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DIRECTORY

ISSUE 88 JULY/AUGUST 2023

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Susan x



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The Closure of Pontywaun Grammar School

A letter from the Clerk of Monmouthshire County Council dated 21st July 1960 was received by the Head of Pontywaun Grammar School. The letter said 'I enclose herewith a copy of notice issued in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1944 with regard to the Authority's proposals to discontinue the existing Pontywaun County Secondary School and to enlarge certain other schools. I should be glad if this Notice is affixed to the school notice board.'





This caused consternation locally and resulted in the formation of a protest group, the Association for the Preservation of Pontywaun Grammar School (A.P.P.G.S.) with Chairman A.M. Baulch J.P. and Secretary L. G. Durban. Being rebuffed in appeals to the County Council, the Association then wrote directly to Sir David Eccles, Minister of Education in a letter addressed to the House of Commons on 7th December 1961. With an introductory letter, this was reproduced in full in the Risca Advertiser of 15th February 1962 under the bold heading 'The Little Dictators'.

All protests and appeals were in vain and, after the summer 1962 holidays, all Pontywaun pupils wishing to proceed to A level and the previous 1st forms were transferred to Bassaleg or Newbridge. Also, there was no new intake, some teachers transferred totally and others became part-time in Pontywaun and part-time in Bassaleg or Newbridge. The headmaster of Pontywaun, John Herbert, became headmaster of Newbridge.

The final school year. 1962/63, opened with 3rd, 4th and 5th forms (about 220 pupils) with 'Billy' Beynon, the previous deputy, becoming headmaster for his final year before retiring. It was a strange final year with a half-empty school and teachers coming and going on a daily basis. A semblance of normality was maintained by appointing prefects but, where previously these had been from the Upper-6th A-level class, now they were chosen from the 5th year O-level students with two who had stayed on to re-sit their exams becoming Head Boy & Head Girl. Towards the end of the final term, whilst 5th formers were involved sitting O-level exams, books were being collected and crated-up to be transferred to the other two schools many to remain in storage before being disposed of having never been used again. David George Evans lays claim to being the last pupil to leave the building having been kept behind for some misdemeanour during the final day. So it is most appropriate that, 60 years later, almost to the day, he is organising a reunion of any ex-pupils at Crosskeys Rugby Club on Saturday 5th July; not just for those that were there at the end but anyone recorded on the school admission register.

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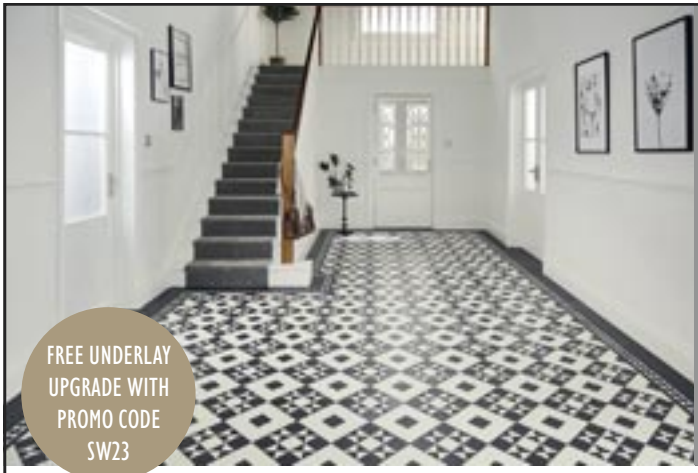
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Conservation Grazing on Twmbarlwm's SAM

Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society have been involved with helping maintain the landscape and environment of the iconic iron-age hillfort and medieval motte of Twmbarlwm for over 12 years.

Now an innovative project sees the society working with local farmers, the Llanarth Estate, Cadw and Caerphilly County Council to implement a programme of 'Conservation Grazing'. The aim is to improve the condition of the grassland, to increase biodiversity, reduce the risk of wildfires and protect the Scheduled Ancient Monument for future generations.

Since a catastrophic series of wildfires in 2018, the grassland on Twmbarlwm has been the subject of study by Gwent Wildlife Trust (GWT) and Cadw, to understand the impact that the blazes had on the grassland and the effect that the vegetation could have had in prolonging the fires. The research has shown that the density of bracken and woody species such as heather and whimberry may have caused the fires to burn hotter and for longer, causing damage to the soil and underlying archaeology. In areas where the fires burnt for longest the vegetation has struggled to recover, which, in turn is causing erosion on the scheduled monument.

The course of action outlined in GWT's report advised that grazing a small herd of Welsh Black cattle will hopefully, reduce the woody vegetation and dense patches of grass whilst manuring and seeding the areas of bare earth, improving the condition of the grassland across the monument. The herd will be regularly monitored to assess the impact of the grazing on the grassland and numbers decreased if over-grazing or damage to the scheduled monument occurs.

Cattle are being used rather than sheep because they are likely to have a more significant impact on the vegetation – they are less selective feeders than sheep and their larger feet are more effective at crushing invasive plants like bracken.

'Conservation Grazing' is being increasingly used to manage land for wildlife across Britain, with organisations like the Wildlife Trusts and National Trust employing grazing animals on their estates. Native breed cattle are also being used with great success to control invasive vegetation and improve grasslands and biodiversity on other scheduled monuments in Wales.

Commoners were always allowed to graze their sheep and cattle on the ridgeway of Mynydd Henllys and Mynydd Maen but the livestock was excluded from the scheduled monument as it was not part of the common. However, fences have now been erected at Twmbarlwm to ensure a controlled number of cattle are confined to the area around the hillfort.

Visitors are asked to keep to the Countryside Code when visiting Twmbarlwm (details can be found on the .gov.uk website) but in particular to ensure they close all gates behind them. Welsh Blacks are naturally docile and do not pose a risk to walkers, however, visitors are advised not to approach them or startle them, and to keep dogs on leads when around them.

There are other aspects to the landscape management plan that visitors may see in action – such as re-seeding with native grasses, erosion control and bracken bashing – but it's safe to say that all the groups involved in this project see this as an exciting new chapter in the history of Twmbarlwm, one that will see an ancient breed of cattle returned to the hill. Welsh Blacks have been grazing the landscapes of South Wales for at least 1000 years and may well have been the cattle of choice of the people who built the hillfort over 2000 years ago!

Terry Evans, Chairman
Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society



Cattle are regularly seen on the Common of Mynydd Maen and now they will also enjoy the pasture of the SAM itself

Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society 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 throughout the year so watch our website and Facebook page for details.

www.twmbarlwm.co.uk

Risca Fire Station are recruiting ‘On-Call Firefighters’

Like the Wholetime Duty System role, On-Call Firefighters respond to Fires and Special Service Calls e.g. road traffic collisions, chemical emergencies, flooding and other natural disasters. They are also required to inform and educate their local communities and carry out Safe and Well visits in people’s homes.



On-Call Firefighters work a Retained Duty System and must live or work in the local community and are from all walks of life. They are builders, consultants, stay-at-home parents, administrators, factory workers, care workers, students or people not currently employed. They are people who are able to give their time to assist the Fire and Rescue Service in return for a salary.

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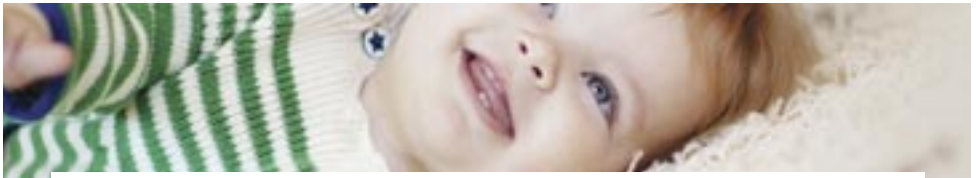
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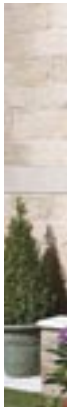
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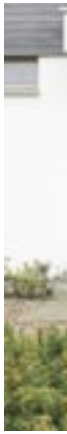






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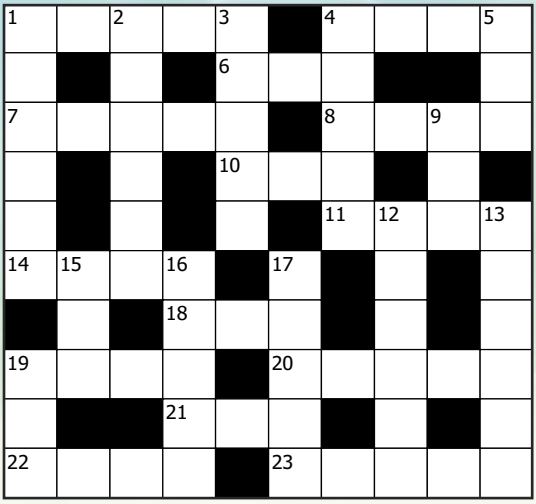




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Puzzles

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Across

1. Seat (5)
4. In addition to (4)
6. As well as (3)
7. Romantic partner (5)
8. Bird of peace (4)
10. First woman (3)
11. Telephoned (4)
14. Appointment (4)
18. Large seed (3)
19. Worry (4)
20. Desired, wished for (5)
21. Devon river (3)
22. For always (4)
23. Having ascended (5)

Down

1. Named (6)
2. Business promotion (6)
3. Scarcer (5)
4. Poisonous snake (5)
5. Single number (3)
9. Commercial vehicle (3)
12. Takes as ones own (6)
13. Place for fruit & veg (6)
15. Atmosphere (3)
16. Go into (5)
17. Surgical spirit (5)
19. Enemy (3)

SUDOKU

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

The object of sudoku is to insert the missing numbers in the boxes to satisfy just one condition: each row, column and 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 through to 9 exactly once. This can be done by applying logic – you do not have to guess.

Solutions on page 23

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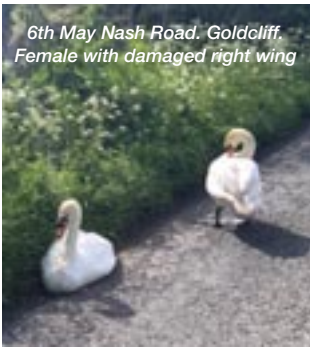
Jottings from a Crazy Month of May

This article is being prepared with just a few days left before June begins; it really has been some month with a very wide range of incidents to cope with; limited space allows a brief reference to be made to only a few of them.

Avian influenza (AF) is still around, although at the time of the actual rescue, we did not make a connection between the fact the adult swan in question was almost totally blind, having what appeared to be cataracts in both eyes. It is now a known fact this is one of the several possible consequences of being an AF survivor. This bird had strayed from the slipway area at Channel View in Cardiff, but mercifully had not got as far as any of the busy roads in the area. Of logistical necessity we had to hold him here in South Wales for 48 hours, during which time he fed extremely well, before transporting him to Shepperton. Interestingly, the swan did respond to changes in light and shade.

The second story for this time would be better described as a saga; it began on the afternoon of Wednesday 19th April, with a call from a member of the public concerned about a swan with a possible wing injury on the road in the vicinity of The Farmers' Arms at Goldcliff. With the best will in the world, travel time to this location is unlikely to be much less than 45 minutes, so it was hardly a surprise to find no trace of the bird when we arrived in the area. As it happens, the police had also been called (Incident No 233) and they too had not encountered the swan.

Forward now a week to the 26th, and a local farmer reported what must have been the same swan on his land. Again, it was no surprise to discover, by the time we arrived, there was no sign of the swan; the area is criss-crossed with drainage ditches – reens – which are used by swans as 'highways' and so can cover relatively long distances undetected unless one happens to have the advantage of a drone or a helicopter!



6th May Nash Road. Goldcliff. Female with damaged right wing



Nash Road. Pair exploring their new home in Kent

Forward again to May 6th. Two motorists on the same stretch of road had encountered a pair of swans – the female with an injured wing, or was it an unusually 'light' case of angel wing? These two wonderful ladies had done a superb job; protecting the swans 'cwtched' down against the grassy verge with a car pulled in close either side. Immediate removal of the birds was obviously essential. So, we picked up the uninjured male first in the belief, rightly, that if he had been left 'til later he might well have been much more difficult to catch. As it was, the female did cross the verge and dropped into the ditch on the far side, but, with the judicious use of the extended swan hook was not too difficult to catch. Having loaded them securely into the car, the decision as to the next move had been made already; Shepperton tout de suite. Later a relatively simple tidying-up on the damaged wing, and the luck continued to hold with a beautiful lake in rural Kent providing a new home for this very lucky pair of swans.

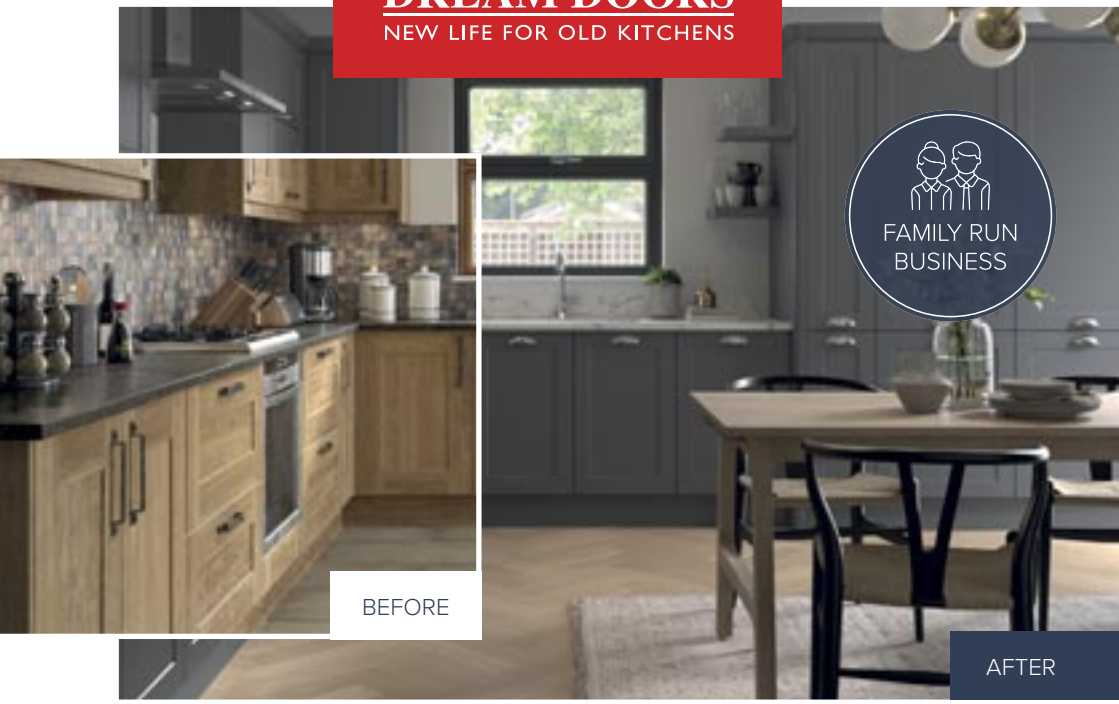
For the record, having described May as 'crazy', what was been related here are just two of the 22 missions completed as the month end approaches, totalling almost 2000 miles.

Story by Peter & Ellen, photographs by Emma & Mel. For swan and all other wildlife problems please contact us on 07802 472788. Please note, because there are so few of us, there is a limit to the volume of rescue work we can carry out; for Swan Rescue South Wales, swans are our priority.

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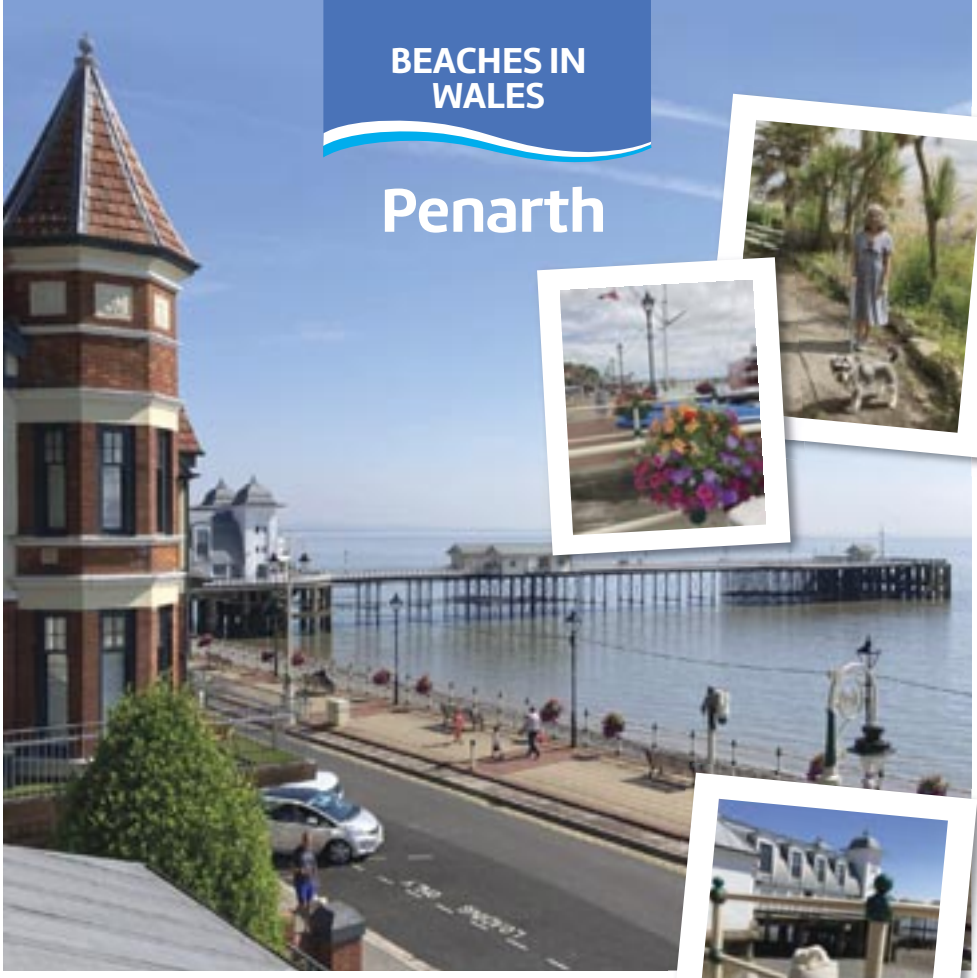
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BEACHES IN WALES

Penarth



In 1856 the Cardiff Steam and Navigation Company started a regular ferry service between Cardiff and Penarth, because of the growing popularity of Penarth beach and the need for better communications with Cardiff. Boats were loaded and unloaded at Penarth using a landing stage on wheels which was hauled up the beach.

The Penarth Pier Company was formed to make a second attempt at building a permanent pier. The foundations were laid in 1894 and the pier successfully opened in 1895, at 750 feet (230 m) long.

In March 2011, planning permission was granted for a £3.9 million revamp of the pier to re-open the pavilion as a major tourist attraction. The new plans included a cinema and observatory. The work was completed and the pavilion reopened in Autumn 2013.

The pavilion hosts a variety of exciting and interesting events throughout the year.

On the seafront itself is the Victorian Italian Garden that displays many unusual palm trees and exotic plants.

During the Victorian era Penarth was a highly popular holiday destination, promoted nationally as "The Garden by the Sea" and was packed by visitors from the Midlands and the West Country as well as day trippers from the South Wales valleys, mostly arriving by train.

Penarth is delightful stop along the Wales Coast Path, and a bonus is that you can easily walk to Cardiff Bay and the barrage.

Take a walk along the pleasurable esplanade with its bars and restaurants or the pebble beach with an ice-cream in hand and enjoy the long views out over the Severn estuary and across to England.

LET'S GET READY FOR ROGERSTONE'S DAY OF FAMILY FUN

THE ROGERSTONE FESTIVAL

Sunday 3rd September 2023

Rogerstone Welfare Grounds 11am till 4pm

A great opportunity for a Community Get Together before the children return to school



We have heard from a very good source that The Vikings (Blaeddau Du) intend to invade our festival so, come along:

YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU.

As well as dealing with the Vikings you can choose from a variety of food stalls including our very own Glade Café or, if you prefer you can bring along your own picnic.

You can wonder through our array of stalls from local traders and find that special gift.

Other attractions include:

- The 'Joining Forces Car Display' and Disc Golf.
- Another big favourite returning that attracted a lot of interest last year is the Taekwondo display.
- Inside the hall you will be able to enjoy and purchase the work of local artists.
- In the cricket club, always a favourite you will have the opportunity to view archive film of Rogerstone past.
- For the younger ones there will be the always popular bouncy castles and much more.
- There are also various other entertainments to be confirmed.

If you would like to have a stall £20.00, or any businesses that would wish to sponsor this community event please get in touch: rogerstonefestival@gmail.com

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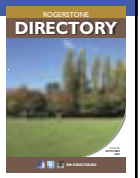
Puzzle Solutions

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Stress, is it holding you back?

Researching the best training, nutrition and lifestyle pathway for my clients is so important. Each an individual requiring varying degrees of support. This lends itself to a path of discovery which identifies common causes to issues that arise and how simple sometimes the answers are to solving the problem.

However, what happens when you've followed the plan, been consistent in your approach, more motivated to look after yourself and still the outcome doesn't follow suit. You suddenly find yourself slower when out on a run, weaker when you lift your weights and putting on weight, when logic says you should be losing it.

Have you ever considered your stress levels? Stress has become the leading cause for both physical and psychological illness, inflammation within the body, impacting on chronic health conditions, like Arthritis, Asthma and Diabetes, to name a few. Stress has such a detrimental effect on the body, with so much research to support this, but do we ever consider what we could do about it, or do we just simply push ourselves more?

Stress impacts on our Cortisol levels, our stress hormone for 'fight or flight' raising blood pressure, heart rate and breathing rate to help us fight our stressor or run away. A little in the body is needed every now and again to help us manage daily life, but too much will inevitably wreak havoc with the equilibrium our bodies try and find every day. Stress will negatively impact your sleep, making us crave sugary foods and caffeine-based products, cognitive function declines, digestive and gut health declines, leading to conditions like IBS.

You can now start to recognise why your run, lifting weights, finding the energy to go out for a walk or shift those pounds are now so challenging. Your body is working so hard to balance out our stress hormones, it can't efficiently help you with the tasks you would like to do during your recreational time.

What can we do? Simple 5-minute time outs throughout your day are great. We all find the time to check our phones, make a cup of tea, procrastinate on a job. But what if we prioritised some time out? Did you know 5 minutes of breathing exercises, mindfulness or meditation is as good as an hour's sleep? Imagine how relaxed, focused and calm you would feel? 5-minute time outs of your day, is proven to improve mood, boost brain function, reduce stress, slow down the aging process and support gut health, amazing.

Now ask yourself could you afford to spare 5 minutes a day? Breathing exercises can be as simple as counting your breath in and out, making sure you lengthen the breath out. Breath in through the nose for 3 seconds and out the mouth for 6 seconds, in a quiet space where you can't get interrupted. Set a timer and notice the difference before and after. Before bed is a great place to start. Don't delay, have a go today.

PBF Fitness
Pretty Bloomin Fabbas Fitness

If you're stuck or need a little advice, I'm always here to help, just simply get in touch. Thanks Karla 07791 217306



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Fundraising Calendar of Events 2023













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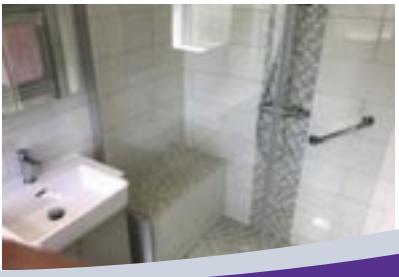
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