CAERLEON

DIRECTORY

ISSUE 78
NOVEMBER/
DECEMBER 2020

SW DIRECTORIES

WELCOME!

If you are interested in advertising your business in the Directory, please contact us to find out about the extremely competitive advertising rates. You will always deal with us directly, like many of the businesses that advertise in this magazine, we are a small, independent family business and fully appreciate how much your business means to you, especially in these uncertain times.

Introducing the newest member of our small team - Betty the schnauzer, we're a team of three now and she's brightening up the office for us every day.

Keep an eye out for more appearances from her in future editions.

Wishing you a happy and peaceful festive period.

Susan x

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE JAN / FEB EDITION FRIDAY 27th NOVEMBER

Advertising enquiries:

Telephone Leslie on 07725 888070 or 01633 892771 or email contact@swdirectories.co.uk

Editor: Susan Woolford | Sales & Distribution: Leslie Woolford

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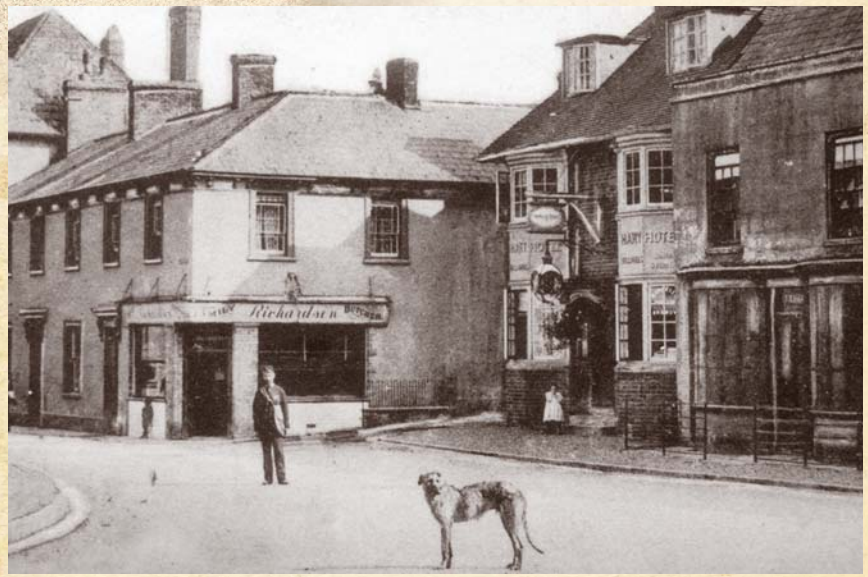
Caerleon
Then & Now



The village postman and an inquisitive dog pose for the cameraman in about 1910. The White Hart with its ornate frontage was at this time owned by a Mr Tom Herbert, a local businessman who also ran a coal merchants and brick making concern. Below is the same scene taken in July 2020

Extract taken from Norman Stevens's books of Caerleon. They can be purchased from Caerleon Post Office

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Kingston Newell
ESTATE AGENTS

Caerleon *Housing Market Update*

It's been a couple of months since we have been able to once again safely resume house viewings and valuations. Demand for viewing and the free valuation service we offer has been higher than we have ever previously experienced in our 30+ year history!

Family homes in **Caerleon** remain very popular with local buyers and those from further afield keen to move into the area.

Safety First

Please be reassured that we are following the latest protocols as advised by Welsh Government regarding valuations and viewings during this unique moment in history.

When you book a **FREE valuation** or if you would like to book a viewing, we will update you as to what we all need to do.

Top Tips to Sell Your House This Autumn

Let the Natural Light In

As the days get shorter, make sure you keep your blinds and curtains open to let as much natural light in and use table lamps in the bedrooms and lounge areas to complement this. You should consider 'daylight' bulbs for the kitchen and bathrooms.

Avoid Condensation on Your Windows

If the windows in your house are prone to condensation, remember to open them before viewings to let the fresh air in.

Clean Your Carpets

You will probably have been in and out of your house from the garden during the summer. Now is the time to give your carpets a good clean to spruce them up in time for viewings.

Put the Heating on BUT Not Too High

The temperature is dropping so put the heating on to avoid it being too cold in your house. You do not need to turn it up too high, a nice even heat throughout the house is ideal.

Clear Your Paths and Driveways

Try to keep the walkways to your house clear of leaves. Not only can they make the garden look untidy they can also be a trip hazard, and no one wants a visit to the Royal Gwent (especially at this moment in time!).

Why Choose Kingston Newell?

We truly believe we are the market leading estate agency in Newport because not only do we offer a fee price match promise (not including online estate agents), we will extensively market your house online, prepare professional property details and always arrange accompanied viewing with a member of our team at times to suit you.

OPS · The Property Ombudsman · NAEA · rightmove · OnTheMarket.com

Book A Free Valuation and Let Us Help You to Sell Your House

If you are thinking of buying, selling, renting or seeking a professional company to manage your properties, get in touch to find out how we CAN help you.

Kingston Newell Estate Agents, 70 Bridge Street, Newport, South Wales NP20 4AQ
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Covid-19 Update - Crawfords Working Practice

Due to the major impact the coronavirus has had on everyone, Crawfords working practice has changed to comply with our customers' needs and our safety in these difficult times.

When Crawfords arrive at your home or property to clean your soft furnishings or carpets we will be:

Wearing disposable overalls, gloves, overshoes and a face mask

Keeping a two-metre social distance

As a company we take our responsibility to our customers as paramount when working at their home or property and will endeavour to keep them safe whilst we are working.

On completion of the clean an application of Formula 429 plus (a water based anti-microbial with multi surface broad spectrum kill factor 6) will be applied to your fabrics and carpets, this will ensure that they are contamination free.

I would like to say to all my customers - please stay safe.

James Crawford

01633 265458 / 07840 554485

info@crawfordscleaningservices.co.uk

www.crawfordscleaningservices.co.uk

Llandegfedd Reservoir

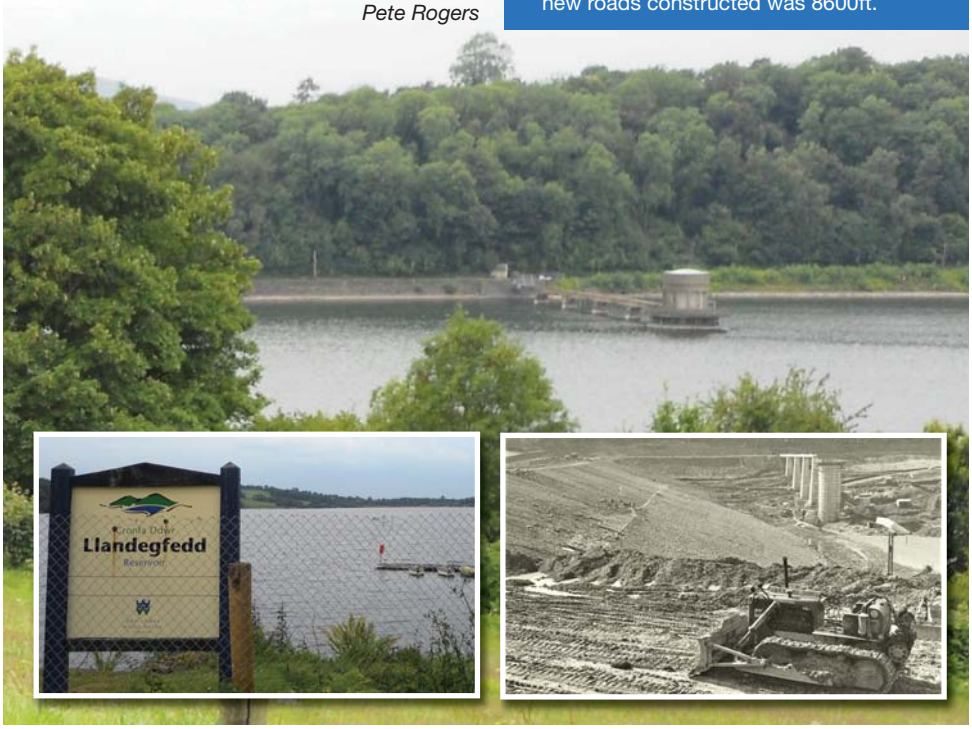
For half of a century, the reservoir has provided people in the South East of Wales with their water supply. In what was a secluded valley known to few others than the 'locals', there is one of the largest areas of inland water in South Wales.

The Visitor Centre and Lakeside café has now re-opened and available for indoor eating with beautiful views out over the lake. For any covid updates, call **01633 373401** or visit the website **www.llandegfedd.co.uk**
Llandegfedd Reservoir, Coed y Paen, Pontypool (for Sat Nav please use NP4 0TA).

Pete Rogers

Some of the Reservoirs Statistics:

- Construction started in the spring of 1961.
- Number of farms that were flooded in the construction was five.
- Impounding started in October 1963.
- Impounding was due to be completed in April 1964, it was eventually full to the top by early 1965.
- Length of the water surface is 1½ miles long and 1 mile wide.
- Storage of 5000 million gallons.
- Average depth of 80ft and at its deepest point is 135ft.
- 25 million gallons are drawn off per day.
- Length of roads abandoned was 2300ft, new roads constructed was 8600ft.



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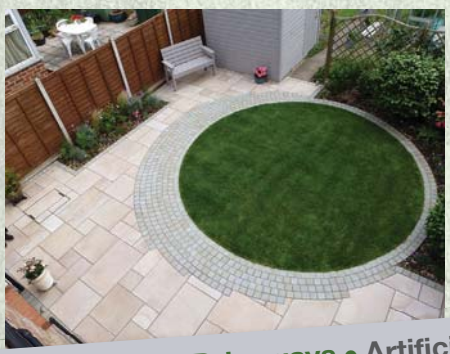
JAPONICA

LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE



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Newport Bathroom Centre Ltd

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Survive Lockdown With Twmbarlwm Awe-Walks

At the time of writing, Caerphilly County Borough is still in lockdown - and if you're anything like me, my mood is darkening with the unease and uncertaintity of not being able to get out and about. From the start of the Coronavirus restrictions we were advised to take some form of daily exercise and suddenly our parks and open spaces were busier than ever with people who haven't used a pair of walking boots in years.

Sunday papers and magazines are full of expert advice on what we can do and where we can go to get our daily excercise and our much needed dose of outdoor life. There's been lists of the UK's best walks or advice on how to walk yourself fit and now the emphasis is on our mental well-being and how to cope with the Covid imposed incarceration.

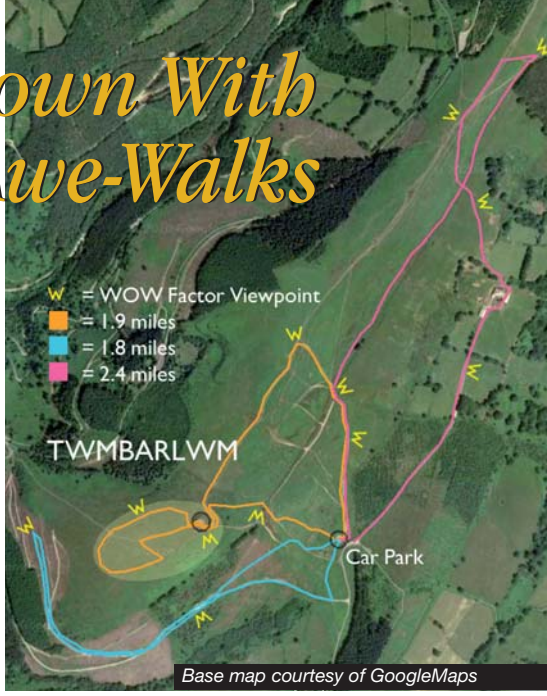
One such recent article concentrated on mental fitness and stated that scientists from Trinity College, Dublin and the University of California have shown that short "awe walks" (blame the Americans for that term) can greatly increase positive emotions and help maintain a healthy mind. An "awe walk" is not about the length or difficulty of the walk but one where you make a concious effort to look for things with that will truly amaze you.

The research team set up one study group who were told not to seek out any awe inspiring moments (no starry skies or vast vistas) on their daily walk, whereas another group were instructed to actively seek out every "wow-factor" instance possible. Both groups had to take selfies before during and after their walks.

Analysis showed that the first group remained focused solely on themselves whereas the selfies produced by the "awe" group progressively became more about the landscape whilst themselves became smaller in the frame. Their smiles were also noticeably wider.

There have been other studies proving beyond doubt the beneficial effects of walking in our natural surroundings – not only for the obvious physical improvements but also the reduction of mental stresses too. A survey of nearly 5,000 people by the Mental Health Foundation revealed that over half of those questioned said that going for a walk helped them cope with the stresses of the Covid lockdown – with a large proportion of them saying a visit to the countryside was particularly uplifting.

Another study by the University of Michigan measured levels of the stress hormone cortisol of participants before and after 10-20 minute walks. They found that the level of cortisol was significantly reduced after a walk where they were in contact with green, natural surroundings.



Base map courtesy of GoogleMaps

All that research only proves what I've always believed and it suits me down to the ground – because having Twmbarlwm mountain on our doorstep, my fitness and continued mental well-being is assured.

However, with my bad knee I can no longer manage the distance or the steep climb from the valley floor in Risca or Cwmcarn to the top.

Thankfully the mountain is easily accessible by car, and using the car park on the common below the Twmp as a starting point there's any number of short walks possible and viewing points with the necessary "wow factor".

Most of the "awe walks" I take are less than two miles and yet often take me a couple of hours because of my frequent stops to sit and take in the views. Apart from a few yards that are a bit steep, if my bad knee and general health can handle these walks then anybody should be able to – you won't get lost up here either, the car park is easily visible from the Twmp.

Space here does not allow me describe the routes fully, but directions to the car park and details of these short walks (and some much longer) can be found on our website.

Terry Evans, Chairman, Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society

CTS meet at the car park below Twmbarlwm's summit for a litter pick and volunteer workday on the last Sunday of every month to which everyone is invited, it's not all hard work and it's a great opportunity to find your way around up there. We organise walks and other events up the mountain and at Crosskeys RFC throughout the year so watch our website and Facebook page for details.

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When you have an idea of what you want we have the passion for fabrics and interiors and we can help you and guide you through the immense range of fabrics to achieve the right look for your home.

Fabrics are sourced from the UK's leading suppliers and your bespoke curtains and blinds can be made to your choice specifications to complete the look.

We offer a full measure, making and fitting service all done professionally by ourselves.

There is a measuring guide on our website to help you to supply the correct measurements for your project, or alternatively book an appointment for a consultation in our showroom.

We have a vast experience in curtains and fabric blinds all made in house by us.

Located at 171 Larch Grove Malpas Newport our showroom has displays of carefully selected fabrics and styles. We are always here on hand if you need help with no pressure.

We look forward to offering you a warm welcome to our showroom for your V.I.P experience with a no obligation consultation by appointment.

Covid-19

During these difficult times we are having to run our business in a different way.
We have re-organised our showroom to allow for social distancing and we are operating by appointment only for the foreseeable future. We have hand sanitizer and various PPE for you to use on arrival for your appointment to keep us and our customers safe and well. Please call or use our contact form on our website to arrange an appointment.
Many thanks for understanding.

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Gater's Barbers

Covid 19 Statement

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We have all completed both the attached certificates and we have all the necessary PPE and cleaning products to be able to provide as safe a service as possible.

We also respect if you can also help us by following any advice we offer.

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Thanks,

Luke

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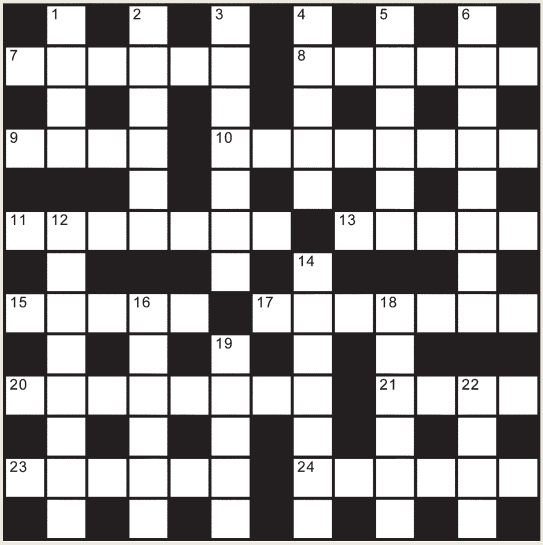
Crossword



Across

7 Any person (6)
8 Strong cloth artists use (6)
9 Wild animal of the dog family (4)
10 Sending something through the air (8)
11 Prohibiting (7)
13 Operate a vehicle (5)
15 Large water birds (5)
17 Easily understood (7)
20 Brief news report (8)
21 A green plant with leaves like feathers (4)
23 Nuclear (6)
24 Person in charge of a newspaper (6)

Down

1 Enter (4)
2 Casket (6)
3 Risking money on horse races etc (7)
4 Provoking fear (5)
5 Reply (6)
6 Large outdoor party or festival (8)
12 Satisfactory (8)
14 Slim (7)
16 Serious (6)
18 An event (6)
19 An orderly pile (5)
22 Part of the plant below the ground (4)

Puzzle solution on page 35

GRAVE CARE

Showing You Care When You Can't Be There

GRAVE CARE offers attendance and maintenance for your loved one's graves and memorials in accordance with the cemetery regulations.

We can tailor maintenance plans to meet your personal requirements that acknowledge significant dates such as Birthdays, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Holy week or any other dates that are meaningful to you.

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Cwmbran group contact - Mrs Val Carnegie
T: 01633 872553 E: slasher45@btinternet.com

Further info on Diabetes contact - Diabetes UK Cymru
T: 029 2066 8276 E: wales@diabetes.org.uk

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Newport U3A

The Newport U3A usually holds its Open Event in August, but this year we have had to sell our 43 interest groups via a special Summer Edition of our new e-magazine called the Desert Island Times. In it the convenors of several groups explain how they have continued during the Lockdown. All issues can be read on the News page of our website: - u3asites.org.uk/newportsewales

The Creative Writers meet to develop poetry and prose writing skills via Zoom: as do members of the Welsh group and they also signed up for Coleg Gwent's online Summer School. Some of our French students use emails and post to improve vocabulary and grammar whilst translating 'Pride and Prejudice'.

Members of the Craft Group are busy producing their next Charity Raising tableau; watch this space! Members of the Cryptic

Crossword Group receive a crossword by e-mail each week followed by hints and the answers. Jazz and Music Appreciation sessions are published in the magazine with suggested pieces to watch on YouTube.

The Theatre Group have streamed live shows from the Congress Theatre and used Zoom to hear episodes of 'Viral News' from its Ad Hoc Theatre Group. Some Ukulele members can be seen practicing on Belle Vue Park's bandstand on Thursdays at 11.30am.

For any more details please visit our website:- u3asites.org.uk/newportsewales or call Angela Robins 07980 970967.

Rotary Opens Opportunities

Newport Uskmouth Rotary

OLD LAPTOPS REQUIRED

Covid 19 has had a devastating effect on children's education.

Whilst many pupils have been able to access online learning and support from their schools during Lockdown, there are too many who have not received this because they do not have the necessary IT equipment .

Newport Uskmouth Rotary are setting up a scheme to support these disadvantaged pupils and we

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CLEAR NEW DIRECTION

WT Laminates had to close for six weeks during the coronavirus lockdown, but now business is booming after it redirected its business to producing bespoke Perspex protective screens

How has COVID affected WT Laminates?
In the run up to lockdown we noticed less people were visiting our showroom. However, we were still very busy until we were forced to close for six weeks. This obviously had an impact on us all and as a company, however, we had a light bulb moment in late April. We ordered some Perspex to trial building protective screens; within four weeks we were so busy even the Saturday boy was working every day.

How did you move forward to keep business flowing?
We quickly realised there was a market for Bespoke screens, for example we provided curved corners which meant no gaps at the edges for more protection. We made freestanding screens, desk screens, dividers and bespoke screens made exactly to our customers requirements.

To whom did you provide these protective screens and where?
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What are your plans for the future?
We expect to be extremely busy with screens as people return to the workplace and our mobile screens are ideal as they can divide meeting/waiting rooms, whilst maintaining visibility. Traditionally the winter is always busy with kitchen worktop and bathroom upgrades as people move back into the house from the garden.

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Fun and Safe Cricket for young Players at the Ponthir Cricket Club

Here Ieuan Watkins, Welsh Cricket's Safeguarding Lead Officer talks about the journey to make Welsh Cricket fun and safe for children and adults.

The FUNdamentals of Cricket

Ieuan Watkins Welsh *Cricket's Safeguarding Lead Officer*

It is a decade now since cricket in Wales was reshaped to form Cricket Wales, a National Governing Body (NGB) seen by many as progressive, innovative and inclusive. The restructure allowed for central governance and increased investment from funding partners leading to increased support for recreational and representative cricket throughout Wales.

The new Cricket Wales Board and Executive identified the need for strong and effective safeguarding procedures, with an expectation that minimum standards would be introduced across all cricket in Wales. (Recent abuse scandals in football have demonstrated the shrewdness of this approach). Following due process, I was appointed as Safeguarding Director and set about my work.

As a cricket coach myself, I remember during my coach training that my role was to ensure we taught the FUNdamentals of cricket. We have to make sport FUN and enjoyable in order to attract children to the game and to retain them within it. The starting point for such an approach is a safe environment, having properly qualified people in place, ensuring those supervising children have Disclosure and Barring checks (formerly CRB), coaching qualifications and first aid certificates and so on.

We have to remember that cricket is a little different to some other sports in that children and adults can play together. Children from the age of 13 can play alongside men and women, subject to appropriate assessment and in exceptional circumstances children of 11/12 years of age can also play. We simply have to get this right.

It would be impossible to manage all of the clubs alone – help was needed! There are six senior leagues in Wales, each league willing to support and encourage safe cricket and to use established protective procedures, but each league needed help to do so. League Welfare Officers were encouraged, linked directly to Cricket Wales, these individuals supporting clubs operationally whilst reporting to Cricket Wales – linking the cricketing network and providing support and encouragement across every club in Wales.

Alongside these remarkable volunteers, the Cricket Wales staffing team, also located in their cricketing communities across Wales provide additional support, pushing for safeguarding compliance. This combined approach, with the League Welfare Officers and the staffing team working hand in glove making huge inroads to make cricket in Wales as safe as it can be.

The creation and implementation of the Cricket Wales Welfare Council allowed all of these key people to come together, to share best practice, to receive specialist training and to help build an effective safeguarding umbrella for everyone.

Local Cricketers having FUN in Safety.

Our ideology is that every club needs a safeguarding umbrella, each panel of the umbrella being a policy or a procedure, such as DBS checks, properly trained staff, reporting mechanisms and so on. It may sound simple, but if we get the panels of our umbrella in place, we keep those underneath it dry – an appropriate analogy perhaps when we think of a sometimes rainy cricket season!
Cricket has grown in Wales and we will continue to grow. We have initiated and embedded All Stars Cricket for thousands of children aged 5-8 and will begin Dynamos Cricket for kids aged 8-11 once the Covid restrictions ease. We support and continue to develop Disability Cricket (our Disability Team recently returning from a tour of Sri Lanka).
We have transformed Women's and Girls' Cricket and continue to develop significant opportunities for everyone across the game.
We have come a long, long way and quite rightly, we are proud to have achieved so much. At the heart of this are the Club and League Welfare Officers who continue to make such a huge difference, building the safeguarding umbrella to keep us all dry. To them, I say thank you, thank you for ensuring we don't forget the FUNdamentals of cricket.
Ieuan Watkins is a retired Police Detective with 31 years' service. During his career he specialised in Public Protection within Gwent, represented the four Welsh forces on national forums and was also deployed internationally with the National Crime Agency. Alongside his work for Cricket Wales and Glamorgan Cricket Club, he is Director of Sport Safeguarding Limited, a consultancy providing training and support across sports and other bodies.

Ieuan Watkins May 2020

FOOTNOTE

Ieuan has done a remarkable job in guiding Wales (classed as a County in Cricket) to be one of, if not, the leading organisation in Welfare Compliance in the U.K.

Derek Picken

Derek Picken
SEWCL
Welfare Officer

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Thank God For Fry Days

by Paul Minton

As Newport enters a local lockdown in response to the second wave of coronavirus, it is worth remembering that this is not the first infectious disease we have had to tackle and survive. Indeed, Newport has a proud tradition of battling contagions going as far back as the Austin Friars.

Whilst the Austin Friars may be long gone, they are still remembered by the street that bears their name and of course, by Friar's Walk. Interestingly, the isolation hospital (or spittelhouse) run by the friars is said to be responsible for the name Spytty Fields, which is a corruption of 'ysbyty', the Welsh word for hospital.

There are actually many Orders of friars. These have included the Carmelites (known as white friars), the Franciscans (known as grey friars), the Dominicans (known as black friars), and the Austin Friars, who also wore black habits and have been mistaken for Austin Canons (known as black canons). The Austin Friars themselves were founded around 388 AD by St Augustine of Hippo (yes, really!), who has often been confused with St Augustine the Second. It can be rather perplexing and many a scholar has been tripped up by the various similarities.

The Austin Friars arrived in England in 1251 and settled in locations like London and Oxford. Ralph, 1st Earl of Stafford and resident of Newport Castle, chose to establish a local friary in 1347 to commemorate his appointment as Lord of Newport. This is believed to have been the only Augustinian house in Wales. In common with other Orders, the Austin Friars would have lived among the people: nursing the sick, clothing the impoverished, and feeding the hungry (possibly with Friar's Tuck!) They were distinct from monks, who were cloistered and largely divorced from the outside world.

In 1377, the Austin Friars of Newport received a boost from Hugh, 2nd Earl of Stafford, who gifted land, later called Friars fields, on which to build a new chapel. Given the vow of poverty that prevented them from accepting property, the land was entrusted to the Benedictine monks of St Peter's in Gloucester, who were already responsible for the Church of St Woolos. By 1385, the friars were suffering from dwindling support and they had to merge with the Benedictines to ensure their survival. As a result of the amalgamation, the dedication of the chapel was changed from St Nicholas to St Thomas of Canterbury (Thomas à Becket to you and me). It was soon destroyed by Owain Glydŵr but rebuilt by the 6th Earl of Stafford in the middle of the 15th century.

The union between the Austin Friars and the Benedictine monks continued until the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII in 1538. By then, however, the Austin Friars were undeniably in decline. Some believe the friars escaped abroad rather than conform to the king's will, whilst others think that poverty drove them to seek refuge in Oxford. It has also been suggested that covert links between the friary and the traitorous 3rd Duke of Buckingham, a descendant of the Stafford line, might have hastened its closure.

The old friary stood beside Newport Bridge well into the 19th century, when it was being used as a cider mill. In 1860, the Newport Corporation purchased the plot and proceeded to raze it to the ground. Today, the bus station operates from the area once occupied by the building but its ruins were rediscovered in 2014 when work commenced on Friar's Walk. The stones were subsequently removed and incorporated into a section of wall, although I would encourage you to apply liberal amounts of hand gel if you want to touch it. You can't be too careful!

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Crossword Solution

■	1 I	■	2 C	■	3 B	■	4 S	■	5 A	■	6 C	■
7 A	N	Y	O	N	E	■	8 C	A	N	V	A	S
■	T	■	F	■	T	■	A	■	S	■	R	■
9 W	O	L	F	■	10 T	H	R	O	W	I	N	G
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11 B	12 A	N	N	I	N	G	■	13 D	R	I	V	E
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15 G	E	E	16 S	E	■	17 C	L	E	18 A	R	L	Y
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20 B	U	L	L	E	T	I	N	■	21 F	E	22 R	N
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Retirement Matters

Staying invested and giving your money the greatest chance to grow

Perhaps the most common investment advice is to stay invested. But with markets being so volatile, the ease of sticking to that advice has been sorely tested in 2020. Even though we have seen global markets bounce sharply from their March lows, understandably there will still be those investing for retirement who remain worried and wonder what the best approach is for the remainder of the year and beyond.

Depending on what stage of retirement planning you are currently at, if time is on your side the evidence shows that remaining invested for the long term is one of the best things you can do for your overall retirement wealth. While it can be tempting to take money out of the market in the short term, it is highly likely to deliver lower overall returns.

INFLUENCED BY MARKET SENTIMENT

It is important that your long-term investment objectives are at the forefront of your mind and you align your actions with them. Any dramatic changes to an investment stance in the current environment are likely to be costly. It may make sense to consider doing things gradually or waiting for more stability.

Another consideration is that market liquidity can be poor in the current environment, which makes transactions potentially more expensive. With the omnipresent 24-hour media, it is too easy to become over-influenced by market sentiment, which makes decision-making with long-term consequences particularly difficult at times like this.

DIVERSIFICATION

Investment diversification will also help protect your investments from adverse market conditions. Diversification can be neatly summed up. 'Don't put all your eggs in one basket' The idea is that if one investment loses money, the other investment will make up for those losses. It is one of the best ways to protect your investment portfolio from the many forms of risk. Diversification cannot guarantee that your investments will not suffer during times of market volatility, but it can improve the chances that you will not lose money in the long term, or that if you do, it won't be as much as it you were not diversified.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW

Once the present coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis has subsided and market volatility has normalised, consider taking the opportunity to review your portfolio. Bear in mind that future income levels expected from the portfolio may have altered, for example, bond yields may have changed in either direction depending on credit rating, while future dividends from equities may be reduced at least temporarily, even if historical equity yields have risen.

PENSION DRAWDOWN

There have been nearly twice as many people seeking pension drawdown advice according to Unbiased, as pension withdrawals have reached a new high in the wake of the coronavirus crisis. However, those acting without professional financial advice risk making some big mistakes. If your pension fund has been diminished due to the recent market events, only time will help it recover – and taking money from an already depressed investment reduces the potential for recovery in your portfolio. So be careful how much you take out of your pot while it is still invested or consider suspending withdrawals.

PATIENT INVESTOR

If appropriate to your situation, reacting to short-term market events by making dramatic portfolio changes make it difficult to stay on course to achieve your investment goals. While many investors feel they must do something during the market downturn, history shows that the disciplined, patient investor will often be the one rewarded when markets return to their upward path. It is worth remembering that reacting to a market decline by selling an investment guarantees a loss that otherwise only existed on paper, and being out of the market can prevent you from participating in any gains when the markets bounce back.

Ultimately, you should always have a well-thought-out plan when investing and receiving professional financial advice is an essential part of this plan. It is not possible to forecast with any certainty another market downturn, but we can say that the long-term evidence supports staying in the market, rather than trying to time your entry and exit. To find out more, get in touch with us today.

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A Story Involving Two Swan Families...and an Apology.

With just one day left in September, it was of interest to check to confirm the month had been as busy as it had felt it had. The confirmation is indeed there. We've been on the road on 23 out of 29 days, have covered over 3100 miles, spending over 90 hours driving, dealing with an all-time record monthly total of 54 incidents, not all of which actually involved travelling. Nevertheless, this statement we hope constitutes extenuating circumstances in the light of one significant error made.

The two families in this story nested in the Cwmbran area – on a lake and on a canal. For the purposes of this, they are called CBL and BWSS. Each started the summer with seven cygnets, but inevitably numbers were reduced as encounters with fishing tackle started to take their toll.

Potentially, the worst of these came from BWSS on 2nd June; the ingested hook ended up in the gizzard – virtually inoperable. However, with careful monitoring by the staff at Vale Wildlife Rescue, release back to a flock in Worcestershire occurred in the middle of September. Two days prior to this rescue (31st May), both CBL adults and one of their cygnets needed attention the pen and a cygnet had picked up line, and the cob – a ringed bird - had a mass of vegetation tangled in the ring. All unwanted material was removed and the birds released.

Fast forward to mid-September. The BWSS family received an unwelcome visitor – an adult swan resulting immediately in a

classic (violent) territorial dispute. With the best will in the world, we managed to reach BWSS in a little under an hour, by which time the intruder appears to have been driven off; an extensive search failed to find a swan which didn't belong there. It has to be assumed it was the same bird which returned a week later to cause more mayhem. During this second invasion an opportunity presented itself for a local resident to pick up the intruder and make it safe in their garage until we were able to retrieve it. This we did, believing throughout that it was a male, and took it to The Knap at Barry where we released it into the resident 'amorphous' flock. Outside the breeding season, distinguishing single birds as being male or female is not always easy, especially in this particular environment where they are so well fed. And, in all these years we have never come across a female being the cause of such a fracas!

By now, almost everyone believed the culprit was the CBL male – one adult was missing from there. Two days later, there was an early morning call from the police because an adult swan had landed in the middle of Cwmbran Drive. No time for breakfast, and a prayer traffic would not be a problem! Catching the swan was relatively easy, but most significantly, the bird was ringed, and in the heat of the moment the writer was convinced this was the missing female. The next move was simply to release it at CBL, where the usual early morning swan feeders were there to greet us. The reunion with the four lone cygnets was, to say the least, low key. While it was obvious no adults were present, there was a comment one had been seen an hour or so earlier up near Llanfrecha Way. With the benefit of hindsight it is now clear the bird was the one recovered from Cwmbran Drive and which it must be assumed was out looking for its mate.

There still remain a few unanswered questions but sincere apologies are offered to the CBL family and for the harsh words which were exchanged with local residents in the immediate aftermath of this sequence of events.

Text: Peter. Photos: Ellen Roz.

For swan and all other wildlife problems please contact Peter or Ellen on 01633 895241 or 07802 472788.

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