

GAEAF
2019
40c

Cylchlythyr
Cyngor Cymuned
Dyffryn Clydach



Newsletter of the
Dyffryn Clydach
Community Council

WINTER
2019
40p

Additional copies available from Abbey Gate Stores and Longford Stores or the Editor, Cllr Sarah Elias
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To include local interest items please contact the Editor or your local Councillor
Er mwyn cynnwys eitemau o ddiddordeb lleol cysylltwch â'r Golygydd neu'ch Cynghorwr Lleol

Merry Christmas



Nadolig Llawn

Photograph by Bob Pickett, Neath

Editor's Note

Welcome to this festive edition of Ymlaen for 2019. This year has been one of many achievements within the Community Council and also within the locality as a whole. We are proud to have installed many planter boxes, trees and wildflower patches in a bid to enhance our environment and also to aid pollinators which are currently struggling. We hope to expand these projects in conjunction with the Working with Nature Project with which we are partnered. We also support local landscape gardener Joe Rayner who is working on creating a meadow in the area and writes knowledgeably and enthusiastically on his subject for the first time in Ymlaen.



We installed a new children's play area with new equipment and also received an excellent inspection report on the larger playground despite on-going problems with vandalism. There has been much charity work undertaken within Dyffryn Clydach as referenced within the newsletter and also many volunteers have helped with the wildflowers, planter boxes and also litter picking. It would however, be inappropriate not to make reference to the tragic event that occurred here this year which sent ripples through this community and to send our best wishes and condolences to the Winchcombe family. We are also saddened by the loss of a loyal Councillor and friend Harry Thomas and the losses suffered by the Price family formerly of Longford Farm amongst others.

On a brighter note however, I do hope you enjoy the issue with its' usual mixed bag of articles and news, we have the local resident Blue Ground Beetle making an appearance and an interesting look at retail as it was many years ago which is extremely timely given the run up to the seasonal spending rush. Finally it just falls to me to leave you hoping that you all enjoy the holidays and have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us at the Community Council.

Sarah Elias

Dates for the diary

Longford Memorial Hall

Children's Christmas party - Saturday, December 7th 2019. (3pm until 5.30pm). Free refreshments and a goody bag from Santa for each child.

Christmas Carol Service- Wednesday December 18th 2019. (7pm start - doors open at 6.30pm).

Hall User's party - Saturday, January 4th 2020. (2pm start until approximately 6pm due to bingo and Christmas raffle). Hope to see you all there!

Pet's Corner

For those who don't know me I'm Samantha, a university student from Longford, and I'll be writing this issues pet's corner.

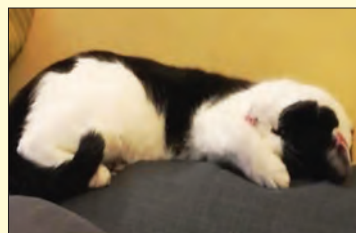
Currently I have two dogs, Mojo and Fly. They are really sweet dogs and honestly we couldn't have had better. We took Mojo into



our family not long after I started secondary school and Fly soon after, and from then on they have been nothing but a joy. However, they definitely can be vocal sometimes as all dogs are. They are quirky in the most lovable of ways, such as how Mojo sometimes likes to have almost teenager-like pouts in his kennel outside even if there is a perfectly warm spot in the house waiting for him, or when Fly huffs at us if we hold off from holding the ball for too long. Even at the older age they are, with Fly's health on the decline due to losing the mobility she once had in her back legs, both my family and I love them to bits and always will. I hope we have many more loving years with them.

Over the summer there have been some pet-themed events that I'd like to bring attention to as I feel like they might be a great experience for both pets and their families! Of course there are a lot in different areas, but the one I'll be mentioning is the 'Dogs day out' run by Burns Nutrition. This is normally held in Gnoll Park so it isn't too far to travel for those who want to. The event this year lasted from 10am until 4pm and includes activities such as a group dog walk, agility classes, refreshments, and advice on nutrition. There will be another event scheduled some time in August of 2020 for anyone that wants to enjoy a fun day out!

Lastly, being as the pet's corner isn't just about dogs, I'd like to share a story told to me by my friend Bec. They have a cat called Jim and he can be quite cheeky. Something strange but cute that he likes to do is to nip



at her feet when she's in bed. You'll hardly catch him with as much feistiness when he is asleep, though! Here he is in the midst of one of his naps.



Blue Ground Beetle Project

In April 2012, the chance finding of an adult Blue Ground Beetle *Carabus intricatus* in a Skewen garden led to the discovery of a population in the nearby ancient woodland of Coed Maesmelin, which is owned and managed by The Woodland Trust (Coed Cadw). Prior to this, the Blue Ground Beetle – Britain's largest ground beetle – had never been recorded in Wales and its discovery, therefore, represented a very significant extension of its British range.



Classified as Nationally Rare, the Blue Ground Beetle has a very limited range with its main British stronghold in the river valleys on the southern edge of Dartmoor, Devon, with a few further colonies in wooded sites on the fringes of Bodmin Moor, Cornwall. In its Dartmoor and Bodmin localities, it is an inhabitant of ancient oak and beech woodland and wood-pasture where there is little ground vegetation, with such conditions usually being maintained by grazing. Given its rarity in Britain and its globally threatened status, owing to its reliance on fragile ancient woodland habitats that have been largely cleared or converted to commercial forestry, and an absence of wings which limit its dispersal abilities, the conservation of the Blue Ground Beetle in Neath Port Talbot is imperative.

Concerns regarding the habitat condition for Blue Ground Beetle at Coed Maesmelin, which was formerly open to stock but has been left ungrazed for a number of years and had consequently developed a dense field layer of bramble in many places, led Buglife Cymru, in partnership with The Woodland Trust, to develop the 'Blue Ground Beetle Project'. This project, which aims to conserve the natural heritage of the Blue Ground Beetle and the long-term protection of its ancient woodland habitat in Coed Maesmelin, received funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and commenced in October 2018 – it is due to run until March 2020. Through the project, targeted habitat management work has been undertaken at Coed Maesmelin to control bramble scrub and create more favourable habitat conditions for the Blue Ground Beetle, allowing the population of this extremely rare beetle to increase. More of this work will continue this autumn and winter, with the help of local Woodland Trust volunteers.

The Blue Ground Beetle is a nocturnal predator of ancient oak and beech woodlands where it emerges after dusk and climbs tree trunks in search of its favourite prey, the tree slug *Lehmannia marginata*, and also potential mates. Like many other ground beetles, it is a spring breeder and is mainly active from late-March to early-July. This spring, targeted surveys were conducted in woodlands around Skewen, Brynnoch and the wider Neath Valley – you may have even seen us – in an attempt to locate additional populations of the beetle. With the help of volunteers, many of which were local residents, 21 night-time surveys were conducted across 10 sites in the Neath Valley. These surveys proved hugely successful with a total of 41 adults and 2 larvae found, significantly increasing the number of sightings of this rare

beetle in Wales – this also included the first confirmed sighting of a larva (or juvenile) in Wales! Of the 10 woodland sites visited, 5 were found to support Blue Ground Beetle and 4 sites represent 'new' locations for the Blue Ground Beetle in the Neath Valley (and Wales). These four 'new' locations expands the previously known distribution of Blue Ground Beetle from one to five confirmed sites, though all of these 'new' sites are located within 900 metres (or roughly half a mile) of the previously confirmed site of Coed Maesmelin. The Blue Ground Beetle remains, therefore, a Skewen/Brynnoch speciality in Wales!

Additional populations of this very rare beetle could well be present in the Neath area, so we need your help! If you see any large beetles with blue colouration on your travels or in your garden (they have a tendency to enter garden sheds), or you see anything you are unsure of, please send details of your sightings, along with a photograph(s), to wales@buglife.org.uk. The following information should ideally be provided:

- Date;
- Location;
- Recorder name (optional);
- Brief description of where (e.g. garden; grassland) and when (e.g. daytime/night) the beetle was spotted; and
- Photograph(s) to allow us to confirm your identification.

Please ensure email attachments are no greater than 6MB in size. Alternatively, feel free to contact us by telephone at 02922 405604 or you can write to us at Buglife Cymru, Forest Farm Conservation Centre, Forest farm Road, Cardiff, CF14 7JJ. And if you find any dead specimens, please keep them in a sealed container for us as they will prove extremely useful in future research.

Longford Community Discussion

As the Local Area Coordinator for Longford, Skewen and Neath Abbey my focus is to support people in their communities to build natural, supportive relationships and alleviate isolation and loneliness. I try to help people understand their own gifts & contributions and enable people to pursue their vision for a good life and to stay safe, strong, connected, healthy, and in control.



On September 9th an event took place in Longford for residents to come together and discuss what they would like to see develop in the area. The event was very positive with 15 people braving the rain to come along and chat about some great ideas including – themed social events, coffee clubs, arts & crafts, a range of indoor and outdoor exercise sessions, a cooking club and a repair café to learn and share practical skills.

At the end of the meeting seven people volunteered to work together to develop opportunities to bring the community together through a range of these activities – starting with a community quiz at the end of October

which was great fun and very successful, we are hoping to host another one soon.

If you would like to be involved or have any ideas of what you would like to see happen in Longford please contact me Emma Jones on



07583780991 or email e.jones7@npt.gov.uk

The Wildflower Meadow

We are introducing Joe Rayner, a local landscape gardener to our Ymlaen readers. He is working voluntarily in conjunction with the Working with Nature Project and us at the Community Council to transform the piece of land in between the Highlands and Longford into a meadow. Joe writes about why meadows are important and also how we will achieve our aim.

Not just a fad

In recent years there has been an upward trend in wildlife gardening due to social influences and a greater knowledge of the natural environment. Words such as bio-diversity are now common place in our vocabulary and are influencing our decisions in regard to the importance of the natural world. However, unlike other trends this can no longer be regarded as a fad but as an on-going necessity. The act of sowing wildflower seed or providing habitat for wildlife is a gateway to promoting a greater understanding of the ecologies that help maintain the Earth's natural greenhouse.

The meadow

The British hay meadow or typical pasture land has existed for over 1400 years and was part of working life in Celtic Briton. The Anglo-Saxon communities however, cleared forests and utilised open spaces to grow pasture for grazing and cut grass to make into hay for animal feed. The Norman settlements in Britain served to increase open field farming systems. Meadows then increased in in lowland Britain for the next 400 years or so, with the exception of the period of history incorporating the great plague due to the inevitable decline in population. By the 1930s the British wildflower meadow had peaked at nearly 8 million acres. However with Britain's involvement in the Second World War, a 'plough up campaign' was undertaken to plug the food gap and six million acres of lowland grass was sown with edible crops. Since then the remaining meadow acreage has steadily declined due to economic growth which resulted in new housing, farming and development of transport networks. The economic motivation albeit is often out of ignorance to environmental damage and as a result a mere 2% of open land is now meadow land. The remaining species-rich grasslands occur in small fragments and are vulnerable to destruction.



Why should we keep our meadows?

Meadows provide a wide range of bio-diversity; this refers to all flora and fauna including fungi and microscopic bacteria. Bio-diversity is crucial for enabling us to survive and stay healthy. It provides our food, cleans our water,

provides medicine for curing illnesses and even creates and improves oxygen quality improving the air that we breathe. When we consider the much loved bumble bee, hedgehog, threatened bird or even a distinctive wildflower then we must respond by showing empathy for our landscape, in particular, the wildflower meadow and the pivotal role that bio-diversity plays in the maintenance of these species. Equally as important is the role these areas play in our mental health and well-being. This land is an intrinsic part of our heritage, rich in landscape character, folklore and history, as much a part of our heritage as the works of Shakespeare.

How do meadows function?

The grasses and seeds provide the upper layer from which invertebrates such as butterflies, bees and hoverflies will collect nectar from the flowers. Birds such as goldfinches may also visit to collect seeds. The lower leaves and stems and other plants provide food for caterpillars and other herbivorous animals. Further down, the dead tussocky bases of the perennial grasses and the accumulation of leaf litter provide shelter and food for springtails, mites and woodlice. Beneath this is the world of soil which is again seething with life, from earthworms to moles. In just one acre of soil it has been calculated that there are no less than 400 million insects and 600 million mites.



Meadows are based on a non-intensive system. High plant diversity more or less guarantees that there will be greater diversity in animals. A variety of herbivores will be on hand to consume all the different plant species. And they in turn will supply food for any number of carnivores from spiders to beetles, birds and foxes etc.

Bio-diversity and the ecology

Bio-diversity is the single most important factor of the earth's ecology and therefore the ultimate survival of the human race. A diversity in flora within the natural environment whether a meadow, rain forest, desert or beneath the ocean is and should remain self-sustaining, locking up carbon within the soil and roots which is then re-used by plants. The greater the potential bio-mass, the greater the potential for removing unwanted carbon from the atmosphere.

Living alongside humanity, these varied habitats are home to a myriad of animal species that are active throughout the year, and becomes the very essence of life on earth. The ecology of the planet and its stability are determined by humankind and nature by definition underwrites its provenance.

To engage in this new ethos promote and involve the community on the issues and practices of the local environment highlights a greater awareness of our surroundings and the way this can impact on the wider ecology and ultimately the greenhouse effect. This is the responsibility we must now have for the sake of future generations.

A practical vision for the Highlands Meadow

The Highlands meadow is an attractive shortcut through to Longford and is an acre space used by dog walkers, access and ramblers. The area has diversity within it including woodland, grassland and hedgerow making it a wealthy place for flora and fauna. A number of species have been noted such as foxes, badgers, squirrels, shrews, mice, hedgehogs, bats, tawny owls, nuthatches, tree creepers, grass snakes, willow herb, cuckoo flower, bluebells and much more. It is hoped that with the help and respect of the community, the area can be maintained and enhanced further in order to preserve the existing wildlife and encourage diversity



The meadow itself contains willow, cuckoo flower and creeping buttercup all of which indicate a moist and fertile soil not ideal for popular varieties of wildflower culture, however, it is still possible to create small pockets of wildflowers around the perimeters therefore establishing a haven for bees, butterflies and hoverflies. Part of the area was raked to remove the nutrient rich grass which would have fed the grass underneath and therefore encourage poorer soil on which wildflowers thrive. Wild daffodils have already been planted alongside the path and will show their heads in a season or two. Yellow rattle and oxeye daisies will also be sown within the grass as a trial. If anybody has an abundance of timber and would like to build a hedgehog home, insect hotel or bird box these would be welcome assets to the project. We will keep you updated on our progress!

Local fundraising and donations to charity continue apace

Charity Psychic Night

Gemma Croydon of Skewen arranged a very popular evening of psychic communication at Longford Memorial Hall during August. The hall was packed out and an amazing £900 was raised. Gemma decided that the money would be divided between nine local groups and amongst those to benefit are Skewen Rainbows and Ti a Fi - Skewen - Bilingual parent and toddler group.

Gemma will continue to host these popular charity events and we are hoping to hold another psychic night in the hall in February 2020.

Helping Hands Knitters

The knitters have had a very busy year and we are looking forward to the Christmas break of one week! Some of our members would meet on Christmas day though, given a chance. We are currently making teddies to comfort children undergoing surgery on the floating hospital equipped and staffed by Mercy Ships. The ships set sail to the poorest countries of Africa, where healthcare is unobtainable, and offer surgery to the severely afflicted. We also supply these trauma teddies to UK emergency services.

For a little treat in July we went on a trip to Porthcawl

where our first call is always a wonderful little shop called 'The Bon Marche.' It doesn't sell clothes though, just wool. As usual we all congregated in the best fish and chip shop in Wales- Finnegans. Try it when you are there.

We are continuing to make tiny hats, blankets and incubator covers along with coats adapted for medical drips and red hats for diabetic babies. These are taken to Singleton Hospital for premature and sick babies.

We had a lovely visit from Rev Emma Street who donated household goods to us as she is moving to the vicarage. No doubt you will all get to know her as she will occasionally cover Skewen. We have a special connection with Emma as she is the daughter of our late chairman Evana Morgan.

The group is branching out this year with a home grown pantomime. It is sure to be hilarious.

As always we continue to support the Shoebox appeal and Syrian Refugee camps and we are pleased to say we have extra help from the new group members. We always welcome people whatever their skill level so if you know anyone who would like to come along please let them know that we meet every Thursday in Longford Memorial Hall between 12 and 4 pm. We currently have 50 registered members but there is always room for one more.



Over the Counter

Jeff Griffiths' memories of his family's grocery shop in Neath

The shop contained fine display cases and trading was conducted over a long, polished wooden counter. Each day fresh sawdust was spread on the stone flag floor and then swept up at close of business. My father would make a display of patting loose butter with wooden paddles on a marble counter top and his salted butter was popular. He was also known for his painting in whitewash on the shop's front display window whatever was the week's 'Special Offer'. Our shop, like others of that time, would carry front window displays of artfully stacked canned products – and woe betide if one of these displays collapsed!

Provisions were delivered in bulk to the shop, not in pre-packaged, small quantities as today. Cheese (there were none of your fancy varieties back then, only what was colloquially known as 'mouse-trap cheese!') arrived as a large, barrel-shaped 'truckle' in a cheesecloth coating which had then to be divided with a wire-cutter into saleable portions. A side of pig, a half carcass minus the head and feet, would arrive slung across the shoulder of the meat delivery man. It was then deboned, cut up and tied with string into more manageable portions. A bacon slicing machine would complete the process. Hooks formerly used for hanging meat still protruded from the shop's ceiling. At one time tea came loose in large, wooden 'tea chests' which were popularly reused for furniture removals when emptied of their contents. Fruit was delivered in bulk and unwrapped. Bananas, shipped by the 'banana boats' from the West Indies into Barry docks, were delivered in wooden crates containing a whole stalk of attached bananas which, on times, might contain an exotic spider or even a small snake. Cigarettes could be bought in packets of five and pungent chewing tobacco, torn off a tight coil and looking like liquorice, was popular with some. A butter and egg merchant who supplied our shop would churn milk into butter in his own small, backyard factory and collected eggs straight from local farms. Food packaging was provided by brown paper bags, replaced in due course by plastic bags, and by greaseproof paper. Old newspapers were also used for wrapping purposes. Customers would bring their own stout shopping bags and home delivered grocery orders would be contained in recycled cardboard boxes in which some food product had once been packed.

Whatever their age or marital status, female shop counter assistants were known as 'shop girls'. There were also shop delivery or 'errand' boys, in which role I served my time. Their duties included riding the shop delivery bike with its wicker pannier front basket. When loaded with a box of groceries these bikes were difficult to control. I later graduated to driving the delivery van. Petrol was so much cheaper in the days before conflict in the Middle East enormously escalated its price in the 1970s: I could fuel my first car bought in 1969 with four gallons for a £1 note. The family store functioned as a social as well as a trading centre with two chairs in front of the long, polished wooden counter enabling shoppers to sit and chat, something not so easily maintained in contemporary, self-service shopping aisles.

The shop operated principally on a cash payment basis - cheques being the only other form of money exchange - but never possessed a cash till. All who worked 'behind the counter' had to be proficient in mental arithmetic, even more challenging before the introduction of the decimal money system. Bills were all handwritten and with £.s.d columns before 1971. Payment for grocery orders - phoned in or prepared from a customer's hand written list - was normally

collected on delivery. Some defaulters unable to pay for goods they'd received would hide at the knock on the door, a ruse sometimes betrayed by children calling out to their skulking parents. Our family shop also supplied the famed faggots and peas stalls in Neath's indoor market.

While stores now open long hours each day and trade on Sundays, for most of the last century those in shops normally had a five and a half-day working week. The Shops Act 1911 allowed a weekly half holiday for shop staff which became known as 'early closing day', typically held on a Wednesday or Thursday. Legislation passed in 1994 introduced Sunday trading and abolished the statutory half-day weekly holiday thereby drastically changing the template of shopping, added to which the supermarkets were locating to out of town centre locations. The local Chamber of Trade would annually charter one of the White Funnel Fleet paddle steamers which plied the Bristol Channel. These would sail typically from Mumbles or Porthcawl for Ilfracombe, Weston-Super-Mare or even Lundy Island. Shop assistants were treated to this annual summer sailing which meant a one day closure of shops in the town.

One shouldn't over-romanticise these traditional shops despite their nostalgic attraction in an era when the supermarket prevails. They fell far short of today's standards in areas like hygiene, health and safety, heating, lighting, etc. Food establishments of that vintage would inevitably attract rodents: shop cats were common and earned their keep. The only heating in the cold of winter was paraffin stoves and staff suffered chilblains from the cold, flagstone floors. After a day's work, which could be quite physical, my father would devote part of each evening to 'doing the books', checking, recording and paying: when VAT was introduced in 1973 it meant even more bookwork for the small trader. I never saw my father use any machine aid, all calculations being done mentally and with pen and paper.

The proliferation of the supermarkets from the 1960s sounded the death knell for many small shops. My father would complain of items being sold more cheaply in supermarkets than he could buy them at wholesale prices. The growth of self-service supermarkets, however, did have one beneficial consequence for our family's business. Until then the concept of customers helping themselves to items was unheard of and shop staff would deal with each customer in turn, plucking goods from stacked shelves then handing them over or delivering them by bike or van. Those who did not want to adapt to self-service shopping gave their custom to the shrinking number of privately run shops where over the counter service was still available. Eventually, our family shop became the last of the old-style grocery establishments in the town and was patronised by those who appreciated individual service and free delivery (many supermarkets didn't offer home deliveries at first then charged for this service when they did). As the twentieth century drew to its close the shop became a living reminder of a past era and school parties were brought to see how shopping was once conducted before supermarkets. The 19th century shop frontage with its multi-coloured glazed tiles and decorative woodwork was listed on account of "the well-preserved shop front and interior, once typical but now extremely rare to the area". In 1992 its wrought iron shop gates closed for the final time. The premises were sold and put to another use: it was the end both of a family chapter and an era of traditional grocery trading in our town.

Jeff Griffiths

Cadw Open Doors Days

On the weekend of September 28th and 29th Cadw once again welcomed visitors to Neath Abbey as part of their Open Doors Heritage Festival. This year more than 200 Welsh landmarks or sites were opened free to the public. Neath Abbey showcased its newly renovated Under Croft which was previously not being viewed by the public due to inaccessibility issues resulting from the restoration work. The Croft is shown in the accompanying photos taken by Tracy Rayner. Guided talks were held over the weekend by Bill Zajac who revisited the Monastery's 900 year old history.



Bill also held talks in Neath Abbey Ironworks as part of the Open Doors Festival. This industrial powerhouse and important part of local history, made iron in its blast furnace and produced stationary steam engines, steam ships and locomotives amongst many other things. These products

were exported worldwide and the visitors to the ironworks would have enjoyed hearing about this local heritage site.

Community Awards

The Community Council held a special afternoon this October to honour those who improve our local environment in many different ways. There were certificates given out for those who had been nominated as having nicely kept attractive gardens within Dyffryn Clydach and also certificates for those that looked after the planter boxes that have been installed locally. It should be noted that we hope to acquire more boxes particularly in areas that have not had them previously.

This year awards were also given to the many litter pickers we have within our community, well done all and keep it up. A nice afternoon was had by all that could attend who enjoyed a buffet, cup of tea and a chat. Those that were unable to attend will have their certificates sent out in due course.



Chair Karon Hopkins with Councillor Martyn Peters



Chair Karon Hopkins with Pam Fleming

Obituaries

The Price Family

We were saddened to hear the death of David Morgan Price (Moc) and June Price of Longford Farm. They were both well-known and long standing characters within the community. They have been in the locality for many years and farmed the good old fashioned way. Residents will remember June delivering milk with her cart and her horse Champion. Moc was always dressed in his working clothes, the only time you would see him dressed up was at a funeral when he put on a bowler hat. He bought his first and only suit in 1948! They were always interested in the people of the community and always kept an eye out for what was going on. People may remember Moc always had a fondness for his pigs. It was particularly sad to see their health deteriorating in their later years. If you were ever invited into their farm house you had to move quickly to dodge the splinters flying out from their fire. Their passing is a sad loss to the community.



Harry Thomas

Harry was born in Taillwyd Road Neath Abbey and was a long serving member of the Community Council. His duties included acting as chairman on several occasions and he was dedicated to the Council taking his role seriously. Harry always believed in public service. He was a frequent walker and writer of letters to newspapers on political topics. Harry would always stop for a chat about the weather or events occurring in the locality. He was an intelligent hard working man and in his retirement was extremely active gaining a degree in humanities amongst many other things. He also had an excellent sense of humour and a glint in his eye, he will be sadly missed. Harry, of The Highlands, Neath Abbey, passed away in October 2019 aged 85 years old.



Alan Martin Davies

The death occurred in August of Alan Martin Davies, formerly of 45 The Highlands. His father, Gerwyn, was a senior executive with the Metal Box Company. Alan attended Coedffranc primary school and Emmanuel Grammar School in Swansea. He went to work in London after school, principally in management accountancy, including for the BBC. A formidable prop forward in his schoolboy days, Alan went on to represent London Welsh RFC before injury cut short his playing career. His coaching talents then led to his appointment as Director of Rugby for Blackheath, the oldest club in England and where the first England v Wales rugby international was played. His was one of the first such paid appointments as rugby moved into the professional era. Alan and wife Meena, a senior nursing executive, retired to North Wales where he died aged 71.



Chairperson's Address • Cyfarchiad y Cadeirydd

Here we are with Christmas already fast approaching and 2019 drawing to a close. Unfortunately, we have lost some well-known and much-loved people from our community, June and Moc Price from Longford Farm and tragically Mark Winchcombe, Landlord of The Smiths Arms. We also lost one of our Community Councillors Harry Thomas who will be much missed amongst others. I would like to send both mine and the Community Council's deepest condolences to the families who have suffered the loss of a loved one – made even more difficult at this time of year.

As Chair of the Community Council I have had opportunities to meet people at a variety of events. I particularly enjoyed the special service in September at St Matthew's Church to celebrate its 148th year. The choir was wonderful to listen to.

For a small area there are wide a variety of events and activities, whether it is walking in our beautiful area, helping Working With Nature, litter picking, taking care of the planter boxes, attending activities in the hall, or joining the Cadw open weekend at local historical sites.

There was a recently held 'Have your say' event with Emma Jones (Local area coordinator) during which people were given the opportunity to suggest new activities. At the time of writing there is a quiz night planned – the first of many I hope.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Community Councillors and the numerous volunteers for all their help and support both to me and our community.

I wish you all a good Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Cllr. Karon Hopkins



Dyma ni, a'r Nadolig yn prysur agosáu yn barod a 2019 yn dirwyn i ben. Gwaetha'r modd, rydyn ni wedi colli pobl adnabyddus ac annwyl iawn o'n cymuned: June a Moc Price o Fferm Longford ac yn drychinebus, Mark Winchcombe, Landlord y Smiths Arms. Hefyd collon ni un o'n Cynghorwyr Cymuned, Harry Thomas; byddwn yn gweld ei eisiau ef ac eraill hefyd. Hoffwn anfon fy nghydymdeimlad dwysaf yn bersonol ac ar ran y Cyngor Cymuned at y teuluoedd sydd wedi colli anwyliaid – mae'r golled hyd yn oed yn fwy anodd yr adeg hon o'r flwyddyn.

Fel Cadeirydd y Cyngor Cymuned, rwyf wedi cael cyfle i gwrdd â phobl mewn amrywiaeth o ddigwyddiadau. Cefais flas mawr ar y gwasanaeth arbennig ym mis Medi yn Eglwys Sant Matthew i ddathlu ei 148fed blwyddyn. Roedd gwranddo ar y côr yn brofiad gwych. O ystyried ei bod hi'n ardal mor fach, mae amrywiaeth fawr o weithgareddau a digwyddiadau, fel cerdded yn ein hardal brydferth, helpu Gweithio gyda Natur, codi sbwriel, gofalu am y blychau plannu, mynychu gweithgareddau yn y neuadd, neu ymuno â phenwythnos agored Cadw mewn safleoedd hanesyddol lleol.

Yn ddiweddar cynhaliwyd digwyddiad 'Dweud eich dweud' gydag Emma Jones (y Cydlynnydd ardal lleol) pan gafodd pobl gyfle i awgrymu gweithgareddau newydd. Wrth imi ysgrifennu mae noson gwis ar y gweill – y gyntaf o nifer, rwy'n gobeithio.

I gloi, hoffwn ddiolch i'm cyd-Gynghorwyr Cymuned ac i'r llu o wirfoddolwyr am eu

help a'u cefnogaeth i mi ac i'n cymuned.

Dymunaf Nadolig Llawn a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda ac iach i bob un ohonoch chi.

Y Cyng. Karon Hopkins

Christmas Recipe – A Boxing Day bake

This is a good way to use up any leftovers from Christmas Day.

Serves 4. Preheat oven to Gas mark 4/ 180 degrees Celsius.

Ingredients

- 700g potatoes (thinly sliced or mashed).
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 150g sliced mushrooms
- 150g meat or quorn (optional)
- 1 red onion sliced
- 30g butter or margarine
- 30g plain flour
- 450 ml milk
- 150g cheese grated
- Leftover vegetables diced

Method

Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the mushrooms and onion until soft, remove from heat.

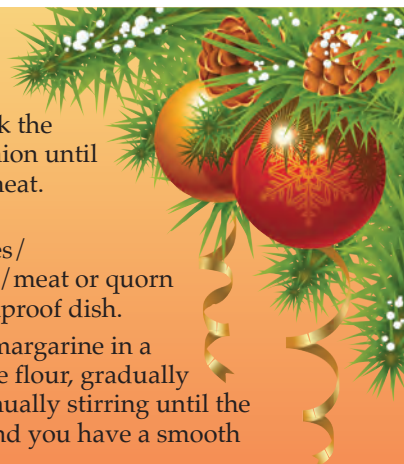
Arrange layers of potatoes/vegetables/mushrooms/onion/meat or quorn (if used) in an ovenproof dish.

Melt the butter or margarine in a saucepan, stir in the flour, gradually add the milk continually stirring until the mixture thickens and you have a smooth sauce.

Add 100g of the cheese to the sauce and stir in.

Pour the sauce over the potatoes etc in the dish and sprinkle on the remaining cheese.

Bake for approximately 40 minutes or until piping hot and the mixture is golden and bubbling.



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Published by Dyffryn Clydach Community Council. Cyhoeddwyd gan Gyngor Cymuned Dyffryn Clydach.

Printed by Glamorgan Press, Unit 13, Milland Rd Industrial Estate, SA11 1NJ. Argraffwyd gan Serol Print, Uned 13, Ystad Ddiwydiannol Heol Milland, SA11 1NJ.