introduced in the government's **Water (Special Measures) Act 2025**, which came into force in February 2025.

This Act introduced measures to increase the ability of the **Environment Agency** to bring criminal charges against water bosses who break the law – with executives facing possible imprisonment if companies fail to cooperate or obstruct investigations.

The Act also pulled the plug on bonuses being paid to water bosses who fail to meet high standards to protect the environment, their consumers, and their company's finances. In 2025, six water companies were banned from paying bonuses totalling more than £4 million thanks to this Act, including **Wessex Water** – the company responsible for sewerage services in Bristol. (To its credit, though, Wessex Water is now spending £8.5 million a month over the next five years on storm overflow improvement schemes.)

The biggest win is that the Environment Agency has published data showing a 35% fall in sewage spills in 2025 compared with 2024.

Change is possible – and it has already begun!

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 - Liberal Democrat Party: **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**

Breast Cancer Awareness Month Fundraiser Is a Huge Success

October was Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and a fundraising event took place on *3rd October at The Lamplighters pub*, Shirehampton. This was organised by *Sam of Curly Red Sam Art*. With the event buzzing with plenty of people, I asked Sam why she decided to run this fundraising event.

"It all started with a chance encounter at my mammogram appointment. I bumped into a familiar face who recognised me from over 26 years ago! We got chatting and I discovered that she lived locally and was involved in organising events to raise awareness of breast screening."

"I already run regular arts and crafts workshops at The Lamplighters so I thought, why not build on that and organise a community fundraising event, it seemed the perfect opportunity to bring together local artists, makers, small businesses and the community to raise both money and awareness," said Sam.

There were plenty of arts and crafts stalls to buy from, a tombola, face painting and **Bosom Buddies** and **Avon Breast Screening** were also present providing information and advice. I asked Sam what she was hoping to achieve that day.

"The main aim was to raise awareness of breast screening, encourage conversations about breast health and raise money for charity, whilst bringing the local community together."

"Stall fees went directly into the fundraising pot. It was lovely to have the NHS Avon Breast Screening Team and Bosom Buddies Bristol involved too. The pub kindly hosted the space for free and the event was run by volunteers. Donations were received from customers and visitors and we raised over £300 which I'm really pleased about. This isn't the final total as we need to collect the donations raised by The Lamplighters. Thank you to everyone who supported us," said Sam.







The monies raised were donated to Breast Cancer Now. Sam and The Lamplighters hope to collaborate next summer for another fundraising event, so watch out for details next year.

To find out more about Breast Cancer Now go to: https://breastcancernow.org.

Kathryn Courtney & Photos © Kathryn Courtney

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THE GREEN PAGES

Climate Thoughts for Samhain

Samhain. Halloween. El Dia de los Muertos (the Day of the Dead). All Souls' Day. It's a spooky time of year!

Samhain is the **Celtic** festival for the **end of harvest**. Stubble burns and dead wood is cleared away to make space for new beginnings. It is a 'liminal' time, a time when we step away from old worn-out ways but are not yet quite sure what the future holds.

We cover our anxiety with pretend fears in children's games: scary ghosts and wicked witches. But for our ancestors, there were real fears that the sun might not return and they might not make it through the winter.

It's a time when life and death draw close together in the fields. And in today's world, there are also real fears as we see life and death struggles over how to survive changes to our old political, social and climate certainties.

Perhaps this is why we see so much talk about readiness.

Are we prepared? Have we got our Grab Bags sorted? Is there enough tinned food in the house to keep us going for three days? Water? Torches? Wind-up radio? Charger packs?

And how will we help prepare for everyone in our **community**? Because more and more we have to think about how to share communal resources.

Our climate is changing and our future is uncertain. We need to explore new ways of living with each other. Wouldn't a communal laundry room save water, or a community pizza oven save energy? Wouldn't it be fun?

RS

Allotment Diary November 2026

'In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row'
– from the poem 'In Flanders Fields' by John McCrae

November on *Myrtle Hall Allotment* sees the beginning of winter, the falling of leaves, the hardening of soil and the occasional frost. Allotmenteers are busy preparing their beds, either for winter planting or for the coming year.

Bed preparation can be surprisingly diverse. Some use raised beds, building wood or metal frames, often about a metre wide, to fill with cardboard, manure, fallen leaves and even seaweed to suppress weed growth, rot down and decompose, allowing worms and microbes to prepare the soil over the winter. Alternatively, they can be lined with cardboard and covered with compost to grow winter vegetables such as onions, garlic and lettuce. Or simply dig over your beds, add any soil improvers, and cover with weed suppressant material to protect them for next year.


Raised beds with manure.


Raised beds with cardboard.

A big thank you to those Allotmenteers who kindly cleared the way in the compost heap for others to deposit their waste plant material!

Peppers and chillies continue to add colour to my neighbour's plot with tiny green chilli peppers, scarlet red Jinda chillies and the yellow Karen chilli. A Jerusalem artichoke shouts out with its bright yellow flowers.

November is also the month of **Remembrance**, and the remnants of summer's vibrant poppies can still be seen drying out, disintegrating and spreading their tiny seeds.

These beautiful, delicate flowers raise their glorious heads every year, reminding us of all those brave soldiers who lost their lives in the fight for freedom.

The real significance of the poppy lies in its adoption as the symbol of Remembrance, especially on **Remembrance Day on 11th November**. **John McCrae**, a Canadian doctor, in **World War 1**, wrote the poem *'In Flanders fields'* after the death of his friend and fellow soldier. It refers to Flanders poppies growing among the graves of the war victims in Belgium.

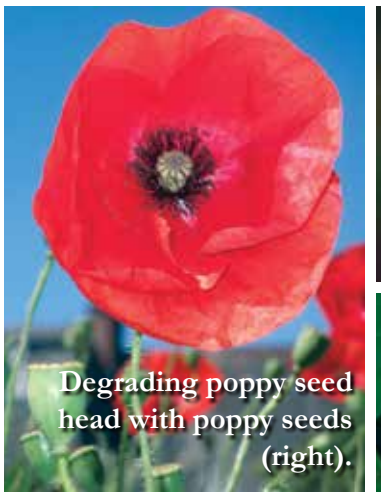
An American, **Moina Michael**, then campaigned for the poppy to be adopted as the National Symbol of Remembrance in America, and **Anna Guerin**, a Frenchwoman, brought the idea to Britain. Remembrance poppies, made from paper, metal and material, are now used to remember military veterans all over the world and raise funds for veterans' groups and programs.

The poppy seed can be eaten in various ways: sprinkled on baked foods such as bread and biscuits to add a nutty flavour and crunch: mixed into salads or dressings; added to smoothies; ground into a paste to combine with nuts, spices and yoghurt for dips; ground up and added to curries and sauces; or mixed with breadcrumbs to coat fish or chicken.

However, be sure to only eat edible, shop-bought, washed varieties of poppy seeds, as some wild poppies can be TOXIC.

Looking forward to Remembering and giving thanks to all our lost soldiers, with everyone in Shire, at 11:00 on 11th November.

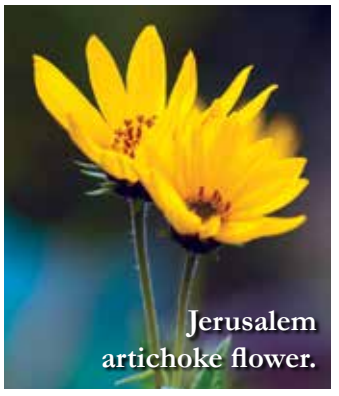
Diane and Myrtle Hall Allotmenteers & Photos © Diane.


Degrading poppy seed head with poppy seeds (right).






Karen Chilli.


Jerusalem artichoke flower.


Chilli pepper.

Nature Notes

When I woke up this morning, **Jeff** quickly got hold of my arm and guided me around to the front of the house. The light shining back at me was almost too bright! Our hedge was smothered in beautiful cobwebs that had been created during the night, and, covered as they were with the incredible simmering shapes, I shot inside to get my phone and rushed back out to get a shot (or 3!) of this autumnal delight.

But what a huge letdown, reader! On my return there was nothing to be seen. The shimmering creations were still there to the naked eye but I was not able to get in the right position to find them with my phone. Such a shame!

However, in an attempt to send an autumn sight to Shire, I looked into our garden hedge and happened to spot a suitable replacement.

Jeff has named it Spaghetti Junction of the Spiders World!

Happy Autumn days folks.

Bobbie





Lawrence Weston Community Market Celebrates Another Fantastic October Market Day!

Lawrence Weston Community Market would like to say a huge thank you to all our fabulous traders who joined us at *Ambition House on Saturday 3rd October*. With more than 30 stalls offering a wonderful variety of goodies, treats and bargains, there was something for everyone to enjoy!



One of the day's highlights was **Bristol Reptile Encounters**, who kept visitors entertained and fascinated as they came along to meet their bearded dragon and python. Meanwhile, our Caribbean food truck, **Vibes n Sides**, was so popular that they completely sold out! We're delighted to hear they'll be returning for our **Christmas market on Saturday 5th December**, so make sure you come hungry!

Only Two Markets Left This Year!

With Christmas fast approaching, there's still time to discover what **Lawrence Weston Community Market** has to offer. We have just two more markets remaining this year, on **Saturday 7th November and Saturday 5th December**, so why not come along and check us out?

We're looking forward to welcoming everyone back with a fantastic selection of local traders, unique products and gift ideas.

Visitors can look forward to discovering local honey, cosmetics, clothing and accessories, jewellery, etched gifts, resin ornaments and vases, and a wonderful range of handmade and personalised items. There will also be **Christmas photo shoots with Louise**, giving you the opportunity to capture some festive memories.



Whether you're searching for an unusual Christmas gift, a little treat for yourself, or simply fancy a browse and a friendly chat, there's plenty to discover. By shopping at our community market, you're supporting local small businesses and helping our community thrive.

Come along, bring your family and friends, and see what you've been missing! With a great variety of stalls and a warm community atmosphere, Lawrence Weston Community Market is well worth a visit. We'd love to see some new faces alongside our regular visitors as we head towards the festive season.





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ComUnity Festival

"ComUnity means so many different things to different people, doesn't it! And this range of interests and skills was very much on display at the festival. Together we are Shire and together we can help everyone in our wonderful village to feel we belong." – Collaborator

Shirehampton Public Hall was once again a hive of activity as it hosted its **3rd ComUnity Festival on Saturday 12th September**. A celebration and showcase of some of the many wonderful groups, activities and talent that are happening and present here in our very own Shirehampton, and across the '*four villages*' – created to bring together the best of what our community has to offer. *'Community is Everything'* – this festival belongs to the community, is from the community and is for the community. Throughout the day there were performances, demonstrations, outdoor activities, art and craft sessions, nature activities, wellbeing sessions, food, drink and the opportunity to learn more about the many groups that serve the local community.

Hopefully the photographs included will give a sense of the positivity, energy and uplifting atmosphere of the day.

"Flexibility is key to our ComUnity Festival. Reading can be a family affair. I got the feeling that I was reading to a family with children of a variety of ages, where English was not their first language. They took so much interest to the children's story that I was reading."
– Friend of Shirehampton Library Collaborator.















If you did come along on the day, we would love to hear your feedback. Please scan this QR code and tell us your thoughts.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/...

We welcome more contributions and collaborations for our next festival. If you are a community group/ local business/performer, etc., we want to hear from you! Please get in touch at communityfestivalshire@gmail.com.

If you missed us this time, then never fear … we would love to welcome everyone back to our next festival, at Shirehampton Public Hall on Saturday 20th February 2027.

ComUnity Festival organisers & Photos © Bob Pitchford.

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SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL HIGH STREET!

Welcome to Parsons Bakery

It was goodbye Shirehampton Bakery and hello to *Parsons Bakery* taking pride of place on our High Street. This family-run business started trading in 1926 and is now an Employee-Owned Trust. Better still, the friendly staff remain, and the warm welcome continues each day.



I spoke with **Claire, Manager at Parsons Bakery** and formerly Shirehampton Bakery, who is a familiar face in Shirehampton, and asked her how she was settling into her job with a new employer.

"All of us are really enjoying our new jobs with Parsons. It's been a rocky road getting here but we've finally achieved what we want to achieve. We feel like we're providing a really good service for the customer. One of the most positive things about Parsons Bakery is the loyalty of the staff that have come with me, the camaraderie remains. We love the shop, we love the village and we feel we're all safe in our jobs"

I asked how important it is to be part of our High Street. "It's very important. It brings people in, it brings passing trade, and it keeps the village thriving. We don't want another empty unit in the village and we all need to work together to keep it alive. We do try and remain like a family business and some of the customers that come in, we might be the only people they see. It's always nice to be able to have a little chat with them and make sure they're okay. We could be the only person that talks to that person that day," said Claire.

When it comes to produce, I asked Claire what makes Parsons Bakery different. "Everything we get in is top quality. We've always got a consistent level of stock; I like the order of it. They've got one bakery which services all their shops. Our pasties we can't keep time with. Some days they fly out the door. Coffee is a big hit, bacon sandwiches, I think our savoury section is our most popular at the moment."

"The majority of our stuff comes in fresh from the bakery, straight into the deep chiller or freezer and then we cook it fresh every morning. All the baguettes for your sandwiches are made fresh by us in the morning. And all of your pasties and savouries, bacon, sausages, etc. is all cooked fresh by us every day. And then we get a delivery every single day of fresh produce," said Claire.





Don't forget to support our local High Street shops. You can find Parsons Bakery at 5 High Street, Shirehampton, Bristol, BS11 0DT.

Website: www.parsonsbakery.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Parsonsbakery

Kathryn Courtney & Photos © Kathryn Courtney.

Save the Date for the Autumnal Christmas Fayre

Christmas comes once a year and we all like to get into the Christmas spirit! You'll find the annual *Autumnal Christmas Fayre* opening its doors once again on *Saturday 21st November*, 10am–3pm, at Shirehampton Public Hall, Station Road, BS11 9TX. As always, it's free entry to the event.

It features their **Christmas Grotto** where you will find **Father Christmas** and **Jan The Elf**. Children can meet them both for free and have a chat with Father Christmas. (Please note photos will be taken on the day – if you don't want your or your child's photo taken, please inform the photographers.)

The **New Yorchestra** will be performing Christmas music from 12 noon until around 2.30pm.

There will be a wonderful selection of stalls to choose from with plenty of gift ideas as well as community stalls. Hot food will be provided by **Bristol Pinoy Kitchen** with their authentic Filipino Cuisine, and not forgetting our **Market Kitchen** serving refreshments, a tasty selection of cakes and of course the traditional mince pies. See you there!

Shirehampton Markets will kick off their Christmas celebrations early, starting with their **High Street Market on Thursday 5th November**, followed by their **Christmas High Street Market on Thursday 3rd December**, where you just might see Father Christmas doing a bit of Christmas shopping! These two events take place at Shirehampton Methodist Church/Hub, BS11 0DY.

For more information and updates, go to: www.facebook.com/shirehamptonmarkets.

Kathryn Courtney & Photos © Kathryn Courtney.







Churches in the Shirehampton Area

Shirehampton Baptist Church

Contact: www.shirehamptonbaptistchurch.co.uk

We say it every year. *"Hasn't this year gone quickly?"* Here we are in November. During September we were blessed with encouraging speakers at our 10:30am service. We are still waiting for a minister but hopefully there will be some good news to share soon.

Our **Songs of Praise Café**, which meets on the second Sunday of the month, is looking forward to **Chris Morton's** talk about his book *"Remembrance Day"* (available from Amazon) and the horrible realities of war. Chris was conscripted to fight in the Rhodesian Bush War fifty years ago at the age of 18 and lost a few friends.

We shall also remember those who died and were injured in the two World Wars and the wars that have followed. We meet in the Cotswold Community Hall, Dursley Road, at 4:45 – 6pm. Everyone is welcome.

Rock Steady, a club for primary school children, meets every Thursday during term time. They enjoy drama, music and crafts. The children have shown a great interest in the Bible when they learn some well-known stories and verses.

The next **Life Café** will open on November 26th. All are welcome to join us. We meet in our church building, Station Road, 10:30 - 11:30am. Next time we will be announcing our Christmas Services. The year really has gone quickly!

Love and prayers from Shirehampton 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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Hello from Shirehampton Methodist Church

As the clocks change we hope you are enjoying cosy evenings. However, we recognise that the increasing hours of darkness plus colder temperatures can make this time of year difficult, so you are very welcome to come along to our *Hub* for hot drinks and chats, with optional craft activities or table top games usually taking place in the afternoons. Here are the times for the Hub:

Mondays & Thursdays: 10am – 12.30pm & 2 – 4pm

Tuesdays: 2 – 4pm

On **Sunday 1st November** we have a special service at 3pm dedicated to remembering loved ones who we no longer see.

Our rooms at Shirehampton Methodist Church are available for hire in the evenings and also during the daytime on some days. Our rates are very reasonable, including a special community rate for locally based charities. We have one large hall and one smaller hall; there is use of the kitchen and also toilet facilities. For more information, please message 07801 802718 or email miriam.sitch@gmail.com.

We are an inclusive church welcoming and affirming every person.

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

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News from St Mary's Shire

November is already upon us and our doors remain open each day for services, coffee mornings, *Welcome Space* and a variety of events. Whether you've never visited before or come regularly, please pop in and we'd be delighted to welcome you. As we settle into the colder months, our Welcome Space provides an opportunity to have a hot meal and share company with others in a heated space - this takes place on Fridays, midday to 2pm. Meals are free but we appreciate any donations to help cover our costs, should you be in a position to donate.

We have 2 services on **Sunday 1st November**. At 10:30am we have **Sung Eucharist**, for the first Sunday of the month. Then at 4pm is our **All Souls' Service**, when we remember lost loved ones. You are most welcome to this moving service, led this time by Judy Helme. 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 at **office@stmarysshire.org**.

Goldies meet on **Wednesday 4th** 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 and new people are always welcome if you'd like to give it a try.

Our **Remembrance Sunday Service** starts at the earlier time of 9:45am on **Sunday 8th**. 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. The service will be led by **Archdeacon Becky Waring**. Please note that **Mary's Munchies** will **not** be taking place that morning.

Our **Winter Warmer Pop Up** event is on **Tuesday 17th**, 3:30 – 5:30pm. Family board games will be available – it's sure to be a fun afternoon. Parents must stay for supervision purposes.

Our **Christmas Fair** is on **Saturday 28th**, 10am – 2pm, featuring lots of stalls, refreshments, games, tombolas, Christmas bargains, dance performances and more. Please join us for this fun event which raises funds to support the work of our church.

Advent Sunday is the following day, **29th November**, and our 10:30am service will be a **Community Café service**. At 4pm we will have our **Christingle service**, with carol singing for all the family, where you can find out what the symbols of the Christingle mean. Treats and drinks will be available after the service and there will be a collection in aid of **The Children's Society**.



We will let you know all about our Advent events in next month's Shire. As always, keep an eye on our notice boards and social media for details of our services and events.

With best wishes from St Mary's Shire

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SHIRE PUZZLE PAGE

Welcome to Shire's puzzle page. Many thanks to Elijah Freeman for creating these puzzles. Please find the solutions on page 19.

Wordsearch:

Find these words on the theme of 'roast dinner'. Going left, right, up, down or diagonally.

1. Carrot
2. Chicken
3. Crumble
4. Flour
5. Ham
6. Leek
7. Onion
8. Peas
9. Pie
10. Potato
11. Salt
12. Turkey

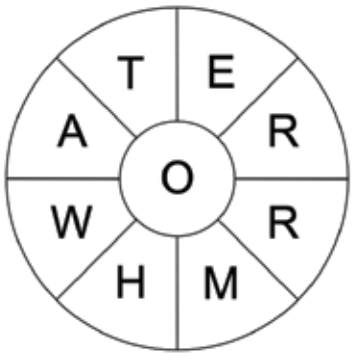
M	A	W	K	N	O	I	N	O
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A	A	C	T	H	A	M	G	O
S	S	G	A	C	K	B	Y	T
B	D	W	T	K	M	L	H	Y
D	F	L	O	U	R	E	I	P

Word Wheel:

Make as many words as you can of 4 or more letters. Each word must feature the central letter. There is one 9-letter word, with a hint below.

HINT: Species like the Lumbricus terrestris, vital for our gardens!

Easy: 18 words
Medium: 22 words
Hard: 26 words



Equation Square:

Fill in the numbers 1-9 in the empty spaces without any repeats. Operations are done left to right and up to down. 4 and 6 have been filled in already so cannot be used.

6	x		-		=	22
/		-		-		
	-		+		=	8
+		x		x		
	+	4	+		=	14
=		=		=		
3		12		9		

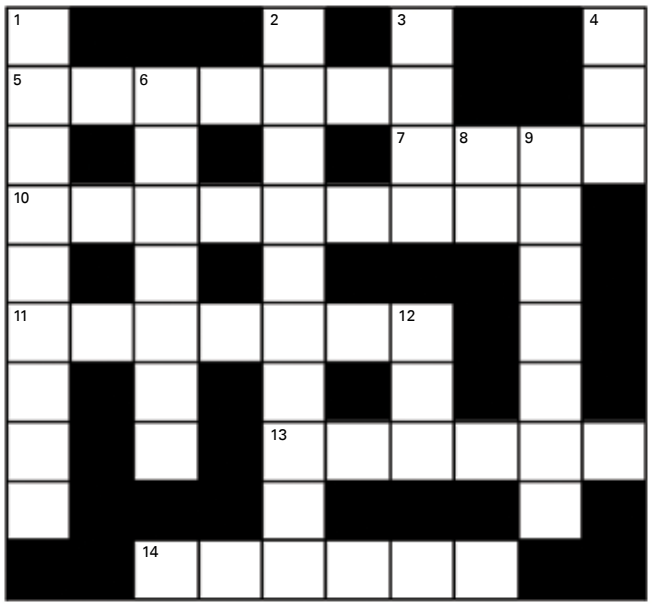
Brainteaser of the Month:

Rearrange the letters in bold to make two words that are synonyms of each other.

Clues:

1. You may visit the **bait shop** before going out on this
2. When you **let minutes** pass without a word
3. Pieces might **sparkle** a **bit** when this happens
4. These people are **rarer without** a pen in their hands

Crossword:



Across:

5: Deify
7: Cut up
10: Catholic involved in gunpowder plot
11: Large shark found in temperate oceans
13: Nickname of mythical Scottish creature
14: Full first name of athlete Murray

Down:

1: Children's coin storage
2: Askew; crooked
3: A little kiss
4: Genre of music often in the charts
6: Ancient Greek epic turned 2026 film
8: Male pronoun
9: Process that allows plants to absorb water and nutrients
12: Satellite navigational system

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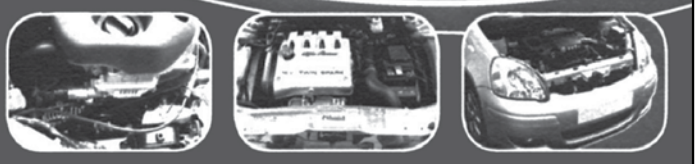
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Sport and Activities IN SHIREHAMPTON

Shirehampton Successes at Youth Kickboxing World Championships

Two children from Shirehampton brought home medals from the *WAKO Youth World Championships (World Association of Kickboxing Organizations)*. The championships were held in Italy in September, and brought together young fighters from 76 nations. Congratulations to *Mollie* and *Brandon* for their fantastic achievements!

Mollie Burton, from Shirehampton, took light contact bronze in the **Juniors category**. She trains with **EPiC**.

EPiC founder **Andy Cleeves** said: "My heart is full. Every one of our athletes gave absolutely everything, through the highs and the lows.

"Medals aside, think about what these young people have just done. Some of them are eight years old, and they've walked out onto a world stage in front of thousands of people. Over the summer holidays some of our fighters trained 25 to 30 hours a week. That's how physically demanding this sport is."

Andy also thanked the coaches and families who supported the team.

Brandon Sun brought home the gold medal as **World Champion in Point Fighting** in the **Children -27kg division**.

Sarah Sun, Brandon's mother, said:

"It was an emotional and nerve wracking week. Two years ago, Brandon started kickboxing and began training seriously. He has gone through weeks of intense training leading up to this competition, it has been quite a journey.

Watching him stand there with his World championship trophy and hearing the words "World Champion," somehow, everything suddenly made sense.

All those long days, all the sweat and hard work, were quietly shaping him into a braver, stronger, and more resilient little boy. Of course, we are incredibly proud of him, but more than the title itself, what touches me the most is everything it took for him to get there: the dedication, the persistence, and the courage to keep going, even when it wasn't easy. We hope Brandon's journey, hard work and dedication can inspire other young children to believe in themselves, dream big and never give up on what they want to achieve. We want them to understand that no dream is too big when you have the courage to believe in yourself, the determination to keep going and the willingness to work hard towards success.

We would like to thank Brandon's coaches, **Sharon Gill** and **Liam Holden**, his teammates and sponsor, and everyone who has supported and encouraged him throughout his journey. Their belief in him has played an important part in this achievement.

Sometimes, the greatest thing a coach can give a child isn't just the ability to win, but the belief that they can become the best version of themselves."



© Sarah Sun



© Sarah Sun


© Natasha Burton



© Sarah Sun

Shire Puzzle Page Solutions

Equation Square:

6	x	5	-	8	=	22
/		-		-		
3	-	2	+	7	=	8
+		x		x		
1	+	4	+	9	=	14
=		=		=		
3		12		9		

Crossword:

P			M		P			P
I	D	O	L	I	S	E		O
G		D		S		C	H	O	P
G	U	Y	F	A	W	K	E	S	
Y		S		L				M	
B	A	S	K	I	N	G		O	
A		E		G		P		S	
N		Y		N	E	S	S	I	E
K				E				S	
		A	N	D	R	E	W		

Word Wheel:

Solution: Earthworm

Brainteaser of the Month:

Solutions:

1. Boat, ship
2. Silent, mute
3. Break, split
4. Writer, author

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Avonmouth Football Club Round Up, from the President, Dave Rowley

The club is sad to announce the loss of *Dave Powell*, who passed away on September 8th. Dave was an outstanding footballer, playing for *Bristol Boys* as centre-half in 1957-58, leaving Portway School to become an apprentice with *Bristol Rovers* for three years.

Realising the uncertainty of professional football, Dave decided an engineering apprenticeship with the **Avonmouth National Smelting Company** would provide a more secure option and he stayed with the company for the next 40 years. After leaving Rovers, Dave played for **Portway Old Boys** where he often came up against **Avonmouth FC** in the Senior Suburban League. Being the Old Boys' best player, that continued when Portway were promoted to the Western League. When Portway OB folded, Dave joined Avonmouth FC; the timing was perfect as we had just moved back to Avonmouth Road in 1986. There was considerable work required to make the clubhouse secure, and the public lane access required a steel bridge over the little rhine. All this work was undertaken by Dave who led the team, delivering all the essential work and sourcing the materials. Dave also became an active committee member and reserve team manager, playing the odd game for the first team when pushed by **Aidan McCann**.

A minute's silence in honour of Dave was held before the **F.A. Vase fixture v Roman Glass St. George** on 12th September. Dave's life and huge contribution to the club continues to be celebrated as we move forward; here's a brief roundup of some recent games:

SEPTEMBER 22nd, H v Odd Down, 0-0:

We were expecting a close game, as **Odd Down** were just below us in the table. The game ended 0-0 but, despite the lack of goals, both teams played good football, and it was an entertaining match. Keeper **Kyreese Johnson** again received the Man of the Match award with a 10/10 performance. However, the two best scoring chances fell to Avonmouth, with **Lynford Bhebe** going through one on one but putting the ball into the sky and not the net!

SEPTEMBER 26th, H v Almondsbury, 3-3:

Avonmouth were missing several key players; however, the squad depth is impressive and the team performed well. **Kyle O'Donovan** opened Avonmouth's account after 13 minutes, **Kieran Burpitt** equalising on 26 minutes. 1-1 at half time. In the third minute of the second half, **Alfie Taylor** scored his first open play goal in two years, slotting his shot low into the corner of the **Almondsbury** net. Avonmouth were dominating but then lost **Josh Lewis** for a second caution. Within five minutes, **Paolo Pali** levelled for Almondsbury.

Avonmouth continued to press and **Samad Ahmadi** made it 3-2 in 82nd minute with a quickly taken free kick, catching the keeper off his line. Sadly, Avonmouth were denied the battling win when Almondsbury's **Laurent Ngunjoh** scored in the 94th minute with the very last kick of the game!



Dave with his wife Sheree and son Craig pictured at his 80th birthday celebration.

SEPTEMBER 29TH, A v Bitton, 1-3:

We travelled to **Bitton** for a **Western League Les Phillips Cup** tie, with a very different Avonmouth side of only three first team regulars, with the rest made up of reserves and six Under 18s players. The outcome was a 3-1 win against a full strength Bitton first team, proving that the future is about youth, with goals scored by 3 u18 players **Theo Collins, Mihali Papantoniou** and **Jahdanti Selassie**. Regular first teamer **Zaid Samadi** hit the post and received the Man of the Match Award. Keeper **Kyreese Johnson** showed his shot stopping prowess, saving another penalty, but the rebound was forced home.

Dave Rowley, Avonmouth FC President. (Photo © courtesy of the Powell family.)

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Avonmouth FC U18s v. Brislington, 5th October 2026

***Dave Rowley* mentioned in his *Avonmouth roundup* that the future of the club is with the youth. The club's *U18s* are playing their first season in the *Western Counties Floodlit Youth League* and had started well, with 3 wins and a draw. On 5th October the boys hosted *Brislington*, who had won all of their 3 games so far.**





Avonmouth players celebrate with scorer Theo.

Avonmouth started well, **Theo** rising at the far post to meet a free kick from near the right corner flag and powering a header across goal into the opposite corner. **4 minutes, 1-0.**

The lead lasted barely 5 minutes, Brislington's **#3** lashing in a free kick from 25 yards out that flew over defenders and keeper high into the net. **1-1.**

Avonmouth thought they had restored their lead in the 25th minute, but the offside flag told a different story.

Brislington poured forward in numbers, and on 29 minutes their **#9** had a shot from a crowded area blocked on the line. The defender fell, the ball rebounding back to the **#9** who lashed into the centre of goal, past the recovering defender as he got to his feet and tried to block once more. **1-2.** The goal encouraged the visitors to press forward, and only four minutes later the **#9** did it again, rising at the far post to meet a corner from the left and powering a bullet header high into the net. **1-3.** It was to get worse before half-time; in the 43rd minute, the **#10** brushed off a tackle inside the area on the left and crossed for the **#3** to lash in low on the far post. **1-4.**

The second half was more even, the Avonmouth **#17** robbed in the 63rd minute by an excellent last-ditch tackle as he closed in with only the keeper to beat. Only 1 minute later, the Mouth's **Jahdanti** fired narrowly over from long range.

In the 71st minute, as Avonmouth pressed, a speculative long-range effort by Brislington from the left flew in on the right-hand post. **1-5.**

That's how it ended, beaten by the league leaders who thoroughly deserved this impressive win. This is a new team, many of the names familiar to me having reported on **Port of Bristol** and **Shire Colts** games for the past few seasons. As they become familiar with each other and gel as a team, they will improve; there was no shortage of effort, commitment and skill; that's the bedrock on which to build. Onwards and upwards for the Avonmouth boys; there are lessons to be learned, but the future is bright.

Paul McMillan & Photos ©.



Brislington's #3 fires in a free kick that flew into the net high on the right-hand post.



Avonmouth's Jahdanti fires over the bar.

Avonmouth Claire's Ladies v Ashley Down Old Boys RFC Women Sunday 11th October 2026

It was a tough test against Ashley Down, going down *17–39* in our second game of the season.

We knew they'd come out firing, and they certainly didn't disappoint! Credit to Ashley Down for a great game. For us, it's still early days. With lots of new faces in the squad, we're building, learning and finding our feet together. There were some great moments out there, with everyone stepping up, coming together and playing for each other.

We've shown what we're capable of in patches - now it's about putting those moments together and delivering them for the full 80 minutes, but there's plenty to build on, plenty to learn, and lots of positives to take forward. We go again, away to **Chippenham Ladies** on **Saturday October 31st**.

Back of the match: **Fizz Harper**

Forward of the match: **Georgia Venn**

Opposition POM: **Alice Elsmore**

Tries scored: **Sienna 1, Ali 2.** Conversions: **Ali 1.**

Report courtesy of Avonmouth Claire's Ladies Facebook page: **facebook.com/avonmouthclairesladies**

Editing and photos: © Paul McMillan.



Sienna McLeary goes "over the top" to bring Avonmouth level in the 13th minute.



Alison Williams sets off on a try scoring run to give Avonmouth a brief lead.



Sienna rises highest in the lineout, but the ball goes over the top for the #4 to collect.



In the second half, Alison Williams goes on her second try scoring run.



Mae on a charge.

U16 GIRLS RUGBY:
Avonmouth OBRFC v Lydney RFC, 11th October 2026

"What a fantastic day for rugby; with the sun shining and warm conditions, both teams putting on a great display of running rugby, showing plenty of skill, determination and teamwork throughout the match." **– Mark Souch, coach and match referee**

It was **Lydney** who opened the scoring on 7 minutes with a converted try on the left, midway between posts and corner flag. Only three minutes later, an Avonmouth break on the right saw scrum half **Elin** running through the defensive line, touching down under the posts and successfully converting. Further tries from Elin and **Skye** saw Avonmouth finish the half with a commanding lead.

The second half started much like the first, with Lydney surging forward, and they were rewarded with the first try right under the posts. They were competitive in line-out and scrum, but Avonmouth used their possession much more effectively and Lydney were unable to cope with Avonmouth's running game, the pace and directness of Elin being a particular problem for them. Elin scored three more tries, exploiting the solid platform provided by her teammates, scoring a total of **35 points**, including conversions.

Mark Souch gave us his summary of the game: "Our Avonmouth Under 16 Girls came away with a well-earned **40–14** victory but the scoreline doesn't take away from the fantastic effort shown by both sides. The opposition battled hard from start to finish, demonstrating great skill, determination and commitment.

Our girls played some excellent attacking rugby, moving the ball quickly, creating space and making the most of their opportunities. There were some brilliant passages of running rugby, with the girls showing great support for one another and working hard in both attack and defence.



Alyssa, Ophelia, Alivia, Libby, Elin, Millie, Ellie, Isabelle, Piper, Skye and Millie W lead out for Avonmouth, greeted by referee and club stalwart Mark Souch.



The captains confer with referee Mark Souch.



An early battle for possession; Captain Ellie shows for scrum half Elin.



Elin sets up the conversion



Skye runs clear to touch down under the posts.



Lydney were competitive at the set-piece but...



...were unable to contain Avonmouth's running game, Elin grounding again under the posts.



The traditional post-match guard of honour, showing mutual respect, sportsmanship, and appreciation of opponents.

A huge well done to both teams for putting on such an entertaining and competitive game, played in great spirit. Plenty of skill, plenty of effort and, most importantly, plenty of enjoyment!

Congratulations to our Under-16 girls on a fantastic 40–14 win. A brilliant team performance from start to finish."

The club is recruiting for all girls' age groups; anyone is welcome to give it a go. Training is Wednesday evenings, 7–8pm, at Barracks Lane.

For ladies rugby enquiries, contact: Stuart Souch, 07821 427840

For girls rugby enquiries, U12–U18, contact: Lucy Souch, 07398 770858

Paul McMillan and Mark Souch. Photos © Paul McMillan.

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AVON YOUTH LEAGUE U16:

Shire Colts Panthers v Almondsbury Utd, Sunday 4th October 2026

Six of today's starting line-up have been with the club since U7; now in their GCSE year this is the last opportunity to win some silverware together and make lasting memories of their successful grassroots years.

Shire Colts have yo-yoed between the top two divisions of the **Avon Youth League** over the last few seasons but remain one of the top ten U16 teams in the region. The boys have 3 clean sheets in their opening 4 matches, plus bags of goals from an exciting forward line, a recipe for an entertaining and hopefully successful campaign. The opposition today was a capable **Almondsbury**, with successive victories themselves. The backdrop was a glorious sunny afternoon at **Coombe Dingle Sports Complex**.

Shire had the best of the early exchanges, but Almondsbury soon tested the home team's defence. The tall figure of defender and Shire captain **Oskar** calmly cleared any loose ball sent his direction, showing why he has the well-deserved honour of captaining his team.

Chances in the first 30 minutes were limited to long-range efforts, with neither keeper tested. When an opportunity did present itself and **Finn**, off the back of a hattrick the previous weekend, was put through, the ball rolled agonisingly wide of the Almondsbury goal, but a forward of his calibre doesn't need many opportunities to get onto the score sheet. On 33 minutes, a neat reverse pass from **Ollie** in midfield beat the Almonds' defence, and Finn lifted it over the keeper's head into the centre of the net. **1-0**.

As Shire kicked off the second half, Almondsbury pressed and posed a serious threat. Crosses from deep peppered the Colts box, but the defence stood firm, showing why they had only conceded twice this season. Wave after wave of attacks besieged the Shire goal in a one-sided second half, but the back 4, or 8 at times, were resolute.

The Colts were riding their luck but actually came closest to scoring, as a long-range effort from **Thomas** came back off the underside of the bar. As the final whistle neared, the tension was palpable as Almondsbury came within a whisker of equalising; Shire players celebrated every defensive block like it was a goal, and survived to collect another clean sheet and 3 points, sending them 6 clear at the top of the table.



Almondsbury will feel unfortunate to leave with nothing, but they will be there or thereabouts, come April. The Shire boys know that luck was on their side today, but they made their own luck, digging deep and grinding out a result. It was clear that the team spirit and friendship built on these grassy fields over the years of youth football lasts longer than the length of the game and will build memories to cherish for years to come.

If you are interested in joining Shire Colts as a player, or even a coach, please visit the website at www.pitchero.com/clubs/shire for contact details.

Iain Macfarlane. Editing and photos ©, Paul McMillan



Finn wheels away, having put his team in front.



Teammates and friends celebrate with goal scorer Finn.



The second half kicks off, Monga racing into Almondsbury territory.



In the second half, Almondsbury laid siege to the Shire goal...



...but it was Shire's Thomas who came closest to scoring.



Tower of strength and Shire Captain Oskar.



Top of the league! Shire colts u16 Panthers with coaches Paul Freeman (back row, 3rd from left) Pete Belmore and Iain Macfarlane (back row right.)

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Fencing Round-Up

September's iteration of the *McNeill Cup Team Sabre Competition* (McNeill Szabla Tourniej) was as hard fought as ever.

The McNeill Cup is contested by teams of balanced ability, made up ad hoc on the night. It's great fun and a tradition of the club, going back decades. It's an excellent way for beginners to get into the swing.

The final brought victory to the team of **Nigel, Daniel** and **Lizz** in a hard fought contest against **Josh, Hubert** and **Louis**.

For our epee fencers, we have our monthly **Martini Cup Epee**. September's podium was:

1st: Ethan Mansfield, 2nd: Nick Scott-Samuel, 3rd: Daniel Miller

White Eagle's Megan Kong took silver in **Cardiff's Dragon Sabre, Under 14 event**.



Winners Nigel, Daniel and Lizz at the McNeill Cup Team Sabre Competition 2nd Sep 2026.

Having emerged first and undefeated from the poule unique, the final was a near-run thing, with a home fencer, that ended 10:12.

Well done Megan!



White Eagle's Megan Kong in the Silver position at Cardiff's Dragon Sabre event.



Runner-ups Josh, Hubert and Louis.

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