

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

Summer
Puzzles in Shire
Kids' Corner
- See page 7

Shirehampton Community Speedwatch Needs You! - See page 7

Help Pollinators and Wildlife! - See page 13

No. 643 - August 2025 www.shire.org.uk 5,000 copies monthly

Have you got a job that needs doing? Go to YOUR LOCAL TRADESPEOPLE section on pages 19-20 to find a local business who can help.

SAVE OUR MUSEUM!

What is the nearest museum to Shirehampton? *Blaise Museum*. Yet many Shire residents don't even know of its existence. And unless more people start checking out this wonderful treasure trove just a few minutes' drive up the road, it may not be around for much longer. *Bristol Council, strapped as ever for cash, has announced that the museum could close next year due to low visitor numbers.* This would be a tremendous loss for Shirehampton, Avonmouth, Lawrence Weston—in fact the whole of Bristol, for there's nothing else quite like it. Set in acres of parkland with its myriad paths weaving through thick woodland, and just a few steps from a brilliant playground, Blaise Museum has something for everyone.



Built by the banker, brass merchant and Quaker John Harford at the end of the 18 century, it was filled with classical statuary and antiquities acquired by his son (also called John Harford) on a European tour. You can see examples in the entrance hall, where visitors are greeted by plaster casts of a frieze from the Parthenon in Athens and of Michelangelo's mighty statue of the Florentine bigwig Lorenzo di Medici in ancient Roman garb. The ground floor also boasts a stately pinkwalled and domed picture gallery adorned with ancient images of Bristol and the Avon valley. The space was used for musical soirées by the Harford family and later became a tea-room. There are more friezes in the games room leading off the entrance and at the top of the grand staircase, where you'll also find a Cabinet of Curiosities filled with such items as a Turkish coffee mill and a snuff mill fashioned from a ram's horn.





Continued on page 6.



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

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We welcome contributions for publication in 'SHIRE' but reserve the right to edit any copy received. Articles should not exceed 500 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

CHIREHAMPTON PURILC HALL RECIII AR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

SHIREHAMI TON I ODLIG HALL HEGGEAR WEEKEL ACTIVITIES				
MONDAY	Twyford Art Club Counselling Martial Arts	10am-12noon 9.30-10.30am 5-9.30pm	Main Hall Springfield Main Hall	
TUESDAY	The Jolly Melodies Music Company Homeschooling (Private) 9 to 5 Ladies Choir Line Dancing Community Living Room Counselling Martial Arts	10am-12noon 11am-5pm 11am-1pm 2-3pm 3-5pm 4-7pm 5-9.30pm	Main Hall Penpole Room Library Main Hall Library Springfield Penpole Room	

WEDNESDAY Healing Rooms (2nd Weds) 10.30am-1.30pm Main Hall **City of Bristol College** 9.30am-4.30pm Penpole Room **Over 75s Exercise** 2-3pm Main Hall **Extraordinary Links (Term Time)** 3.30-5.30pm Main Hall Counselling 6.30-7.30pm Springfield Women's Fellowship (2nd and 4th Weds) 7.30-9.30pm Main Hall 7.30-9.30pm Shire Stitchers (3rd Weds) Main Hall

Bereavement Support (1st Tues)

Puppy Training

THURSDAY 10am-12noon Main Hall **Shire Social Group Healing Rooms** 10.30am-1.30pm Main Hall Tai Chi 2-3pm Main Hall Counselling 4-7pm Springfield **Martial Arts** 5-9.30pm Penpole Room

> Family History Group (2nd Thurs) 6-8pm Library **Model Railway Club** 7-10pm Club Room Youth Group (2nd and last Fri) 7-10pm Main Hall/Penpole 10am-12noon **Bradlev Room** Shire Stitchers (1st Friday)

Martial Arts 5-9.30pm Main Hall **SUNDAY** Main Hall & Springfield **Church of Grace** 11am-4pm

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

Avonmouth Ladies Club

FRIDAY

We meet on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday at **Avonmouth Community Centre** 2.30-4.30pm

> (But not in January & February) A warm welcome awaits

For information contact Julie on: 07814 183976

SHIRE ADVICE SERVICE

Free Advice Sessions

Shirehampton Health Centre, Pembroke Road, Shirehampton

Tuesdays from 10am

To make an appointment call 0117 9515751

Notice to Our Readers and Advertisers

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



5.30-7pm

6-8pm

Library

Main Hall

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

Regular Events at the Cotswold Community Centre

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

TUESDAY Over 70s Exercise Class 2pm-3pm Film Night 7:30pm

(1st & 3rd of month) Keep Fit 10:30-11:30am **WEDNESDAY**

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

Happy Space 2pm-4pm (3rd of month)

SATURDAY Coffee Morning 10am-11:30am

(2nd of month) Bingo 7:30pm

SUNDAY **Cotswold Christian**

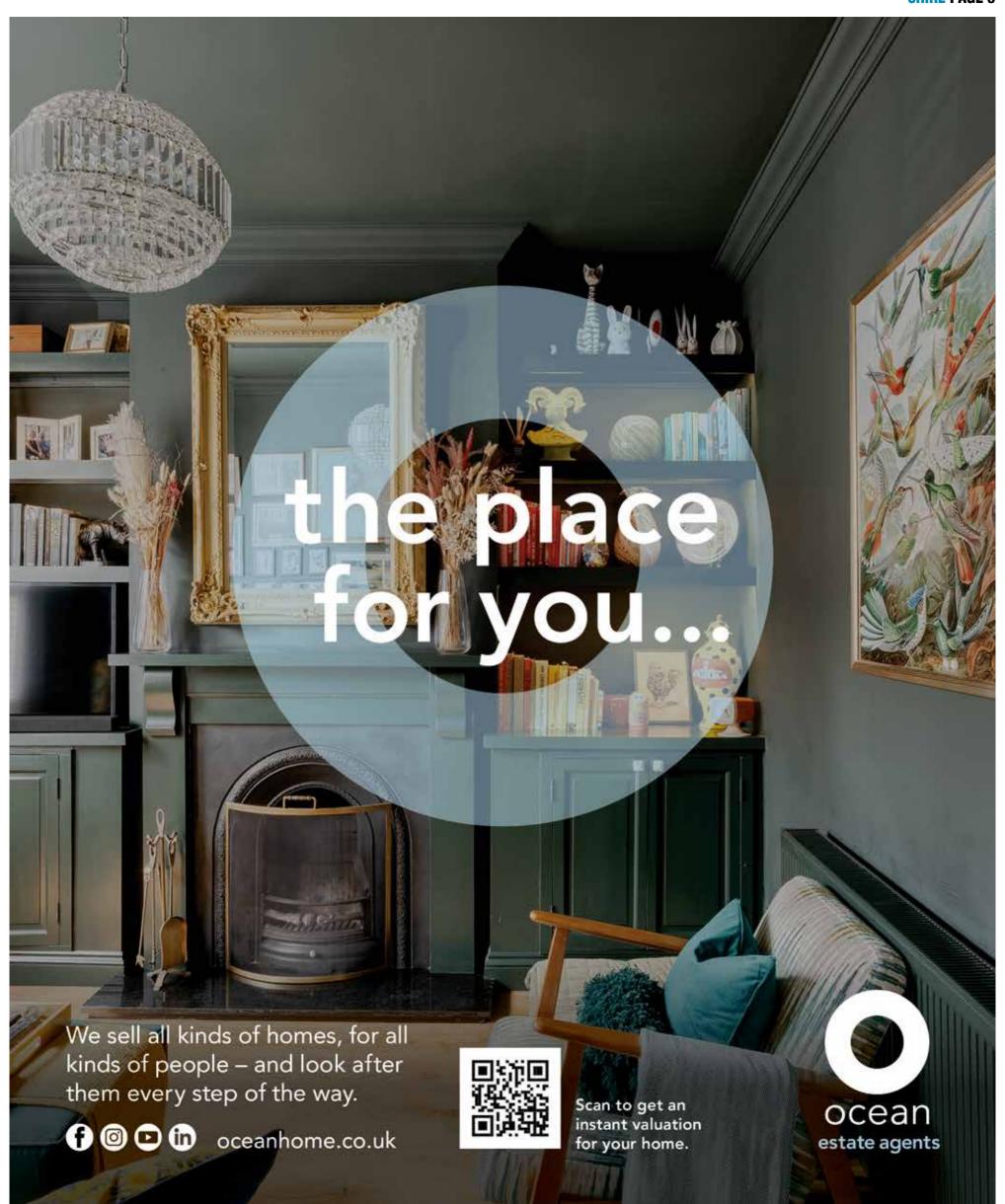
FRIDAY

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



The Shire Community Pages

GIL OSMAN

11th July 1939 to 16th June 2025

It is with great sadness to announce the passing of one of our regular contributors to our paper, Gil Osman, who passed away on 16th June at the age of 85. Many readers will know that he contributed

monthly his story "The Strange" to our paper.

We share with you a tribute sent to us by his son and daughter:

Gil was born in **Walton Road** on 11 July 1939 and grew up in Shirehampton. He had

many memories of scrumping from an orchard nearby and playing in Penpole woods with his brothers and friends. In his teens he became a **Scout Leader** and has a collection of letters sent to him from the cubs he led when he was enlisted for **National Service**.

In his 20s he left Shire to do teacher training in **Bognor Regis**, where he met his wife. They settled in **Farnham in Surrey**, where her parents lived, and raised two children. Gil taught at a secondary school until he specialised in teaching children with special educational needs (**SEN**). When he retired he used his skills to work for **Voluntary Service Overseas** in **Fiji**, where he helped develop an SEN curriculum.

In the late 90s Gil moved back to Shirehampton to look after his elderly mother, **Lilian Osman**. After her death he stayed in the house he was born in and had many happy years back in Shire, reconnecting with old friends, chairing the **Public Hall Committee**, singing in two choirs and supporting local community activities.

He loved travel and meeting people from all cultures and walks of life. He was known by many as an entertainer, either playing the piano, telling jokes, showing off card tricks or writing his serial story for the Shire paper. He also had a serious side and supported many, many charities that work tirelessly to provide help to both humans and animals.

He will be missed by many.



Queen's 60th Jubilee photos June 2012.

TREVOR SCANLON

13 February 1950 to 19 June 2025

You left us with a heartache that no one can heal but your memories are our treasures that no one can steal.

We miss you more than you could ever know.

Lynn & Nick & Bertie Burand



POB TRIBUTE TO TREVOR

Past members and friends of the City and Port of Bristol Bowling Club were saddened to hear that Trevor Scanlon passed away at home on Thursday, June 19th.

A keen bowler for a number of years, Trevor was the club's only ever **Master of Flag** and at one time he cut

the green. Initially as one of three members doing so but eventually alone. Some time prior to that he cut the square at **Shirehampton Cricket Club** where he was at one time a player.

In his younger days he played football in **Sea Mills** and had a trial with **Bristol City**. As a bowler he played regularly for the men's league team and in many friendly games -



Trevor Scanlon on Island Bohemian in June 2016.

not always near home - he was on the club's first ever visit to **Caversham** to bowl on **Island Bohemian** in the middle of the **Thames in 2016**. A unique experience because the final part of the journey is by boat.

Known to many people in the community for numerous reasons, Trevor was a keen gardener – his front garden is very colourful at this time of the year - and a skittler --- he played for two teams and captained them both.

So – well-bowled and well-skittled Trevor --- you will be missed. David Hinksman





Shire AGM

The Shire newspaper AGM will be held at the Cotswold Community Centre on Friday 8th August at 6pm. Anyone interested in finding out how this paper get produced and delivered all by volunteers to 5000 properties in Shirehampton please come along to meet the friendly team.

Personal **Announcements**

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

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

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 SKETCHES

by Richard Coates

The Shire is pleased to announce that "More Shirehampton Sketches" can be viewed on our website, www.shire.org.uk.

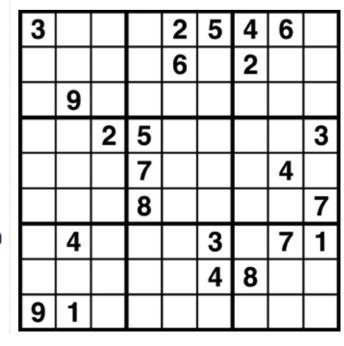
They are a new compilation of facts and insights into Shirehampton's long history. More Shirehampton **Sketches**, is the latest publication from local professor and historian Richard Coates and is now available to read online exclusively on **Shire website**. Copies of Richard's first publication, Shirehampton Sketches, are available to buy for £.10 from Shirehampton Action.

Shire-doku

Puzzle compiled by Jack Jefferies. Find the solution on page 8.

The editorial team would like to apologise to our Sudoku players and to Jack Jefferies for the mix up with the game in the last issue.

Thank you to one of our readers who brought this to our attention.





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Wednesday from 5.15 - 6.15pm

Bootcamps: Monday and

and Thursday from 6.30 - 7.30pm at the Cotswold Community Centre.

Message for 1:1 technique session.

Weekly classes - just come along -Hello there! Would you no need to book: like to improve your well-**Kettlebells are Monday** 5.15 - 6.15pm and 6.30 - 7.30pm, 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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Email: t.linda1206@gmail.com www.shirestrong.co.uk



Continues from page 1.

The four bedrooms used by the Harford's and their descendants now display fascinating collections of historical items, from toilets and baths to washing machines, vacuum cleaners and stoves. There's also an exhibition of fashions from years past, and a room for kids to get kitted out in old-time costumes. Children will also love the vintage toy room, with its teddy bears, dolls and model trains. The excellent staff, some of them volunteers, are always on hand to answer questions.

Sadly, the Orangery can no longer be visited following an incident of vandalism during the Covid lock-down, which also saw the destruction of one of the lovely pair of statues of dogs that guard the entrance. But there's plenty left here to see, making this the perfect place to visit during the summer school holidays.

The only mystery is, why hasn't the City Council's Museums Department made more of this neglected jewel? In common with two of the















Council's other museums, the Red Lodge and the Georgian House, Blaise Museum receives almost zero publicity, and unless you consult their website you're most likely to find information on these places in a tourist guidebook. So come on, people of Shire: let's show that we care enough to keep this hidden gem alive for us and our children and children's children to visit for generations to come!

Blaise Museum is open April-December Thursday-Sunday 11-4. And it's free! There are family activity days on Saturday 16 and 30 August (£5 entry, under-4s free; see www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/blaise-museum for details).

Robert Andrews and Photos © Robert Andrews

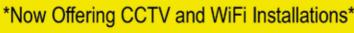
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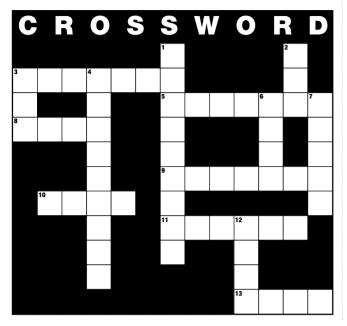
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Shire Kids' Corne

Enjoy these Shirehampton themed puzzles | CLUES ACROSS supplied by our editors!

Find the solutions on page 8.



- 3 This person is in charge of your class at
- A piece of jewellery worn on your ears (7)
- A period of 365 days or 12 months. (4)
- 9 Your buddies, your pals, your mates. (7)
- 10 Animals that are part of your family, such as cats or dogs. (4)
- 11 A place of learning (6)
- 13 You may use this to catch a fish. (4)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 The first meal of the day (9)
- 2 A place to put your rubbish (3)
- Attempt to do something (3)
- Celebration held on 25th December (9)
- To remove creases from your clothes (4)
- Windows are made out of this (5)
- 12 When the door is not closed its ... (4)

Shire Word Search

We've hidden some local road names in this word search, can you find them all (They can be found horizontally, vertically, diagonally or backwards)?

Barnards	High Street	Penpole	Station
Dursley	Nibley	Springfield	The Green



Shirehampton Sailing Club

Shirehampton Community Speedwatch Needs You!

We need volunteers for the Shirehampton Community Speedwatch!

After near misses and a few serious incidents on the roads in the village, we're looking for volunteers to help start a Community Speedwatch. Hopefully this Speedwatch will be a positive step in slowing people down and gathering some useful information about the speeds people are travelling at through the village.

There will be training given before we can start, as our safety is paramount and we want to keep everyone safe. We know through-traffic is vital for our High Street; our aim isn't to stop people coming through Shire, but to get people thinking about their speed when travelling through the village. We don't want a fatality. Please join us.

We are asking for volunteers to join us and give as much time as you can. It may be an hour a week or fortnight, or an hour a month. The choice is yours. Please email shirehamptonroadsafety.group@ gmail.com and we will get back to you ASAP.

The Lifeboat **Upcoming Events**

Community

SPEED

WATCH

August

Details of events not currently available. Please call the pub on 01179 824366 for information.

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Sundays & Mondays Bath Gem/Doombar £2.20 per pint

For more information follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/LifeboatPub

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Shire **Needs (Junior) Reporters**

Have you recently taken part in a local event you'd like to tell us about?

Is there a local issue you'd like to see more widely discussed?

Or a local story you think should be more widely known?

Why not write a short piece, no more than 500 words, for the Shire. Send your story with your name and contact details to editor@shire.org.uk by the 10th of the month.

The Arts in Shirehampton

Japan Trip Inspires Local Artist Simon Gamble's

Work on Display in Post Office

Throughout July and August the Post Office in Shirehampton will be displaying work by local artist *Simon Gamble*.

Simon is interested in how paintings give us an illusion of a space or object which isn't physically there and how we respond to paintings as objects. He says "There's something intriguing about that lie paintings tell us. They say 'Here's an object or place' when really you're looking at a flat surface. It's an illusion, so how

can you play with that illusion to create depth but also remind the viewer that what they're looking at is a physical thing you can pick up and hold?". To explore this, Simon uses layers of different painting techniques to build up a brightly coloured surface, creating depth, but not an image of any recognisable place or thing.

"I wanted these ones to be bright, colourful and joyful, because that's how I feel when I'm making them. Mixing different techniques gives us a reminder that this is an object, and the abstract nature of the paintings I make reinforces that."

Simon also took inspiration from a recent trip to Japan, where he enjoyed collecting 'Eki stamps', intricate rubber stamps found in train stations and tourist sites. "I had great fun finding new ones. You stamp them in a book and after a while I started getting a little bit obsessed about them. Every new place I visited I was looking for new ones. Each one is specific to the place you find it, so the collection is a lovely reminder of all the places I went to in Japan".



There are eleven new paintings by Simon in the post office, using bright colours and different painting techniques. "They're experiments really, but I loved the idea of creating a series or set. The rubber stamps I created add to that idea of collecting and the joy of making a mark on a surface with paint or ink. Physically stamping on the painting also reminds us that this is an object, that we can touch and make a mark on."

As part of the **Shire Inspire artists' group**, Simon has exhibited work in Shirehampton before, as part of **'Window Wanderland'** in the High Street in 2023 and for the 120th anniversary of the library earlier this year. He says "It's so good to be connected with other artists and Shire Inspire has been brilliant in giving me opportunities to show my work locally. It's so valuable to part of that community and it's lovely to be able to tell neighbours 'My work is in the post office, go and have a look!'. It makes it so much more accessible for people you know when they can just nip up the road to see what you've done'.

Simon Gamble









© Simon Gamble

Shire Inspire Supporting Local Artists

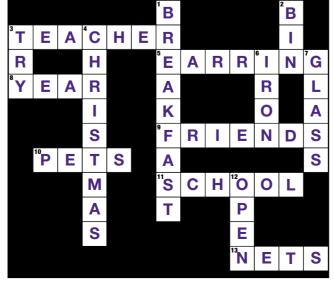
Shire Inspire works in the community to offer exhibition space to local creatives and to encourage engagement with the arts.

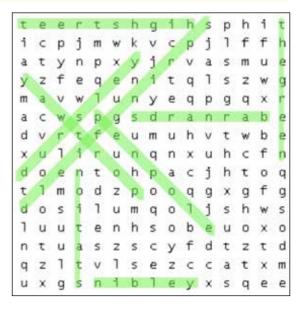
Shire Kids' Corner Solutions

Shire-doku Solution

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

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





Dursley Road Street Party

On *Midsummer's Day, 21 June*, we held the *fifth* Dursley Road Street Party, taking place on the Cotswold Estate. The first one started in 2019 as several of us inhabitants in the road felt that a lot of newcomers had moved into the area in the last few years, and this would be great opportunity for people to connect and reconnect with their neighbours. Well, since then, there have been many more arrivals into the area, though this does mean we've lost a fair few friends and neighbours on the way, sadly. However, without exception, they have been welcomed and added to a great sense of neighbourliness.

We set up a **Whatsapp group** with nearly 150 members. This acts as a **Neighbourhood Watch** too, and we have a localised Swap Shop, Buy and Sell group running too. It includes passing on of children's clothes, toys etc, tool loans, even excess fruit and veg from gardens or allotments!

We are hugely grateful to lots of people who helped make the event the most successful one yet. Obviously, the main factor is the weather, but Children's Entertainer, **Johnny G**, did his annual fantastic show, a warm up for his first appearance at **Glastonbury** apparently! Facepainter, **Christine**, was a sensation and did Kids and Adults faces and arms for over three hours nonstop. The Burgers and Pizzas went down a storm, and the music by local group, **Feedback**,



emanating from the **Create to Elevate** workshops run by **Tom Bradley**, were sensational. The tug of war and sack races in the **Lamplighters Field** produced the usual hilarity too.

Everyone who came along thoroughly enjoyed the event and all expressed a wish to continue it as an annual event. We would encourage other streets to do the same and are happy to offer support and advice to any who wish to do so. We can be contacted via this email: dursleyroadstreetparty@gmail.com

John Hastings © J Hastings photos













Izabela Rogalska



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An Update from Darren Jones MP, Bristol North West

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

I hope you've all managed to stay fairly cool and comfortable during the recent heatwaves that saw the UK Health Security Agency issue three health heat alerts for the South West in just over three weeks.

I am pleased to hear that **Shire JTE Hub** is one of the venues taking part in the Council's brand-new **Bristol Cool Space** project, which is looking to develop a network of public places across the city where people can get support during periods of extreme heat.

The impact of climate change in the UK means we can expect to see hotter and drier summers, warmer and wetter winters, and more frequent and intense weather extremes.

So, whilst it is an imperative that we continue to work towards **Net Zero**, we must also face the present challenges and adapt to the changing climate.

Climate adaptation and resilience was highlighted as a priority in the recently been published **Shirehampton's Community Climate Action Plan**. Thank you to **Shirehampton Action** for sending me a copy.

In the plan, Shirehampton Action says it will encourage residents to sign up to priority registers for utility companies, train flood wardens, and organise community emergency preparedness sessions, among other actions. I fully support these endeavours, and if I can help in any way to achieve these actions, please get in touch.

Of course, the risk of flooding might not be at the forefront of your mind during this hot and dry weather, but prolonged dry spells can lead to compacted soil that increases the risk of flooding from surface water when it eventually rains.

And it hasn't just been hot of late – it has been exceptionally dry, too. Data reveals that March to May of this year was the driest three-month period in the **Wessex Water** catchment since 1990, and the fourth driest since records began.

Dry grass readily ignites — a situation we sadly witnessed in April across two acres of land at Lamplighter's Marsh. I was devastated to see the damage caused, but I am thankful the crews from Southmead, Patchway and Avonmouth Fire Stations were able to put out the fire quickly and that nobody was harmed.

Finally, we know that water is a precious but finite resource, so installing a water butt is a fantastic way to do your bit to help the environment.

These containers collect and store rainwater in your garden, which can stop sewage overflows into our



rivers during heavy downpours and can also provide a sustainable source of water for gardening.

Members of the local Save Water to Save the Trym group demonstrated the work they are doing to install water butts in the constituency for the short film about the River Trym in my Village Matters series, which was released last year. You can watch the film online at darren-jones.co.uk/village-matters.

As always, if you need my help or have a question, you can get in touch with me on email 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

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

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A Day in the Life of a Market Trader: Elvire

Shirehampton Markets run the monthly High Street Market held on the first Thursday of each month at the Tithe Barn in Shirehampton. All the Market Traders are self-employed, and it is their main source of income. Every week they attend various markets, with larger markets at the weekends. This is not a hobby, this is their living and I chatted with Elvire who runs 'Homemade At 54' to find out more.



"The start to a normal market day depends on where it is and what time it starts but, for the vast majority, I get up between 4am and 5am.

I have a look at what stock I need to take with me and replace what I sold at the last market. I can't do that part too much in advance as I often have to make the replacements for a lot of products. They have to cure before being wrapped and labelled before going out on sale.

I love chatting to people about my handmade products, advising and hopefully selling my personal care items to them. "On a non-market day I am researching and developing new products, test them until I'm happy and then get them assessed by a cosmetic chemist to ensure they are safe, compliant with the regulations, and therefore legal to sell. I am also planning what needs to be made, labelling, wrapping and bottling all my products as well as pricing each item. I order in all the ingredients I need, making sure they are in date, and that I have a stock of labels for everything I make. An example week can be receiving 320 empty glass bottles for cleansing oils, hair oils, 5KGs of shea butter, 12.5kgs of coconut oil and 15 litres of different oils. Soaps, for example, need to be made a minimum of 4 weeks before selling but I prefer curing them a bit longer.

"I only use the **best quality ingredients**, and **environment-friendly packaging**. I have to pay for them upfront, long before I can even think or recouping my costs.

It is a full-time job and longer than a forty hour week but I love it - along with having happy customers." concluded Elvire.

You will find Elvire at the High Street Market each month held at the Tithe Barn, Shirehampton, BS11 0DE from 9am until 2pm. She looks forward to seeing you on Thursday 7th August.

Kathryn Courtney + photo © K Courtney

Sea Mills Flower Show

This year's Sea Mills Flower and Craft Show will take place on *Saturday 6th September at St Edith's Church* BS9 2HU, between 1.30 pm and 4 pm. The show will be opened by the newly elected Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor Henry Michallat.

The show has been running since the 1930s with a break in the late 1990's early 2000's and then restarted by **Jane Wiltshire** and **Lisa Dicker** in 2018 with a further break taking place during the Covid pandemic. Its aim is to showcase the creativity and diversity of local residents through various categories. Qualified judges will be assessing the standard of the exhibits and awarding first, second and third place certificates, all category winners will also be presented with a trophy in recognition of their achievements.

Craft show organisers run a twice monthly craft club for children using funds raised from previous shows, giving children an opportunity to learn new skills and show off their creations on the day. Entries are encouraged from all ages with a category this year for under 10's. Some of the other categories include Coconut Ice, a Novel arrangement, a Selfie as well as the usual homegrown fruit and vegetables.

Visitors will be able to view all the exhibits as well as enjoying a hot drink and tasty homemade cakes, there will also be numerous local stall holders selling homemade and handmade items for anyone looking to treat themselves or someone else to a unique gift.

In addition, guests will be entertained by a variety of local performers throughout the afternoon.

If you would like to enter something in one of their categories or volunteer for them on the day please email them at seamillsflowershow@gmail.com. More information is also available on their Facebook page: Sea Mills Flower & Craft Show.



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"It's Too Darned Hot!"

There is a Climate Emergency at the moment as we enter the third heat wave of the summer. But breaking hottest day records is still presented as some kind of victory. We still fail to connect the weather with the real 'existential crisis' – the consequences of the changes in our weather patterns which bring not just a few warm summer days, but serious drought in our own gardens. Drought for us but devastating wild fires in Spain, France and Greece. The whole of Europe is suffering from extreme heat caused by global warming. My garden – and probably yours – is parched. The phlox trying to bloom is drooping, leaves withering on their stalks. The ground is rock hard and there is no moisture on the grass, no dew.

Meanwhile, in Eastern Europe, in **Croatia and Hungary**, the heat has been followed by violent storms with high winds uprooting huge trees and hail stones blocking drains. In the **United States** flash floods after torrential rain have killed nearly 200 people and there is disastrous flooding in **Pakistan**. The climate catastrophe is global even if we only hear about local disasters.

Yet while it may seem that we aren't concerned about **Climate Change**, *the Guardian* reported on 9 July that nearly 5,000 people lobbied **Westminster** asking MPs to restore nature and create green jobs for the future. Polls show that 89% of us back net zero goals even as the government rows back on green initiatives. So it's up to us, the 89%, to support local green initiatives and





projects. It's up to us to do all we can to support the natural world through the heat and drought. The grass will grow again once the rains come.

RS

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AMD Solicitors are pleased to announce that there will be a **free of charge family drop in clinic** at our **Shirehampton office** on the third Wednesday of each month, between the hours of 10am – 4pm, commencing **Wednesday 16 July 2025**.

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- Divorce and separation;
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Whilst this is a free of charge appointment, we will be scheduling the appointments to ensure availability. Please confirm your spot by emailing katieandrews@amdsolicitors.com or calling on 0117 962 1205.



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Why not join the Shire newspaper committee!?

We have lots of tasks and activities you can

get involved in and we're always open to new ideas – so if you have things you want to share please get in touch.

Contact the chairperson at: chairperson@shire.org.uk or pop along to one of our monthly meetings on the 1st Monday each month at 6pm in Shirehampton library.

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



The Repair Café

The last Repair Cafe session before the summer break was held on Saturday 28th June. As always, our experts on the sewing machines were busy throughout the morning; this time they were stationed in the small but cosy Springfield room due to the redecoration work going on inside the main hall.

All other activities took place in the entrance/foyer with our Bristol Energy Network advisor setting up her stall just outside, not to be missed by anyone.

We still only offer textile repairs of various types (darning, hand and machine sewing) but we make up in other ways offering a clothes swap, a talking & listening corner, plants, skills share (crochet, knitting and more) which makes our sessions stimulating, sociable and welcoming. Home baked treats and a good choice of drinks are always

on offer. There is no selling or buying; we do accept donations to cover our costs.

We are planning to resume monthly session in September. If you would like to become involved or have any suggestions how to develop the Shirehampton Repair Cafe you can drop us a line on repaircafeshirehampton@gmail.com

The Repair Café Team

Let's Get Shire Buzzing

Planting has begun in the *Community Garden* that is based in Pembroke Avenue at the back of the Baptist Church in Shirehampton. On 5th July Sara from *'Bee Happy Shire'* and a group of volunteers met up and started clearing the raised beds and tidying up the garden area. A selection of herbs were planted in one of the raised beds and more planting will be happening over the coming months. Any like-minded people are welcome to join and help the community garden thrive. No experience necessary, just an interest in plants, flowers or gardening.

Bee Happy Shire are also launching 'Let's Get Shire Buzzing' where locals can grow a pot of flowers on their balcony or patio, vegetables, herbs, fruits and flowers in their garden or allotment thus creating a pollinator corridor that allow the insect population grow and strengthen. From bees, hoverflies, wasps, butterflies to ladybirds and moths all play a role in pollinating plants and flowers.

Cosmos, Borage and Marigolds are easy to grow from seed. You could grow a pot of herbs including mint or even carrot tops. They may not grow more carrots but they will flower and provide extra food for pollinators. Share seeds and cuttings with friends and family to grow additional plants. You can even make a water drinker for insects using a clean saucer of rainwater adding pebbles or marbles to provide little islands to prevent insects from drowning. Ladybirds eat greenfly and are better for a balanced eco system rather than using pesticides. Dandelions provide early nectar and pollen when few plants and flowers are available as well as seeds for seed-eating birds.

You can join the 'Bee Team' via their Facebook page:www.facebook.com/groupsbeehappyshire Leave a message on: 0117 982 9963 or simply turn up at the Community Garden, Pembroke Avenue, Shirehampton, BS11 9SB.

Kathryn Courtney + photos © K Courtney







A "Pit-Stop" for Pollinators Guide

Bee Happy Shire and Shire Greens have created a new A BEE C guide to helping the bees, and all the pollinators, thrive in Shire.

The Let's Get Shire Buzzing leaflet will give you an easy pathway to follow so that every window box, plant pot, garden and green space in Shirehampton can be prepared as a Pit-Stop for pollinators.

Have a look for yourself - pick up your FREE "Let's Get Shire Buzzing" leaflet from the Shirehampton Public Hall or the next High Street Market in the Tithe Barn.



The Big Clean for Shirehampton

The weekend of 12th & 13th July was The Big Clean Event for Shirehampton; it was also the peak of another summer heatwave. This meant the times were changed for both days from 10am until 1pm. Some people began litter picking from 8.30am on the Saturday but the heat was already increasing that time of morning. Health and safety during this time was adhered to. Bottles of water were on hand, refreshments, pastries and biscuits made available to all who took part.

Litter picking equipment, shovels and brushes were provided. Some did litter picking on their own, others with a friend and some were family groups. Children through to a couple of people in their nineties joined in and there was amazing camaraderie over the two days.

"The weekend has gone very, very well." said Nick who is Treasurer with Shirehampton Action and organiser of The Big Clean.

"We had two bases. The first was at The Ridge in Shirehampton and the second was at the Cotswold Community Centre. The numbers on Saturday were









very, very good even with the high temperatures. Sunday was absolutely excellent and exceeded my expectations which was a little cooler but we faced a bit of a challenge with the unexpected heat wave." said Nick.

Areas covered included The Bean Acre, Old Quarry Road, Lower High Street, through to The Ridge and surrounding roads, Hermitage Close, the High Street and surrounding roads, Pembroke Road, Station Road, Hung Road, parts of the Portway, Woodwell Road, Nibley Road, Dursley Road and much of Cotswold Estate. A lot had been achieved during the weekend and shows the achievement that can be reached when the local community come together. Problem areas for litter and fly tipping were identified and reported on Fix My Street and problem solving is now underway with ideas being discussed to reduce litter throughout Shirehampton.

"It has been both satisfying and frustrating at the same time for everyone. We are trying to make the village that we live in more presentable and a better place to work and live. There are some streets where people are really making the effort themselves to do litter picks on a regular basis and we need to recognise this. I think that needs to be encouraged, recognised and congratulated. I'd like to thank everyone who took part in The Big Clean this weekend. It really has been appreciated" said Nick.

It is hoped this will become an annual event and plans are already underway for the **next Big Clean**. Check out Shirehampton Action website for updates: www. shirehamptonaction.org.uk or join their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ShirehamptonCAF

Litter is the responsibility for us all and we can all do our bit to keep Shirehampton tidy where ever we live. Any fly tipping can also be reported online with 'Fix My Street' for removal.

Regular Litter Picks take place the third Thursday of each month from 10.30am until 12 noon run by Shirehampton Action. Meet up is at Shirehampton Public Hall, Station Road, BS11 9TX. Litter pick equipment is provided.

Kathryn Courtney + photos © K Courtney

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"Take care of your inner, spiritual beauty. That will reflect in your face." Dolores del Ri

Dolores del Rio was a famous 1920-30's Hollywood actress. She was a beautiful woman but was acutely aware that physical beauty is "only skin deep" and that it is how we feel about ourselves and others that makes "inner beauty."



So how do we take care of our own inner self, our spiritual beauty? Firstly, you don't have to be religious to be spiritual. Some people find spirituality in art, yoga, music, walking, nature, meditation; the list is endless. There are also therapies available; one such therapy is Reiki and I was lucky enough to try it out when I visited **Darren Burke's Reiki studio in Avonmouth**. I chatted to Darren and then had a

30-minute treatment, which I found to be a wonderfully relaxing and uplifting experience. I'm going to leave it to Darren to explain to you what Reiki is:

What is Reiki?

Reiki is a healing therapy that helps stimulate the body's natural healing systems and energy centres. Originating in Japan, Reiki can be translated as "universal life-force energy". It was founded and developed by **Mikao Usui** in early 20th century and has its roots in Buddhism and Shintoism.

Reiki supports and stimulates the body's natural healing and promotes deep relaxation. It is not a replacement for modern medicine, but it can be complementary to other treatments and therapies. **Cancer Research UK** say:

"Some people with cancer say they feel more relaxed after using therapies such as Reiki. Studies suggest that this is often because a therapist spends time with the person. Gentle touch in a calm setting can be relaxing. Reiki is sometimes used in palliative care, especially in hospices".

Reiki treatments involve a practitioner placing their hands on your fully clothed body, focusing energy on areas where it is most needed. People find Reiki enormously relaxing, often reporting feeling a profound sense of wellbeing. This effect of inner calm often lasts long after the session is over. Everyone's experience of Reiki is unique though, but I have never had a client who didn't feel some positive benefit.

People come to receive Reiki for many reasons, including emotional support in facing life's challenges, or physical health challenges. In times of emotional stress Reiki is particularly beneficial, including times of grief, trauma or sleeplessness. Many people describe life as 'easier to manage' when they receive Reiki. It balances mind, body, and soul.

There are many forms of Reiki available which are based on Usui's teachings. I teach western Reiki but have been instructed in traditional eastern methods



and am a practitioner member of the **Jikiden UK Reiki Association**. Jikiden means "directly taught" and highlights the lineage and the traditional methods of Reiki as they were originally practiced in Japan. My aspiration is to travel to Japan to receive instruction to become a **Jikiden Shihan** (teacher).

Darren Burke, foreword by Paul McMillan

Contact Darren on: 07951 987175 or at: contact@justfortoday.live



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Churches in the Shirehampton Area

St Mary's Church News



www.stmarysshire.org

We start our article this time with the sad news that *Chris Eynon*, our Assistant Verger, Choir Member and friend passed away on 9th July. He was a part of St Mary's from infancy, joining the church choir as a young child and still sang here until very recently, only poor health preventing him from continuing. Our heartfelt sympathies are with his family at this sad time.

This is proving especially difficult to write as it is only the day after his passing that I am composing this, so I haven't had time to properly process his passing and to write in a way that gives full justice to all he brought to St Mary's, the village of Shirehampton and beyond. Chris wrote the Shire article for many years until very recently, always signing off with a silly joke and his cheery *Bye for now - C.M.E.* so, we will be signing off this month with a hastily found joke to meet the Shire submission date and in his memory. *Chris, it was a joy and privilege to know you, and we will miss you.*

He would want me to continue sharing our news with you all and so you are invited to our **Pop Up Play Village** taking place from Monday 4th August to Saturday 9th August as follows: **Monday 4th & Tuesday 5th** 10am to midday; **Wednesday 6th** 10am to midday (please note **Goldies** will also be joining together from 10:30am); **Thursday 7th** 12 to 2pm (after our Communion Service that starts at 11am); **Friday 8th** 10am to 2pm during our Coffee Morning and Welcome Space; and **Saturday 9th** 10am to midday.

This was a hugely successful event last year and will again feature a many amenities available in Shire. It will again be free of charge. Free squash and biscuits will be available for the children, and hot drinks will be available to purchase as our Coffee Mornings will be taking place from 10am to midday on all these days except Thursday. On the Friday, free bacon sandwiches will be available in the morning and a free lunch from midday, so come along and join us if you can.

On Friday 15th August 6-7pm there will be a **VJ Day Firepit, Praise & Peace Gathering** at St Mary's Churchyard. All are invited to sing a variety of classic hymns and pray for peace in our world. This will be followed by hotdogs and marshmallows.

As this is the beginning of our **Patronal Festival** weekend, we will be holding an **Afternoon Tea** on Saturday 16th August from 2 to 4pm, which will also remember 85 years of cafe ministry at St Mary's. We hope many of you will join us.

Then on Sunday 17th August at 10:30am we will hold our **Patronal Service**, celebrating our Patron

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	Coffee Morning
	10:15-11:45	Prayer Hub
	10:30	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

Saint, *Mary the mother of Jesus*. We would be pleased to welcome you to this Worship for All service that is suitable for all ages.

Before wrapping up, we would like to send our congratulations and good wishes to **Shirehampton Methodist Church** on celebrating 150 years in the village.

As promised at the start of this article, I finish with a joke that I hope Chris would have laughed at:

Question: What kind of plants didn't Noah want on the ark?

Answer: Leeks!!

Best wishes from all at St Mary's Shire

Shirehampton Baptist Church

Contact: 07743 683684 or rhodespaul360@gmail.com

On June 9th a packed church came to give thanks for the life of Do Mortimore. Do was a faithful member of our Church for many years and will be remembered with affection by our fellowship and friends in the village.

On **June 27th** a service was held to celebrate the life of **Betty Baker**. Betty was also a well loved member and she wrote many inspiring poems one of which was read in the service.

The next **Songs of Praise Café** will be on **August 10th** at 4-45 pm at the Cotswold Community Hall, Dursley Road. All invited to join us in an hour of Song, talks, drama and refreshments.

The next **Life Café** opens on **August 28th** 10-30 to 11-30 am. This is held in our Church Building and all are welcome to enjoy some lovely cakes, tea or coffee.

On **July 3rd Rock Steady** held an Open Evening. They will meet again in September after the Summer break.

At the end of this month we will say Goodbye to our **Minister Paul Rhodes** and **his wife**, **Katy**. They will be missed not only by our fellowship but by the children who have come to Rock Steady and also by **Shirehampton Primary School** where Paul has been leading Assemblies and leading a drama class.

They will not be far away so we can keep in touch.

We meet every Sunday at 10 30am and on Zoom at 4-30pm

Due to Paul leaving, please see our website www.shirehamptonbaptistchurch.co.uk

Sending love and prayers, from us all!



Hello from Shire Methodist

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

We hold Morning Worship each Sunday in our church building from 11am. This month we have a slight change to our normal rhythm of services. The first and third Sundays in August are led by guest preachers, the second is All-Age Worship, on the fourth we celebrate Holy Communion, and the fifth is a more informal gathering with coffee and conversation.

We are delighted to have been offered a grant from the **John James Foundation** for a **Summer Party**. We will be offering afternoon tea on **Sunday 7th September** between 2pm and 5pm. This is at the same time as **Penpole Avenue has a "Playing Out" event**, where the road will be closed so that children can play safely. All are welcome to join us for free refreshments.

This news is being written during a heatwave in July when many people are glad to find a cool space. Our

Hub is taking part in a Cool Space trial in partnership with the Council. The trial is trying to identify what makes a great "cool space": somewhere that supports communities during hot weather (i.e. days with air temperature of 25 °C or over) and heat waves. Our Hub is taking part in this trial until the end of September. On hot days, when we are open as usual (usually Monday to Thursday 9.30-4.30), you can pop in to get a drink of water, have a seat in a space that is out of the sun, and access information about staying cool.

You may want to pop in for a bit of respite on the way to the shops or the medical centre. Also, you may find our space is cooler than your home for spending a bit of time. As part of the trial, if you are able, it would be great for as many people to fill in a survey as possible to help the council learn from the trial about what residents most need. This will help with future funding opportunities.

Our Hub has many free events which happen in our building on weekdays from Monday to Thursday: games, benefits and jobs advice, support groups, and a community fridge.

Our building is on Shirehampton High Street opposite the old Lloyds Bank and the Job Centre. The entrance is on Penpole Avenue. There are three doors; the most accessible entrance is the white door a little way up the road. Please ring the doorbell if the door is shut!

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

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.

Jesus heals today as He did during His time on earth.









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Summer Beach Fest Success

Once again St. Bernard's Primary School hosted their Summer Beach Fest on Saturday 5th July that was organised by their PTA. It all kicked off at 12 noon and although the sun didn't make an appearance until later in the day, the clouds in the sky didn't dampen the six hours of energy and fun had by all, adults and children alike.

There were plenty of stalls to browse in the main school hall from wood crafts, knitted and crochet toys, handmade greeting cards, candles, jewellery, gift ideas, cakes and savouries, raffle and more besides.

Outside there were games to take part in, lucky dips, face painting and refreshments that included a bar opening later in the afternoon. Pimms o'clock anyone? There was hot food available as well as sweets.

There was entertainment too. Zac provided a live music performance and The Marky Jay Monkey Magic Show, provided fun, mayhem, tricks and magic that everyone enjoyed. Scales and Tails joined later in the day providing the children with opportunities to meet and greet, small reptiles, snakes and small mammals. The children were fascinated and loved every moment.

There was also a special presentation to Mrs Russell during the afternoon. "Kim (Mrs Russell) has worked for 28 years in our school and the job has been beyond just that for her. She has embraced all our families, treating them with kindness and always provided a warm welcome. She is a hugely respected figure and much loved by all the children. Plus, she has managed school finances outstandingly well, in her main role as school bursar. So today we introduce the 'Mrs Russell Shine Your Light Award' to present to children in the future for shining their light in the form of kindness, respect, community-mindedness and/or special effort." said Richard Jordan, Head Teacher at the school.

"We also managed to raise significant funds for school improvement and development areas. We thank the PTA for their time and energy, providing a hugely successful event." Mr Jordan said.

Here's to the next event which I am sure will be a resounding success. Enjoy the summer.

Kathryn Courtney © photos and article

















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Sport and Activities IN SHIREHAMPTON

Photos That Didn't Make The Cut

One of the frustrations of telling your stories is that there are so many photos that we can't fit in. We are going to try to make up for that with this collection from 2024-25.

In April 2024, Shire covered a match between Shire Green Rovers and Bristol Academia. At half time we interviewed the referee. Paul had been refereeing local football matches for over 40 years. At the time, he told me that he still referees matches on Saturdays and Sundays most weekends and sometimes midweek too. I know that he's still active, because I spotted him refereeing at the Port of Bristol Youth Tournament in May. People like Paul are the bedrock of our game and a priceless asset to our communities. Thanks to his dedication and that of his colleagues in the refereeing family, our game continues to grow and thrive at the grassroots level. If you read this Paul, or if someone who knows him reads it, please get in touch; we'd love to have a chat about your memories of 40+ years in our beautiful game.

Paul McMillan (Photos © Paul McMillan and Kathryn Courtney)

Contact: sports@shire.org.uk



On Oct 7th, Avonmouth OBRFC's u14 girls played their first match as a combined team with Ashley Down, against Imperial.



On 10th November, youngsters of Avonmouth OBRFC lined up, with players from other clubs, for the Remembrance Day silence.



Paul Tucker



On 14th September Shire Colts u10's prepare to kick off the second half of a Bristol Saturday Youth League match against Shine Saints Colts.



On 22nd June 2024, Shirehampton's Nathan Brown scored 118 in a partnership of 233 with Dan Conway in the local derby against Twyford House.



February 2nd, Shire Colts u14 Panthers, pictured after a hard-fought 1-1 draw with St. Nicholas Youth.



Parkinson's Awareness Golf Tournament, Friday April 25th 2025 at Shirehampton Park Golf Club. Organiser Russell Slee's brother Bob playing "Peek-aboo", followed by Men's winner Chris Kavanagh.



15th February; a cold and wet Saturday morning saw Shine Saints u10's host Port of Bristol in a friendly.



GOAL! POB Youth Tournament, 17th-18th May 2025.



On June 12th 2024, Twyford House u11's chase Lodway's total of 114 for 8.

Blaise Castle parkrun

Blaise Castle parkrun has just celebrated its second anniversary and 100th run this summer. It's one of five parkruns in Bristol, the others being in Eastville Park, Ashton Court, Three Brooks (Bradley Stoke) and Pomphrey Hill (Mangotsfield). They all start at 9am every Saturday. The Blaise Castle parkrun has plenty of parking and a great cafe too, and the 3 or 4 buses go past every 15 minutes.

There are usually between 300 and 400 attendees every week, the emphasis is on exercise and enjoyment and it's NOT a race. To register go to: www.parkrun.org.uk/register - if you don't have access to the internet, ask a friend or relative to help, once you have a barcode, you're off. When you complete the course, you're given a finish token, both your barcode and the token are scanned in, and the results are available within an hour of the end of the run. You can follow your progress week on week and see your improvement (and you do improve very quickly usually). Finish times vary between 16 minutes and an hour, and there are always volunteers who back at the back and chat with folks who'd rather walk the course, as there is a major campaign to encourage people to parkwalk the course.

The Pioneer Medical Group, which runs GP Practices in Avonmouth, Lawrence Weston, and Henbury, was given a kind donation by Moments, a local charity that supports mental health. They have

used this donation to buy t-shirts and a meeting point flag and every week they invite anyone struggling with their mental or physical heath to join them for 'meet in the park', an inclusive and welcoming group that meets alongside the Blaise parkrun. No running is needed and all are welcome irrespective of mobility issues. There is more information here, and a wonderfully inspiring video: https://pioneermedicalgroup.nhs. uk/surgery-information/news/meet-in-the-park

I spoke to Dr Cary, who provides tea/coffee, and homemade biscuits and cake there every week, one of the Pioneer GPs and she assured me that they welcome folks form all communities to join them there.

Lots of people from Shirehampton take part already, either as walkers/runners or volunteers, as it's a fabulous way to start the weekend and a great way to meet people too.

Why not give it a try!

John Hastings











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Fencing - The Dread of Losing

As part of my teaching in schools, I sometimes show videos of top-level matches. One thing that seems very important to young children, is to know beforehand, who is going to win.

It makes evolutionary sense; we are the heirs of social groups that won out in pre-history. There is security in winning; terror in losing.

The ability to lose gracefully seems to be a function of a type of civilisation in which inter-dependency makes the humiliation of the loser unprofitable. In highly interdependent eras, such as the Bronze Age, when tin has to make its way from Cornwall to the Levant, Empires have to respect each other; rebel provinces must be appeased because chaos would lead to disruption of the networks of exchange that make those complex societies possible.

Once chaos begins or the need for those networks diminishes, the gloves are off and an age of banditry ensues; an age of iron replaces that of bronze.

In sport, particularly an almost entirely amateur sport like fencing, there is a network of dependency; on others being willing to referee; of experienced fencers helping beginners along; of general courtesy and consideration to make a session at the club a recreation and not an obligation or ordeal. In the end, we need interdependency and understanding of difference to get us out of the primitive rut of survivor bias; the desperate hope of winning that makes us ignore consequences and the terror of losing that haunts us.

When we play competitively we have the chance to slay that dragon. By knowing that those two imposters, triumph and disaster as the same, as **Kipling** put it, we learn to evaluate ourselves by how we face them. That's a victory always available to us and why games are important; because the result is less important than how we play them.

John Rohde



Winning and runner up teams from White Eagle's monthly Team Sabre Competition.

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Avonmouth Football Club Update



Over the last three years Avonmouth FC has enjoyed its best set of results in its 105 year history and last season managed to survive its first experience in the Jewson Western League Division 1, finishing 15th out of 22 clubs. The highlights were the battles against local sides Shirehampton and Hallen with games that were hard fought close

encounters that attracted large numbers of local people to watch the matches. The Boxing Day home game against Shirehampton attracted over 500 spectators, the sixth highest non-league football crowd that day who enjoyed a great game and were able to celebrate the Christmas period in the bar!



Avonmouth's new Under 6 team.

Congratulations need to be given to Hallen on winning the league by 13 points and being promoted to the Hellenic League Premier Division where they will enjoy visiting many new grounds. Avonmouth started their Western League experience with new manager Tom Morgan following Ashley Bennett's move to Southern League Cribbs. The season started well with the side in the top six through to October but Tom then had to step down due to a work promotion that meant he then ended the season playing for the reserves who achieved success by winning the Bristol & Suburban Senior Division and being promoted to

the **Premier Division** where the first team played just three seasons ago. Tom's departure brought about Ash Bennett's return to the club as first team manager and they enjoyed a confident end to the season and now looking forward to the new season that commences with a home match on the **2nd August**.

The move to the Western League required a step up in how visiting teams were welcomed, the level of hospitality provided and extra volunteers were required on the gates where entrance charges were now being made. Also, the step up meant the club had to provide a stand for 50 spectators, which was opened in March by long time sponsors **Alison** and **Craig Franklin**, with guidance from **Councillor Don Alexander**. Having completed a season in the Western League at **Step 6 of the English football league** system qualifies the club to feature in the **FA Vase** where they will play **Brimscombe** & **Thrupp** at home **23rd August** 3pm ko.

The club celebrated its centenary in 2019 but recent research has shown the actual first season was 1913-14 under the name of **Avonmouth Rovers**. On the outbreak of the **First World War** all the players volunteered for the **6th Glosters Regiment**, with a number not returning and due to the horrors experienced during the war many clubs restarted in 1919 linked to their local church, hence Avonmouth St Andrew's, now Avonmouth FC.

Dave Rowley, Avonmouth FC President. Photo © Ellie Rocket Photography

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ShireStrong Update: Strength, Community, and a Personal Milestone

I've always believed that fitness should be accessible, enjoyable, and something that brings people together—and that's exactly what we're building at ShireStrong Kettlebell Club here in Shirehampton.

What started as a small group has grown into a welcoming, supportive space for people of all ages and fitness levels. We run regular kettlebell training sessions at the Cotswold Centre, along with two early-morning bootcamps each week on the playing fields at Lamplighters Marsh. It's not about chasing extremes - it's about functional strength, stamina, and staying mobile for the long haul.

Our members range from complete beginners to experienced lifters, and my goal is always the same: to help each person feel strong, capable, and proud of what their body can do. We've had some lovely new faces join us recently, and it's been brilliant to see their confidence and strength grow with every session.

Outside the club, I recently reached a personal milestone that I'm proud to share. On 28 June, I competed in the British Masters' Powerlifting Competition in Guildford. I entered as a Masters 3 lifter (that's the 6070 age bracket) in the under-76kg category. Going in, I was ranked second, and after the squat and bench press rounds I was still trailing. To



NATIONAL CHAMPION

win, I needed to deadlift 142.5kg - a weight I hadn't lifted for quite some time. But I gave it everything, made the lift, and secured the championship title.

It was a hard-earned win and a real reminder that age doesn't define our strength. We're capable of more than we think - especially when we have the right support around us.

Soon I will be starting a new daytime 10 week small group training challenge. Keep an eve out for updates on my social media at Linda Thorne PT or contact me directly to register your interest (see my advert on page 5).



ShireStrong continues to grow not just as a fitness club, but as a community. Whether you're lifting for the first time or pushing for a personal best, there's a place for you here. And if you're curious - come and see what we're about. You might just surprise yourself.

Linda, Coach and Founder, ShireStrong Kettlebell Club

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