



# ABERHAFESP COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2021

**From the Editor:** Thankfully there now seems to be some semblance of normality. Long may it last so we can enjoy village life to the full again. You will see from the items in this newsletter that locals are making plans for the next few months, so hopefully this will continue.

## COMMUNITY CENTRE

Now Autumn is here, with lovely dewy mornings, and warm days to enjoy, we have been able to start things off again in the hall, albeit cautiously. We have had a committee meeting, community council meeting, and a Coffee morning. Dave Smith, committee member and trustee has recently moved away from the area, so he was presented with a fun present as thanks for all his work in the past, and congratulated on his recent marriage. Good wishes for the future Dave.



The committee met one very hot Saturday morning in July, to clear the moss and other detritus from all over the car park. Armed with shovels and bass brooms and dressed in old things, with fetching floppy hats, we cleared enough to fill two large buckets on Alwyn Nutting's machine. Thanks to him for removing this and disposing of it, and all the helpers who scraped it up, and also to the people who tidied up the garden by the entrance. What an improvement



The Coffee Morning, on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September was really good, and very encouraging for our efforts towards normality. Masks were worn, except when eating and drinking, which went some way to helping us feel safe, in what is still to some people a giant step. The bacon butties were delicious as usual and I am convinced that when that enticing smell filters out of the hall, in come the punters! Thanks to you all for supporting the event, and for helping us to raise an amazing £401!

We had fewer stalls this time, by design, but they were all “quality”. The delicious cakes were presided over by Elaine Benbow, the garden stall, run by Marg Wright and Carol Gough was very successful, and goodness knows how they produced so many plants as my clay soil garden is still like concrete with so little rain, and only pickaxe friendly.

Ann Griffiths set up a very professional looking book stall, backed by the piano, with some excellent merchandise. John Williams set up his usual wonderful gifts in wood, including two small captains’ chairs for little ones, which I can see becoming family heirlooms. He was exhibiting a superb model Rolls Royce open touring car, made entirely from wood, and admired by all. Thank you to Bill Gough and Roger Stone for doing the raffle, Edward Parry for manning the entrance, and of course all the marvellous well organised people in the kitchen, the hub of the whole thing, It was interesting in a programme on TV this week in which the public chose their 20 favourite sandwiches, number one was the bacon butty, in a bun, just like ours!

We have decided to postpone table tennis Fridays until after Christmas when the covid threat will be more under control, hopefully. We may have another coffee morning in November, to keep the momentum going. We are now planning the

## Christmas Celebration



**SATURDAY DECEMBER 4TH**

**TICKETS £17.50 EACH**

**Full roast dinner and puddings by the Sandwich & Salad Bar, Newtown, as before.**

**Bar, Raffle, and after dinner entertainment by Gareth Jenkins, Magician.**

**Also our own music, of varying decibels, arranged by Nigel Hamer!**

I will leave you with this thought, I am sure everyone has noticed that there are three creatures at the moment which are unlikely to become extinct, barring specific viruses. They are flies, wasps, and many grey squirrels. The latter are making sure my dog Scamp gets plenty of exercise, but no catches yet. Have a good Autumn, and we hope to see you again in the hall soon.

*Maddy Thornton. Chair*

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## COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Aberhafesp Community Council covers the area of Aberhafesp, Bwlch-y-Fridd, Bethel and Rhyd-y-Felin.**

A Community Council is governed by the Local Government Act of 1972. Here in Aberhafesp it consists of seven Councillors who sign a Declaration of Office and work on a voluntary basis for the good of the whole community. They are supported by a clerk who is employed to ensure the correct procedures are enforced and the smooth running of the Council in general.

Meetings are held on a **Wednesday evening in the Community centre**, and members of the public can attend any meeting, unless otherwise specified.

**Notice of each meeting** is displayed for three clear days giving the date, the time, and the agenda. They are posted on the notice boards at Bwlch-y-Fridd, Hillcrest Aberhafesp, the Community Centre and the telephone kiosk in Bethel.

Details of meetings can also be found on the new Community Council [Facebook page](#) and the **Community Council website**

You can access the latest *County Councillor monthly reports* as well as current *County planning applications*, where you can enter comments to support or object.

The minutes of meetings are only posted on the website after they have been approved by the Community Council which takes place at the start of the following meeting. For example minutes from a meeting in July would be approved in August, if a meeting was held then.

If you have an item you wish to add to the agenda please contact the clerk Rachel Hamer [rachel.hamer72@hotmail.com](mailto:rachel.hamer72@hotmail.com). Come and just watch if you have an interest in anything on the agenda, or if you have anything you wish to bring to the attention of the council and you wish to speak at the meeting you need to ask the chairman.



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## SHORT MAT BOWLS

We had our first session on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September, and will be meeting every Tuesday night at 7.30pm in the Community Centre. We can provide bowls and tuition to get you started. Please come along and give it a try.

*Elaine Benbow: 01686 625586*

## COMMUNITY EVENT



Alice and Lewis Birch would like to thank the Community Centre for the free of charge use of the marquee on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> July for the birthday party on Hillcrest green that they organised for their son Ronnie. They were so pleased some of the village residents attended and thankful that the weather was kind to them.

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### RYDFELIN CHAPEL

The chapel reopened in April for members of the chapel initially. The congregation have been meeting on the first Sunday of each month when we were happy to see a good number turn out. The joint service with St. Gwynog's Church also took place on the last Sunday in August. For the foreseeable future the chapel will continue to open on the first Sunday of each month only. All are welcome.

Angela Owen. 07713270882 email [aowenx2@gmail.com](mailto:aowenx2@gmail.com)

### MOTHER'S UNION

The Aberhafesp Mothers' Union Branch have at last held a face-to-face monthly meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

Since February 2020 was the last time a meeting was held in person, the reconvening of the group was much welcomed and appreciated. The speaker at the meeting was Stephanie Benbow, a member of the Aberhafesp MU who shared with the group a film about her three visits to Kenya. It demonstrated the making of basic cardboard furniture for disadvantaged children with physical disabilities and impressed those present with the resourceful and giving nature of this helpful work. Peter Thompson thanked Stephanie on behalf of the MU members.

The Aberhafesp MU diary for 2021 was scheduled to finish in September but the group have agreed to meet for a social afternoon on 21<sup>st</sup> October at 3pm.

The group would welcome anyone wishing to join the MU in Aberhafesp. Meetings are held in the St. Gwynog's church room.

Barbara Moelwyn-Williams 01686 627329





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## ST GWYNOG'S CHURCH

At the last minute we were told that we could hold our **coffee mornings** again provided we did the necessary risk assessment which was completed just a few days before the September coffee morning, but we were not allowed to advertise the event. It was a successful morning and we were able to have socially distanced tables and chairs in both the church and church room. Apologies if we failed to contact you before the event – we will now be able to continue on a monthly basis on the **first Saturday of each month**, providing there are no further restrictions.

We are back in church for our services which are being held on the first Sunday of the month at 9am (Holy Communion) and the third Sunday at 9.30am (Morning Prayer) and look forward to seeing you.

We also hold an 11am short service on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Morning prayer on the second Wednesday and Holy Communion on the fourth Wednesday.

We are keeping socially distanced, and singing again wearing our masks! We have a cup of tea after services.

We are holding our harvest service at 3pm on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October which will be followed by a tea. All are welcome.

We have registered as an eco church and we will be trying over the coming months to be more eco friendly. We are waiting to be advised about nesting boxes which we hope will be in place for next spring.

Although it seems to be too early for thinking about Christmas we are making plans for both inside the church and in the churchyard. We hope to decorate the churchyard similar to last year.

We thank you for supporting us over the past months.

See our [Facebook page](#)

**Note:** Online Sunday worship is available on the first Sunday of every month and special occasions. You can view these services at All Saints [here](#).

## 200 CLUB

Winners were drawn on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September at the Coffee Morning.

£50	Mr & Mrs Price	Lluest, Llanwnog
£25	Mrs Jean Jones	Cwm, Aberhafesp
£25	Alwyn Davies	Tregynon
£25	Mr & Mrs P Breese	Plausduon, Pondolgoch
£25	Mrs Ann Sharp	Aberhafesp
£15	Mr & Mrs R Jones	Wernddu, Aberhafesp
£15	Aled Jones	Llanwnog
£15	Hazel Turner	Aberhafesp
£15	Ivor Lloyd	Bwlchyffridd
£15	Laura Evans	Aberhafesp

## LOCAL YOUNG FARMERS

Aberhafesp Young farmers are delighted that we can now start to meet up and enjoy YFC like the good times. We had a club night with Trefeglwys YFC with a fun rounders evening, the sun was shining blue skies and a little competition was a great reminder how much we all missed these events. We held our Annual General Meeting and officials of the club were elected as follows:

Chair	Gemma Owen
Vice Chair	Ellie Lewis
Treasurer	Iora Gethin
Secretary	Ffion Smith
Minutes and attendance	Ruby Grigg
Press officer/social media	Eden Grigg

We really look forward to welcoming the members back to our first club night for our New Members evening on the 4<sup>th</sup> October, we hope to see new and old faces there on the night!

YFC has something for everyone so why not come down and have a chat to us whilst playing some great fun games! Throughout the pandemic our members kept supporting our community and we hope the community will now support us in creating a strong vibrant club for the young people of Aberhafesp and surrounding areas.

A date for the diary is **17<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER** our “annual” **TREASURE HUNT** will take place so please keep a lookout for the details very soon.

Again we would just like to thank the community for their continued support and remind everyone that this year, more than ever, we need your help to grow to be the young farmers we once were before the pandemic. See our [Facebook page](#).

Thank you. *Gemma Owen.07791466484*

## WOMEN’S INSTITUTE

We are fortunate in Aberhafesp to now have the Community Centre open and able to welcome the return of user groups. Being able to hold our monthly meetings in a safe and secure place is reassuring for our members which was demonstrated by the good attendance at our July meeting. For the remainder of this year we have decided to call on the wealth of talent amongst our members to provide speakers.

Carleen Schofield was the first to step up to the challenge and stand in front of her fellow members. Her talk had a very intriguing title “I can’t do joined up writing”, but all was revealed when she spoke of her experiences as a celebrant and registrar of marriages.

A visit to a local garden was planned for August. Heavy showers had been forecast but the rain kept off long enough for us to enjoy a leisurely stroll around the garden at Llys Celyn, Llanwnog, the home of Tom and Lesley Geary. After our tour of the garden we were served afternoon tea with delicious home made cakes. In September Maddy Thornton gave us an informative and humorous talk about her life as a dentist.

Our sporting ladies are looking forward to playing croquet, short mat bowls and kurling in the coming weeks, and a sure sign that winter is not far away players are being recruited for the dominoes team.

We meet at 7p.m on the first Thursday of every month at Aberhafesp Community Centre. Contact Elaine Benbow on 01686 625586 if you would like to come along to any of our meetings.

- October 7<sup>th</sup> History of Llanwnog Church Edward Parry
- November 4<sup>th</sup> Floral Demonstration Carol Gough
- December 2<sup>nd</sup> Quiz followed by Christmas Carols.



## A BRIDGE A HOUSE AND A CHURCH

Half a mile west of Aberhafesp, on the Llanwnnog road, you cross a rather innocuous looking stone bridge over the Nant Rhyd-ros-lan at Rhydlydan. Its parapet, made up of regular shaped stone blocks, is relatively recent. However, if you (carefully!) lean over the parapet you will see a graceful single arch spanning the stream. This dates back exactly 190 years to 1831 and was designed by a gentleman named Thomas Penson. Only three years earlier, he had also designed what is now The Old Rectory in the village, an elegant Regency villa in a striking location.

Penson was born in 1790 at Wrexham and was a member of a significant local dynasty of architects. His father was County Surveyor for Flintshire and two of his sons also followed him into the profession. Penson himself occupied the posts of County Surveyor for Montgomeryshire and Denbighshire as well as being Surveyor for the Montgomeryshire Turnpike Trust. In hindsight, Penson can be seen as an innovative and imaginative architect who left his mark very clearly on the buildings of mid and north-east Wales. His architectural legacy in Montgomeryshire is a particularly rich one. Public buildings he designed include the County Gaol in Montgomery, workhouses in Llanfyllin and Caersws (Plas Maldwyn) and, perhaps his most impressive, the old Flannel Exchange in Newtown (now the Regent Cinema). To the extent that Penson is remembered today, however, it is as a designer and builder of bridges. By one estimate he was responsible for as many as 62 bridges in Montgomeryshire alone. Early in his career he concentrated on elegant and strongly built stone bridges. Locally, as well as Rhydlydan, these include Caersws Bridge, Wig Bridge just off the Caersws-Trefeglwys road, Long Bridge, Short Bridge and Felindre Bridge in Llanidloes, and perhaps the best known, Newtown Long Bridge. This three-arched stone bridge was built in 1826/7 and replaced a dilapidated wooden one nearby. To save money however it was narrower than recommended by Penson. His concern proved justified when in 1857 a lady pedestrian was crushed to death by a carriage. As a result, the existing footpaths supported by iron arches were added.

It was his work on churches however which allowed Penson to express himself to greatest effect. In the mid 1840s for example he was responsible for rebuilding St. Agatha's in Llanymynech – for which he chose a striking use of the popular Neo-Norman or Romanesque style – as well as Christ Church in Welshpool, best known for its innovative use of terracotta for the arches and ceiling vaulting. Around the same time, Penson was also busy designing a new church for Newtown. St. Mary's was badly sited and subject to flooding and had become too small for a growing industrial town. The result – St David's in New Road – was a large, light and powerful-looking church built with buff bricks in the Victorian Gothic style. Sadly of course, it has remained empty since 2006.

Papers in the Vaynor estate archive (now in Powys Archives) indicate that towards the very end of his career – and life – Penson returned to Aberhafesp to design a substantial rebuild of St Gwynog's church. The old building had only a single 'chamber' with a low west tower surmounted by a wooden belfry. Penson's design is generally considered to be of good quality and to show real sensitivity in its execution. He refaced the old walls, added a chancel and crowned the tower with mock battlements. The church was also embellished with some beautiful windows, particularly the unusual straight-headed ones in the nave. Perhaps Penson's masterstroke however was to retain and carefully repair the lovely early 15<sup>th</sup> century roof.

Thomas Penson died suddenly on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1859. He deserves, I think, to be better remembered than he is, so give him a thought the next time you pass through the village.

*Peter Francis.*

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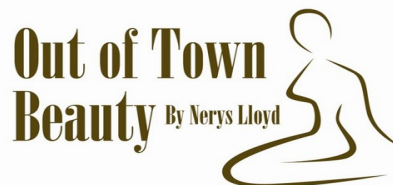
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## GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

Residents and friends of Aberhafesp and Bwlch-y-ffridd have submitted their email addresses to the editor of this newsletter giving permission for the distribution of quarterly issues of the newsletter plus occasional emails giving additional local news and/or information. Consent for the use of personal details to be held for this purpose can be withdrawn at any time.

## NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of this newsletter will be published in **January 2022**. Please send any articles of interest to the Editor ([mbedworth@gmail.com](mailto:mbedworth@gmail.com)) no later than the **20<sup>th</sup> December**.

**Also:** If you usually receive this newsletter as a printed copy through your letterbox and you have an email address please let the editor know so that we can save on the cost of printing.

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