CAERLEON

DIRECTORY

ISSUE 112 JULY/AUGUST 2026



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Let's hope the weather will carry on being kind to us over the next couple of months and we'll all be able to continue walking in our beautiful countryside, paddling on the lovely beaches (see article on Barry Island) and benefit from some summer sunshine.

Susan x

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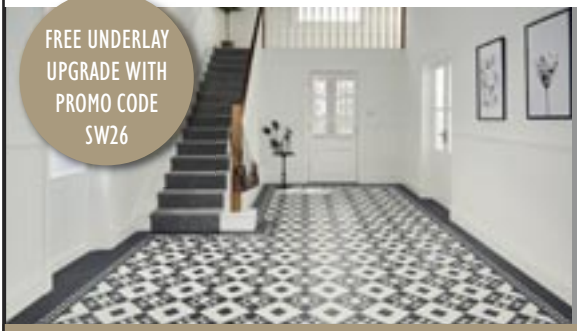
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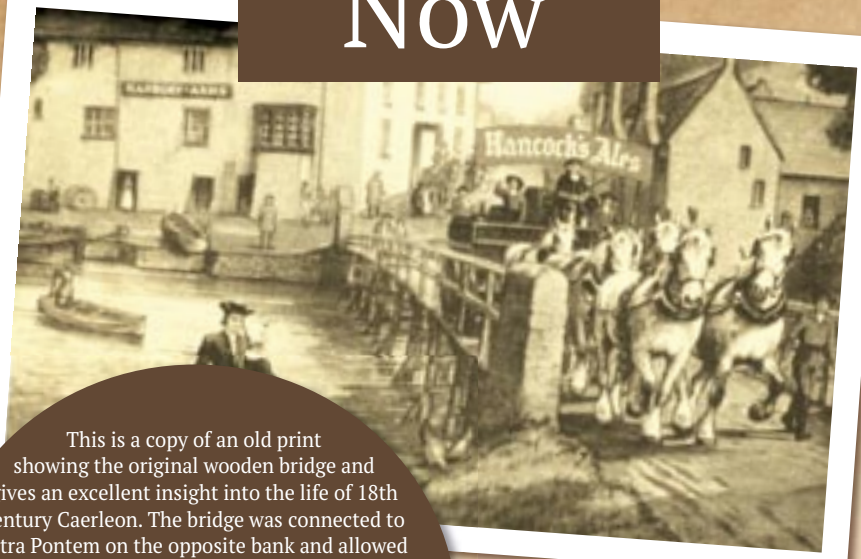
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Caerleon Then & Now



This is a copy of an old print showing the original wooden bridge and gives an excellent insight into the life of 18th century Caerleon. The bridge was connected to Ultra Pontem on the opposite bank and allowed coaches to travel to London on the coaching road which ran past the Bell Inn. In 1771 the bridge had reached a poor state of repair and was closed until new timbers had been inserted to strengthen it. Shortly after repair, on the night of October 29th 1779, heavy floods carried away the centre section.

Below is the same view taking from the pub garden of the Hanbury in 2008.



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



WHY DO WE NEED A PROPERTY PROTECTION TRUST?

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passes to the beneficiaries. As the surviving partner does not own the deceased's share of the property it is fully protected for the beneficiaries, so if the surviving partner requires care, or even remarries, this share of the children's inheritance is protected. This last point can be of particular interest to couples who have come together but have children from different partners. A PPT can help each person in a relationship ensure that their children inherit their share of the property, while giving their surviving partner the ability to live in the property for the rest of their life. If the surviving partner wants to move to another property, they can still sell the property and the proceeds be used to purchase a new property; the terms of the trust remain over the new property.

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All the carers are very kind, helpful and very supportive. I can't fault the service at all.

Review from Catherie D

Our hourly support includes:

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Afon Mawddach

Afon Mawddach originates from a wide area north of Dduallt in the Eryri National Park (Snowdonia). It is 28 miles (45 km) long and meets the sea next to the town of Barmouth, forming the wide, sandy Mawddach Estuary, which stretches eight miles inland to the town of Dolgellau.

The southern bank of the Mawddach estuary, along which used to run a section of the GWR branch line from Ruabon to Barmouth, has now been designated the Mawddach Trail, an eight mile cycle path running from Dolgellau to Morfa Mawddach, at the south side of the Barmouth railway bridge.

Barmouth Bridge or Viaduct is a Grade II* listed single-track wooden railway viaduct across the estuary of the River Mawddach near Barmouth. It is 900 yards (820m) long and carries the Cambrian Line. It is the longest timber viaduct in Wales and one of the oldest in regular use in Britain. It is also used by cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians and is part of the National Cycle Route 8.

We stayed in Barmouth while touring North Wales during the unusually warm days of late September 2019. The boutique hotel we chose was exceptional and provided an excellent base for exploring the area. Both the accommodation and the food were outstanding, making our stay especially memorable.







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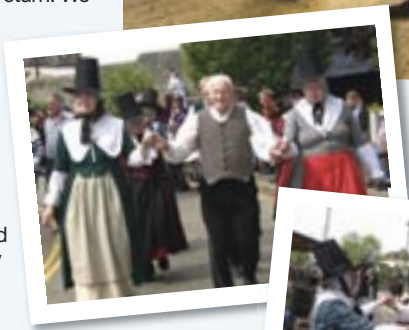
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Gwerinwyr Gwent Showcases Welsh Tradition Across Gwent and Beyond

Whenever possible we do like to show off Welsh dancing at festivals, particularly in England, and this year we were invited by the Upton-on-Severn folk festival. .



The festival is held over the May Day Bank Holiday and is predominantly a show case for the three styles of Morris dance, Cotswold, Border and Northwest. We only danced on the Saturday, and apart from GG, I only spotted one other type of dancing among the more than 30 Morris sides taking part, so we certainly introduced a bit of contrast to the day and received quite a few pleasing comments in return. We had some new members dancing out for their first time and it was quite a relaxed introduction for them. The weather was kind and Upton is a pleasant riverside town with plenty of independent shops and pubs, so all in all a very nice day out.



On the 19th May we spent a very pleasant evening with the ladies of Marshfield WI. They meet in Castleton village hall which has a spacious interior, perfect for dancing. As usual, Barbara Griffiths was our MC and we alternated our display dances with her GG-slanted Welsh culture talk. We then got the ladies to join us in a couple of simple ceilidh dances and finished the evening off with the tea & cake they provided, we always enjoy our trips to the WI.

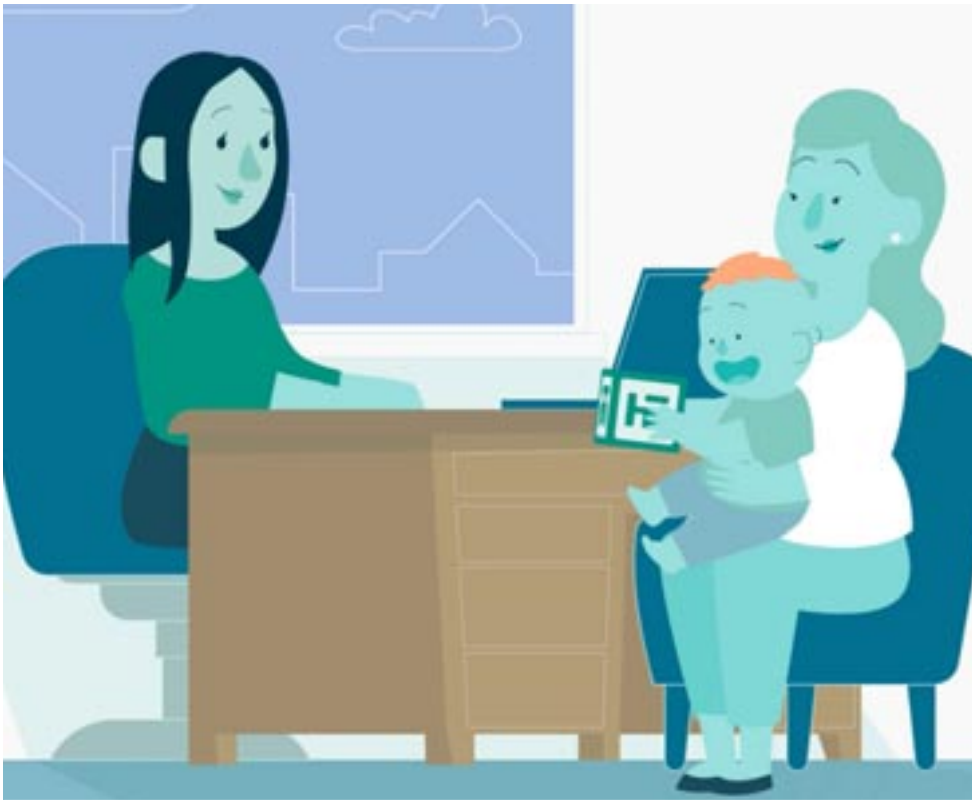




By the time this edition is published, Gwyl Plant (the children's dance festival) will probably be over for this year. It takes place in three venues - Abergavenny, Cwmbran and Newport over three weekends, where on separate Saturday mornings (Abergavenny and Cwmbran in June and Newport on the 4th July), local primary schoolchildren show off their dancing skills in public. Hopefully out of doors, but with inside provision should the day be wet.

Sadly, schools from the Abertillery area no longer take part. Gwent's Gwyl Plant was started 45 years ago by members of GG, and is an after-school club where teachers, having been taught the dances and provided with the music, then teach the children. For many years there has also been a mini Gwyl Plant on the Saturday of the Tredegar House Folk Festival, but alas, for various reasons there was no folk festival this year. Gwerinwyr Gwent is always seeking new members, and beginners/experienced dancers or musicians are very welcome. Practice night is Thursday 8-10pm at the Graig Community Hall (opposite the Ruperra PH).

For more details visit our website www.gwerinwyrgwent.org.uk, or ring 01495 271953



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The Louisiana Access Walk In Bath

The latest addition to Newport Bathroom Centre's already extensive catalogue of innovative products now includes Access walk-in baths - a British company based in the Black Country, who specialises in making bathing more than a possibility, they make it a pleasure, with elegant designs to suit any bathroom.

Newport Bathroom Centre Director, Dave Viggers, told us: "We understand you want to bathe with confidence, so the experience is relaxing and enjoyable. This is why every bath has been carefully designed to include multiple safety features without compromising looks. Combine this with outstanding design and affordability, you have a walk-in bathing solution that is unbeatable."

Here is what Carol Warren, who purchased a 'Louisiana' style walk-in bath from Newport Bathroom Centre had to say:

What made you decide to get rid of your old bath for a walk-in bath?
As we (my husband and I) got older, mobility became more of an issue, especially after falling and breaking my ankle. Getting in and out of a regular bath became a serious issue, due having to put one's entire weight on my weaker ankle.

How long did it take to fit?
Fitting took just under a week, which also included waiting for the electrician and replacing the floor covering. It would've probably been sooner, as the work was split over a weekend.

Finally, would you recommend an Access Walk-in Bath and why?
David and his team were really good with sound advice and were able to maintain use of the original bathroom, whilst the new one was being fitted.

Everything was left clean and tidy at the end of the working day.

Where suggestions were made in order to get a good looking bathroom there was no pressure to make the changes, but due to the experience of David and his team we ended up with something that was far better than we could have put together.

David also kept in touch throughout the whole experience and followed up with phone calls to make sure that there were no problems and we were satisfied with everything - Newport Bathroom Centre comes highly recommended in our eyes.

If you are interested in this Louisiana bath or any of the nine other options available, please get in touch with one of Newport Bathroom Centre's experts using the details below:

Call Dave today or email your enquiry for a FREE no obligation quote.

For more info about the walk-in baths on offer, please visit the official Newport Bathroom Centre website.

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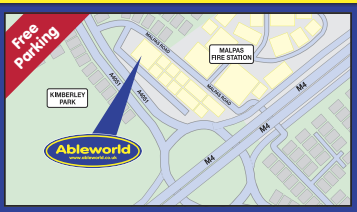
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Newport Bathroom Centre

NOT JUST BATHROOMS

Family-run business within Wales' largest furnishings store offers incredible savings on luxury items

Newport Bathroom Centre is renowned throughout South East Wales for offering a wide range of luxury bathroom items at very affordable prices, but what you may not know is that they also supply and fit not only bathrooms, but also kitchens, bedrooms, doors, and tiling and high quality engineered flooring for any other room of the home too.

The best thing about this service is that you get first-hand experience of what your new room will look and feel like, as your dream becomes a reality with a bespoke design and fitting service.



Director Dave Viggers







Director Dave Viggers has more than 30 years' experience in the installation of kitchens and bathrooms, using his extensive knowledge of working at a drawing office to formalise your ideas into real working plans.

Dave has full oversight of the project, fully costing the materials and labour from the outset, giving you piece of mind that everything is taken care of.

Dave told SW Directories: "The design process is simple, it just starts with a conversation to discuss styles and individual tastes. Working with a set budget, we can then look at the best suited materials for the job, then it's on to measure to work out an exact cost.

"You'll sit down with an experienced and talented designer who'll discuss your ideas in detail, noting your likes and dislikes, encompassing tiling, storage, accessories, and fittings.

"Whether modern, classic or specially commissioned, we ensure that your bathroom, kitchen or bedroom will look exactly how you want it while retaining practicality and function.

"When designs have been agreed and confirmed, customers will then receive a supply and fitting quotation based on the products and design chosen. These quotations will include a total cost including the products and the work involved in transforming your bathroom, kitchen or bedroom.

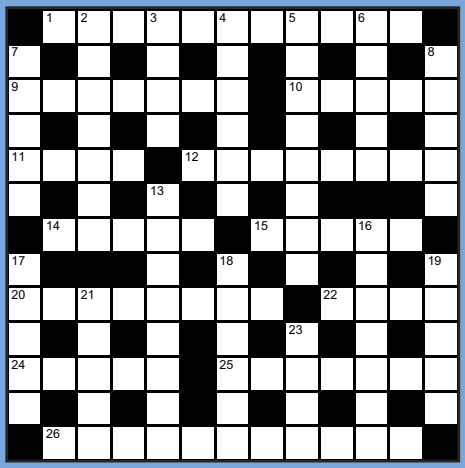
"We usually allow for two weeks as standard, but each installation varies depending on the work involved and will be discussed with you prior to confirmation of your installation date."

So, if you're looking for a high-level of quality service from a professional team who strive to get the very best for you and your budget, then simply pay a visit to Newport Bathroom Centre.

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PUZZLE PAGE

Crossword



Across

1 Sweet-smelling climbing plant (11)
9 Light raft made of balsa, used by Thor Heyerdahl to cross the Pacific in 1947 (3-4)
10 Insect in the stage between egg and pupa (5)
11 City of Helen, whose face "launched a thousand ships" (4)
12 Tree which grows in tidal, chiefly tropical, coastal swamps (8)
14 Communion table (5)
15 The Mill on the ___, George Eliot novel (5)
20 Line of descent of a pure-bred animal (8)
22 Brewery cart (4)
24 Private instructor (5)
25 Spanish painter, born in Greece (1541-1614) (2,5)
26 Primate species to which modern humans belong (4,7)

Down

2 Action that turns out to be to the disadvantage of the person who took it (3,4)
3 First name of authoress Blyton (4)
4 Helix (6)
5 Roman Emperor who succeeded Tiberius (8)
6 Key ___, 1948 film (5)
7 Glide across ice (5)
8 Biblical tower intended to reach to heaven (5)
13 Australian marsupial (8)
16 Physician who performs operations (7)
17 Mark ___, US swimmer who won seven gold medals in the1972 Olympic Games (5)
18 Formerly the basic unit of money in Spain (6)
19 Tower supporting high-tension wires (5)
21 Mark used to indicate the word above it should be repeated (5)
23 Tangerine/grapefruit hybrid (4)

Sudoku

9		5		8				
	1	7			4			
	6						9	
			1		6			7
		1		2		5		
8			7		5			
	4						8	
			2			9	1	
				6		4		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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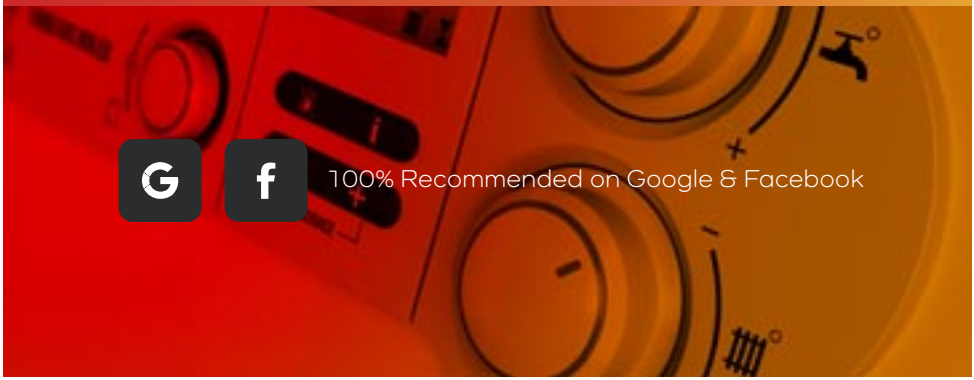
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Wildlife on Twmbarlwm


Data gathering on a bio-blitz day with Gwent Wildlife Trust

MYNYDD TWMBARLWM intrigues us all with its historical mystery both factual and mythical. Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society has, since its inception, explored these subjects in many of our talks and written articles. But rarely have we visited the question of what actually lives on Twmbarlwm now!

I bet not many of you know that Twmbarlwm and its environs is a SINC (a Site of Importance for Natural Conservation) which is an official designation that helps an area to protect and enhance the landscape and its wild flora and fauna.

I have always loved to walk this mountain of ours and one of my favourite pastimes up on the Twmp is to lie flat on the ground, on a bed of wimberry bushes and heather, searching the sky for the high flying Skylarks who soar to incredible heights whilst continuously chirruping their high pitched songs. Yet when I spot an unusual bird, creature or wildflower I find the SEWBReC (South East Wales Bio-Diversity Records Centre) website a useful resource to help identify them.

I'm no great ornithologist but I can recognise the most common visitors to our mountain – the various Tits, Great, Coal and Blue – birds of prey like the common Buzzard and Red Kite gliding the air currents – Song Thrushes, Ravens, Warblers and, of course, the famous spring time visitor, the Cuckoo. I've seen both the Green and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, Jays, Fieldfares and even a couple of Woodcocks.

I tend not to see much wildlife at my feet because my dogs have usually frightened everything away but I have come across frogs, toads, lizards, mice (or are they voles?) and slow worms which I used to spend hours searching for when I was a lad.

I'm told there are grass snakes and some say they've even encountered adders. There are reports of dormice hereabouts, although they were last recorded in 2004, so I sincerely hope they are thriving here still.

As regards larger mammals, strangely enough, I've never personally seen rabbits up there, lower down the hillside maybe, but never up on the ridgeway. There's plenty of evidence of foxes and I've seen their tracks in the snow and the dogs are always keen to roll in you-know-what. There's even been quite a few sightings of deer reported on social media – especially since NRW have cut down much of the forestry.

I've spotted many butterflies like red admirals, peacocks and tortoiseshell but I often have difficulty telling them apart – again, out come the reference books when I get home.

As regards the flora I get totally lost with all those Latin names – if you look at the data-sets compiled by SEWBReC available on their website www.sewbrec.org.uk you will see what I mean.

The SEWBReC documentation tells us this upland area is a mix of acid grassland and heath vegetation with bracken and coniferous planting on the valley sides – we helped compile this information when we first explored the area for conservation grazing.

If you have a strong interest in local flora and fauna I recommend that you visit their website – their scope of activity is too wide for me to explain here, but basically it is their job to compile and make appropriate local biodiversity information available to all those who need it, to ensure that decisions which affect local biodiversity are made using the best available data.

It's been a few years since CTS organised a bio-blitz (a sort of census of the flora and fauna) on the mountain under the guidance of Gwent Wildlife Trust and we would like to prepare another in the near future – so keep an eye on our website and Facebook page to see if we can get one underway – because it will be an informative, exciting event that everyone will be able to get involved with.

Terry Evans, Chairman of Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society


Cuckoo


Adder


Peacock Butterfly

Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society meet at the car park below Twmbarlwm's summit at 10:30 (What3Words location = ***ironic.sweetened.people***) for a litter pick and volunteer workday on the first 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

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Puzzle Solutions

Crossword Solution

Across: 1 Honeysuckle, 9 Kon-Tiki, 10 Larva, 11 Troy, 12 Mangrove, 14 Altar, 15 Floss, 20 Pedigree, 22 Dray, 24 Tutor, 25 El Greco, 26 Homo sapiens.
Down: 2 Own goal, 3 Enid, 4 Spiral, 5 Caligula, 6 Largo, 7 Skate, 8 Babel, 13 Kangaroo, 16 Surgeon, 17 Spitz, 18 Peseta, 19 Pylon, 21 Ditto, 23 Ugli.

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

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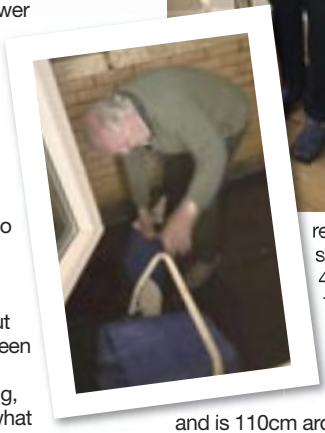
Swan
RESCUE

Very Occasionally, there is a Funny Side!

This is a little story which ought to have been prepared for the March-April edition of The Directory, but when the time came, we felt there were more pressing issues which needed to be aired.

It was the late afternoon on Wednesday 11th February when, as it does, the phone rang. Remember, it was away back in late September when we had our first call of the autumn requesting help with a stranded cygnet making a mess of attempting to leave the parental territory and now, five months later, the same need continued to exist. This time the swan had landed in, rather than on, the balcony of an east-facing apartment (probably at the first-floor level) in a tower block in Adventurer's Quay in Cardiff. Before setting off, a sixth sense advised I should go armed with a small foldable stepladder, and so I went back into the house to retrieve same. Good job! Without it, I would have been totally stymied! Before proceeding, and in order for what follows to make sense, it is necessary to present a few statistics, firstly in relation to the position and size of the window, and secondly regarding the rescuer! From the floor to the sill, in the bedroom in question, it was 110 cm. (hence the need for the step ladder). The width of the sill 43cm. and the 'working' size of the window through which the rescuer needed to squeeze was 46cm. wide and 102cm. high. The rescuer is 82 years old and weighs 90kg. He is 210cm tall and is 110cm around the chest. Getting out onto the balcony was relatively easy, followed by passing the steps through the window to facilitate the return journey. It was a very large and heavy juvenile swan, and certainly not very pleased to meet me, and then to be man-handled and wrapped securely. The swan was passed back through the open window; again, thank goodness for the steps! On the balcony, the height to the top of the sill was even greater than inside the room! My advice to the homeowner was to take the swan in its Ikea bag out onto the landing; the swan wrap combination is in no sense guaranteed to be swan poo proof…





The final manoeuvre, and by far the most difficult was the return from outdoors to indoors, as it were, 'against the flow' of the open window. In writing this, I'm not sure how easy it has been to follow; a video of it might have been quite entertaining!

As I drove to Channel View to release the swan, it occurred to me it would make a story so later on, I stopped and sent a text message requesting the measurements I have been able to include in the text; they were sent immediately, by return.



Story & photos by Peter. For swan problems please contact Peter on 07802 472788

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BEACHES IN WALES

Barry Island's beach in Whitmore Bay

Barry Island is a district, peninsula and seaside resort, forming part of the town of Barry in the Vale of Glamorgan. It is named after the 6th century Saint Baruc. Barry's stretch of coast, on the Bristol Channel, has the world's second highest tidal range of 15 metres (49ft)

The peninsula was an island until the 1870s when it was linked to the mainland as the town of Barry expanded. This was partly due to the opening of Barry Docks by the Barry Railway Company.

Butlins Barry Island was a holiday camp that opened 1966 and closed in 1996, by which time it had been known as The Barry Island Resort for about nine years.

Barry is now known more for its Pleasure Park, there's a rollercoaster, log flume, dodgems and a Waltzer. Younger children will find plenty to keep them amused, with trampolines, pedal boats and traditional fairground attractions.

At the front is Whitmore Bay, which has a huge crescent of golden sand, it's ideal for families to have fun in the sun, with its wide, gently shelving sands. The promenade with its columned colonnade is full of amusement arcades, fish and chip shops and busy cafés including Marco's Café, which was used in the TV series 'Gavin & Stacey'.




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Hidden Talents on Display at Newport u3a Art Group

Members of Newport u3a's very successful Art Group have rediscovered their hidden talents or found a new one at its sociable sessions where beginners and the more experienced are all welcome. Members can experiment with a range of media while developing their individual styles. They quickly manage to produce some noteworthy samples and are keen to display them.

Recently we held an exhibition of their work to which many of our members from our other groups attended to support the artists. They were impressed with the talent exhibited and the standard of the work.



Newport u3a runs 40 more active, cultural and social groups for the retired at the Dolman Theatre Wednesday to Friday at 09:45-15:00. If you would like a more colourful retirement, come and try us out free of charge for two weeks.

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www.newport.u3asite.uk | Angela Robins 07983130541

Green Fingers & Great Company in Monmouthshire

The HPS Monmouthshire group is for people who love plants and gardening and enjoy sharing their enthusiasm with other like-minded people.

Non-members are very welcome to come along. The meetings always take place at Little Mill village hall NP4 0HE on the second Saturday of each month from September to May with the doors open at 2pm and the talks begin at 2.30pm. Before the speaker, there's time to talk to fellow members, enjoy refreshments and perhaps buy some plants. The group



organises garden visits in the summer, discussions, dinners, plant sales and more throughout the year.

Our September to May programme at the hall on Saturdays has now finished but we will meet again in September. Until then, do not forget the wonderful Usk Open Gardens on 27th & 28th June from 10am to 5pm. Admission £10, children under 15 are free. A map of the gardens is provided free with your ticket. There are also shows in Llanthony on Saturday 1st August, Chepstow on Saturday 8th August, Monmouth on Sunday 16th August and finally, the biggest of them all, the Usk show on Saturday 13th September.

For further information from the national Hardy Plant Society website: https://hardy-plant.org.uk


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What Does Financial Independence Mean To You?

When people hear the term ‘financial independence’, many assume it means being wealthy enough to stop working altogether.

In reality, financial independence means different things to different people.

For some, it might mean having enough savings to retire comfortably. For others, it could mean reducing working hours, helping children onto the property ladder, travelling more, or simply having the confidence that unexpected expenses won't derail their plans.

At its heart, financial independence is about having choices.

The journey towards financial independence rarely happens overnight. Instead, it is usually the result of many small, consistent decisions made over time. Regular saving, sensible investing, careful debt management and planning for the future can all play an important role.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that financial independence is only achievable for high earners. Whilst income can certainly help, the reality is that good financial habits often matter just as much. Understanding where your money goes, setting clear goals and making informed decisions can significantly improve your long-term financial wellbeing.

Another important consideration is that financial independence isn't just about accumulating wealth. It is equally about protecting what you have built. This may involve ensuring you have appropriate emergency savings, reviewing protection arrangements, maintaining an up-to-date Will and considering how your assets will be passed on to future generations.

The definition of financial independence can also change throughout life. In your thirties and forties, it may be about balancing family responsibilities with long-term savings. In your fifties, attention may turn towards retirement planning. Later in life, the focus may shift towards maintaining lifestyle, managing income and supporting loved ones.

The key is to have a plan that reflects your own goals and circumstances rather than someone else's idea of success.

Financial independence is not necessarily about reaching a particular number in a bank account. It is about creating a financial foundation that allows you to make life's important decisions with confidence.

Whatever stage of life you are at, taking time to review your finances and consider your long-term objectives can be a valuable step towards achieving greater financial freedom and peace of mind.

After all, true wealth is often measured not by what you own, but by the choices available to you.

At Kymin Wealth Management, we help individuals and families gain clarity and confidence in their financial future. For over 33 years, we have supported local clients with pensions, investments, inheritance tax planning and long-term financial strategies. Our approach is personal, considered and built entirely around what matters to you.

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