

Offa Community News

Newyddion Cymuned Offa



Bellevue Park

Parc Belle Vue

As regular users of the park could not fail to notice, we have been forced to take the **sad decision to fell the large beech tree** next to the tennis courts.

The tree has been showing signs of ill health for the last two years, with the tree producing far fewer leaves than normal, making the canopy look 'thin'.

Over the summer the Wrexham Councils Senior Tree Officer identified a large fungus growing at the base of the tree as *Meripilus giganteus* (Giant Polypore). Unfortunately *Meripilus* is a fungus which causes 'white rot' in the tree, breaking down lignin which gives wood its strength and rigidity. As the tree was close to a very busy path, our tree officer had for reasons of health and safety, no choice but to instruct contractors to fell the tree.



The trunk of the tree has been turned into two benches, one has been sited on the edge of the playing field next to the tall poplar trees, while the other is near the shelter adjacent to Ruthin Road.

At about 150 years old, the felled beech was the oldest tree in Bellevue and was the only tree to be growing before the parks creation in 1910.

At about 150 years old, the felled beech was the oldest tree in Bellevue and was the only tree to be growing before the parks creation in 1910. The old maps show that the area as open fields on the edge of Wrexham. The shape of the tree, with the trunk separating into lots of branches just above head height, hinted at possible pollarding early in its life. Pollarding is a method of harvesting wood from a tree. The tree is cut down at about 2 metres high, from which fresh shoots grow, which can be harvested again in subsequent years. As beech decays quickly compared to oak, the wood has traditionally used to make indoor furniture.

The felled beech tree is going to be replaced with a Hungarian Oak, also known as the Italian Oak (*Quercus frainetto*). Despite its name it is rare in Hungary and is more commonly found in the Balkans and Turkey. With 'lustrous foliage' which turns russet or yellow in autumn, this impressive tree should over time grow in to a worthy successor to our much admired beech tree.

Bellevue Youth Club

Clwb Ieuenctid Belle Vue



Bellevue Youth Club

8 - 19 year old males and females

Every Thursday, 6:45pm - 8:45pm

Bellevue Community Centre

FREE OF CHARGE!

LOTS OF ACTIVITIES ON OFFER:



Playstation 4



Pool



Arts & Crafts



Table Tennis

For more information:

Contact the Youth Team at Caia Park Partnership on 01978 310984

Or Find us on Facebook **Caia Park Youth Team**

Your Community Councillor

Cyngor Cymuned Lleol

Meet your Community Councillor. In each issue we will be featuring one of our Community Councillors – first up is **Alex Jones - Community Councillor for Erddig Ward.**

A bit about me. I'm 31, married and have a daughter who is eight months old. I have lived in Wrexham all my life and in 2009 I opened the first of my two businesses in Wrexham Town Centre.



Wrexham has played a big part in my life and I wanted to give something back so I became a Community Councillor. For just over two years now sitting on OFFA CC, I have learnt a great deal about how important it is to have a voice in the council and to be involved in decision making on behalf of the community. I have also been elected to the Governing Body of Victoria CP School and again in my spare time assist in the running of a fantastic school. Being part of the community council is my way of putting something back into Wrexham and I enjoy every minute of it.

Where we can we invest money into the local area to benefit those who live within Offa; from investing in our play areas for children, keeping the community centres running, organising carnivals, issuing grants to community groups and installing CCTV cameras into crime hot spots.

I have learnt a great deal about how important it is to have a voice in the council and to be involved in decision making on behalf of the community.

If you have any issues in the Offa Community then pop along and see us at our monthly Council meetings or contact our clerk who will pass on your concerns for us to deal with.

Alex Jones

Email: alexmartinjones@hotmail.co.uk

Tel. 07772582829

Offa Sheep

Dafad Offa

Earlier this year Offa Community Council held a competition to **design a sheep for Offa Community Council** with all local schools invited to take part.

Although many wonderful designs were received the winning design was done by Cerys Owen a pupil of year 8C at Ysgol Clywedog.

Cerys has called her sheep 'Anwen' which means very beautiful in Welsh and she is pictured next to Anwen in the recently completed 'Welcome to Offa' garden on Kingsmills Road in Hightown.

Clerk to the Community Council Karen Benfield thanked Cerys and all who took part in the competition.

"I have received so many positive comments about our sheep Anwen and she looks very attractive in this location. Visitors entering the town must be a bit surprised wondering what it is doing there but as they drive around Wrexham they will notice others here and there on the sheep trail done by WCBC. They are certainly helping to brighten up the town."

Further information on the sheep trail can be obtained from the tourist office on Queens Square.

Visitors entering the town must be a bit surprised wondering what it is doing there.



Small Grants Available

Grantiau

Offa Community Council has a policy of giving **small grants to community groups** that meet within the area and serve the local community.

If you would like your group to be considered for a grant please write to the Community Council giving information on your group, where you meet and how many members you have.

The Community Council will also need to see a copy of some up to date financial information on your group such as a balance sheet or a recent bank statement.



Please write in to:

Mrs Karen Benfield, Clerk to the Community Council
Parciau Community Centre, Bellevue Road, Wrexham LL13 7NH.
For further information: Tel 01978 291562

All applications will need to be received by
Friday 10th March 2017.

If you would like your group to be considered for a grant please write to the Community Council giving information on your group.



Wrexham Cemetery Works

Gwaith Fynwent Wrecsam

Heritage Lottery funded conservation works to improve the Wrexham Cemetery have begun.

A number of trees have been removed and utility connections across the Ruabon Road undertaken to improve electricity and water connections for the buildings.

The next stage of the works will be undertaken on the listed chapel buildings, fencing, gates and paths around the Victorian Cemetery. A Part time Development Officer will be appointed in early spring to start community development work and encourage volunteers to become involved in the history of the cemetery.

The works to conserve and restore the old cemetery are funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The work will continue until the late spring 2017. During the conservation work there will be no access to the main Ruabon Road gate entrance.

Access to the cemetery is through the Bersham Road entrance. Vehicular access is only for Blue Badge holders and visitors will need to be patient and wait for the onsite attendant to allow them to use the cemetery pathways. This is dependent on the number of cars onsite. If there is a funeral taking place you will need to wait until this has been completed.

If you would like to access the cemetery on foot, you will be able to use the Bersham road entrance, during the cemetery opening hours.

We are sorry for any inconvenience, but we need to manage the restricted access, as safely as possible during the building works.

Del Solari
Cofrestrydd/Registrar
Telephone: 01978 840068



The works to conserve and restore the old cemetery are funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The work will continue until the late spring 2017.

Residents & Tenants Association

Cymdeithas Trigolion a Thenantiaid

Huntroyde Residents & Tenants Association meet bi-monthly in the Salisbury Park United Reform Church Hall (at the town end of Percy Road) on Wednesdays at 18.30pm.



Although initially it covered the relatively small area from Salisbury Road down to Tudor Road and also from Bennions Road to Sontley Road, over the years it has widened the horizons to now incorporate further southwards to the Coed Y Glyn area and also Brynycabanau Road to Ruabon Road.

Any problems which are experienced by people living in the area, including anti-social behaviour, speeding traffic, potholes, cold callers street lighting etc, can be raised at the meetings and every effort will be made to deal with them.

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Additionally, input of suggestions for improving the community is always encouraged and welcomed, so if you feel that you can offer anything, then please come and visit us – all meetings are free to attend.

The association is taking a slightly longer break during the winter months.

The first meeting in 2017 will be held on **Wednesday 1st March at 18.30pm.**

Further meetings will be held on **26th April** and **21st June.**

If you require any further information please email the Chairman: John472309@yahoo.co.uk

Christmas at St. Giles' Church

Nadolig at Sant Silyn

St. Giles' at Christmas is full of light and music, celebrating the birth of Christ and the coming of Light into the world.

This year we have the Tenovus Lovelight concert on 24th November and this is followed by the Nightingale House Concert on 3rd December. On the 9th December we have the Greater Manchester Male Voice Choir with soloists from the Royal Northern College of Music, with the Glyndwr Community Choir on the 10th December. All these concerts begin at 7pm.



Many local Schools and groups will celebrate Christmas with us too, including Wrexham District Scouts, Acton Primary School, Gwenfro School, Ysgol Plas Coch and St Giles School. The Wrexham Youth Orchestra hold their annual concert on Monday 19th at 7pm. During all these occasions, the preparation of leaders, teachers and children will join with those of young people of Wrexham down the ages past, in celebrating this joyful season in words and music. The Salvation Army will be holding Citizen's Carol Service on Sunday 4th December, and there will be our own traditional Nine Lessons and Carols on Sunday 18th December at 3pm. This year we are hoping to involve representatives of local Schools and Colleges, emphasising our strong connection with young people through the work of the Religious Education and Faith Development Centre, which is such an important part of our resource at St. Giles'.

The Church is decorated in all its splendour, the rafters ring to the carols, and the mystery of the Birth of Christ is solemnly revealed in the words of the liturgy.

Then comes Christmas Eve! For the Crib Service at 4pm, children dressed as angels, shepherds, wise men, sheep, even perhaps a donkey or two, gather with parents, grandparents and family friends to experience the excitement of the Nativity. The Crib is gradually assembled and, as we sing our favourite carols, the air is full of the joyfulness of this precious season. The greatest service is at Midnight on Christmas Eve. It actually begins at 11.30pm, with the celebration of the First Communion of Christmas happening at about midnight. The Church is decorated in all its splendour, the rafters ring to the carols, and the mystery of the Birth of Christ is solemnly revealed in the words of the liturgy. All are welcome, but do arrive early as there is usually a very large gathering for this special service. There is another Eucharist held on Christmas Day too, at 10am. At Christmas at St Giles', as on every day of the year, all are welcome.

Come and join us!

Erddig Christmas Wonderland

Gaeaf/ Nadolig yn Erddig

Create some magical memories with your family this Christmas and join a **host of festive activities at Erddig**.



New for Christmas 2016, will be our 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' themed garden trail. Using Erddig's iconic Grade 1 listed garden and outbuildings as a backdrop, a team of sculptors and artists will present Erddig - and this classic Victorian story - in a new light.



International chainsaw artist Simon O Rourke has been commissioned to create some exciting new sculptures for the trail and we're expecting some quirky results. Trail supporters, the British Ironworks Centre will be supplying some of their unique creations to display as part of the trail.

Staff and volunteer artists and joiners have been busy creating a series of interactive displays to ensure families have a fun time filled with a little madness and nonsense. From flamingo croquet and shadow puppet shows to making a mad hat to take home, this unforgettable trail will delight both young and old.

Staff and volunteer artists and joiners have been busy creating a series of interactive displays to ensure families have a fun time filled with a little madness and nonsense.

Be sure to wrap up warm and share this unique opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle with family and friends in our 18th-century walled garden. Once you've enjoyed the Victorian parterre, avenues of pleached limes, grand lawns and iconic topiary, visit our Hayloft restaurant for a traditional Christmas dinner with all the trimmings at £9.45 or £5.45 for smaller appetites and perhaps a mulled wine.

Don't forget to step inside the house below stairs to discover what life was like for servants when the story of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was first published. Learn about Christmas in Victorian times as festive scents from pomanders in the servants' hall and mulled wine on the lit stove in the kitchen transport you back in time.

The Yorkes almost certainly read Alice in Wonderland. The Erddig toy collection includes a white rabbit wearing a waistcoat and white gloves. A rolled paper found under the rabbit's arm reads: **'The White Rabbit -**



made at the Doll Industry which was started in Wrexham Social Ladies in 1916 to get Money for the War. Bought by L.M.Yorke. See if you can spot him when you visit below stairs.



Wake up young imaginations early and join Father Christmas for breakfast during weekends from 3 December to 24 December in our Hayloft Restaurant, 9am to 10am. Mother Christmas has prepared the breakfast, but Father Christmas is late for this very important date. Give a big cheer to wake him out of bed and listen for the bells to signal his arrival! With music, songs, a special story and gift for children, this memorable experience is guaranteed to fill everyone with festive cheer.

A child ticket for breakfast is £9.45 for National Trust members and £10.45 for non-members. Price includes a Welsh buffet breakfast (vegetarian options available), small gift and Christmas decoration craft activity. Adult buffet breakfast tickets are £8.45 for National Trust members and £9.45 for non-members. Gates open at 8.45am

If breakfast is too early, why not join Father Christmas for supper visit our events page for more details. If you just want to say a quick hello to Father Christmas, he'll be in our elves' workshop, weekends from 3rd December to 24 December, so you can enjoy the gift of giving by leaving a donation for our local foodbank. The Elves and Father Christmas will be thrilled that you're trying to help them in their quest to help the less fortunate this Christmas time.

Weekends from the 3 December to 18 December we'll be running centrepiece workshops for all the family. The centrepiece workshops are outdoor drop-in sessions run by our garden team, who'll carefully select the best cuts of winter foliage for your Christmas table and help you to create a special festive display. At just £3 per item, including a candle, it's a great value gift for friends and family.

Be sure to wrap up warm and share this unique opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle with family and friends in our 18th-century walled garden.



A Church in Cremona

Eglwys Yng Nghremona

We are very grateful to **David Subacchi** for allowing us to publish his poem '**Eglwys yng Nghremona**' (a Church in Cremona) which is previously unpublished.



David is a local poet born in Aberystwyth to an Italian family. David's father Mario was educated in Cremona in the 1930s and the poem is about the beauty of a particular church called 'The Church of Saints Egidio and Ombono' in Cremona in the North of Italy. It is the subject of a painting that David's mother Joan has in her house in Aberystwyth. The artist is M Draper 1964.

4,000 Crocus Corns Planted

Plannu Bylbiau Blodau Gwanwyn

Children from Victoria CP School **plant four thousand crocus corms** at Bellevue Park to promote and celebrate the 'End Polio Now' campaign.

On the morning of Thursday 20th October children from Victoria CP School joined Rotary Club of Wrexham Erddig and WCBC Park Ranger Alasdair Thomson to plant over 4,000 crocus corms (bulbs) around the bandstand at Bellevue park.

The children, from the school Eco-team and Year 5 impressed the rotary club members and the ranger with their hard work and excellent behaviour.

The crocuses were planted to promote and celebrate the success of the ongoing 'End Polio Now' campaign. The Crocus is a flower which symbolises the story of the Polio eradication programme. It was chosen as the purple colour matched the dye painted on the fingers of children to show that they have been immunised.

The Rotary Club is heavily involved in fundraising to support the global polio vaccination programme, which over the last 25 years has saved millions of lives around the world.

The Crocuses have been planted between trees all around the bandstand and will hopefully provide a beautiful springtime display for many years to come.



The purple colour matched the dye painted on the fingers of children to show that they have been immunised



Autumn

Yr Hydref

Yr Hydref

Haul yn cysgu tu ol i'r cymylau.
Y plant yn chwarae yn y goedwig.
Dail yn dawnsio ar y llawr.
Rowlio a rowlio y dail lliwgar.
Esgidiau glaw sydd gan y plant.
Fy ffrind y wiwer yn casglu mes.

Barddoniaeth am Yr Hydref gan dosbarth Mrs Ellis. Ysgol Bodhyfryd.



Denbighshire Historical Society

Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Dinbych

The first meeting of the **Denbighshire Historical Society** in 2017 will be held in Wrexham at Capel y Groes, Bodhyfryd, on Saturday 4th February at 2.30pm.

The speaker will be Claire Harrington, archivist from the Flintshire Record Office, on The Erddig Family Book.

This scrapbook, put together by generations of the Yorke family has been inaccessible to the public for some time but has recently been restored. Ms Harrington's illustrated talk will look at the content of the book and the restoration process.

For more information please contact 01978 353363.

All welcome.
Admission is free.



Wrexham Museum

Amgeueddfa Wrecsam



Wrexham Museum – Family Events For Christmas **Short Stories for the Shortest Day**

Monday 19th December 2pm – 4pm

Tuesday 20th December 2pm – 4pm

For the over 5s

There are 30 places per session which includes a story-telling session with local author and storyteller, Fiona Collins, a craft session and light refreshments.

Cost is £5 per child and children must be accompanied by an adult.

Booking is essential and full payment must be received at time of booking.

To book a place please contact the museum on 01978 297460
or by email museum@wrexham.gov.uk

Maesgwyn Youth Club

Clwb Ieuenctid Maesgwyn



Maesgwyn Youth Club

8 - 19 year old males and females

Every Day, 6:45pm - 8:45pm

Maesgwyn Community Centre

FREE OF CHARGE!

COME AND MEET THE STAFF AND
TELL THEM WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE
TO SEE AT THE CLUB



For more information contact the Youth Team on 01978 310984

Walter Roberts

by Community Councillor David Jones



Pantomime has become part of the Christmas season and one of its most popular performers and producers in Wrexham was **Walter Roberts**.

Born in 1872 Walter Roberts was educated at the old British School, Brook Street, where he showed early talent as an entertainer in school concerts. His headmaster, Charles Dodd, later became the first headmaster of Victoria School.

As a young teenager, he and a group of friends staged plays in the yard behind the Wynnstay Arms using the stable of the Blossoms hotel, Charles Street, as their theatre. He joined the Wrexham Dramatic Society, and started other troupes including the Christy Minstrels whose Honorary Secretary, John Davies, lived at 8 Talbot Road, and whose 1896-7 programme raised funds for the town's British and National schools.

But life was not all plays and no work. He served his apprenticeship at 7 Hope Street with ironmonger John Colemere Gittins (after whom Colemere Street is named), and in 1892 started trading in his own right as Messrs Walter Roberts and Co. after buying W.H. Williams's ironmongery business at 44 Hope Street. The premises became legendary. Originally described as a 'little box of a shop' it stood on the old entrance to Brade's Court (behind Queen Street). He later bought the old cottages there and extended his shop on their site.

In 1907 The Walter Roberts Amateur Pantomime Company was founded, a product of the Wrexham Cycling Club's annual carnival, first held on the Beast Market in 1894. Early pantomime titles include 'Cinderella, or the Glass Kipper' and 'Robinson Grew-So, or Friday Sat-a-day'. Walter Roberts wrote the book for each production, and the pantomime soon established itself as an annual fundraising event, particularly for the then Wrexham Infirmary which elected him as a Life Governor in February 1914.

In 1919 the Great Victory Pantomime of Cinderella staged at the Rink (later the Majestic Cinema, now the Elihu Yale public house). The profits of £1,009 endowed the 'Cinderella' bed in memory of the late Mr Robert L. Ellis, Beechley Road, and an 'Aladdin' bed followed in 1920. The same year Walter Roberts was made a vice-president of the hospital and in 1923 the increasingly popular pantomime moved to the Hippodrome, its home until 1940.

In 1928 the Daily Mail claimed that the Walter Roberts company had raised more money than any other amateur organization in the country.



It was reported in 1926 that over the years Walter Roberts's charitable work had raised £6,000 from the Pantomime alone and £10,000 from all his other entertainments. The following year (when in February he was also appointed a Justice of the Peace) between 13,000 and 14,000 people attended Cinderella and net proceeds amounted to £1,230. In 1928 the Daily Mail claimed that the Walter Roberts company had raised more money than any other amateur organization in the country.

The souvenir programmes were entertainments in themselves and show both the humour of the time and the variety of Wrexham businesses working together to support the event. The pinnacle of their achievement was the funding and opening of the hospital's Pantomime ward.

Walter Roberts began to suffer from eye trouble, and by September 1937 Walter Roberts was described as 'practically blind' but was able to receive the honour of being made a Freeman of Wrexham on 20 October. Ever buoyant in spirits, and devoted to the hospital, he laid the foundation stone of the new out-patients' department on 27 July 1938 (which the Pantomime again helped to fund), and on 12 July 1939 opened the extension with a 'golden' key. His last pantomime, Dick Whittington and His Cat, was staged in 1940 before the War curtailed performances.

After being in poor health for some time he died at his home, The Gables, 46 Percy Road on 24 October 1942 a great loss not only to his family but to the whole town. One of his daughters, Mrs Dorothy Cudworth, lived for a number of years at 86 Norman Road.

Truly an Offa resident of whom we can be justly proud.

Images reproduced by permission - ©Wrexham Archives and Local Studies.

The larger collection of items relating to Walter Roberts form part of the 'Wrexham Library Collection' held at Wrexham Archives and Local Studies, Wrexham Museum and Archives, Regent Street

Erddig Youth Club

Clwb Ieuenctid Erddig

This year the **Erddig Youth Club** has been working with the **Green Academies Project (GAP)** once a month to undertake conservation work around the Felin Puleston Countryside Centre.



The young people have been getting their hands dirty on the allotment, chopping back trees, learning how to use lawn mowers and a range of other tools and equipment.

The young people have done an amazing job and look forward to our conservation evening every month.

The last few months have also seen the youth club doing more baking and cooking, as well as arts and crafts activities, including pyrography and drawing with our resident artist, Sue. The drawing kits are a great addition to our resources. Everyone has a lot of fun at the youth club, including the youth workers as can be seen in this photo of Ken. Nice wig Ken!



If you are interested in finding out more about the youth club or would like to come along and see what we do then just contact **Jasmine Hopkins** on 01978 315179 or jasmine.hopkins@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Indoor Football

Pel Droed Tu Fewn

Indoor Football

at St Christopher's School



St Christopher's School, Stockwell Grove, Wrexham, Clwyd LL13 7BW

Wednesdays 18.45pm - 20.45pm

Juniors 10 to 13 years 18.45pm - 19.45pm

Seniors 14+ 19.45pm - 20.45pm

Victoria CP School

Ysgol Fictoria

Here at Victoria CP School we had a busy summer term including an aspirational workshop delivered by the **GB Paralympic Events Team** based on determination and courage.

The events team brought the real Paralympic torch with them and we had our own school torch procession. Lots of our friends and community members joined us.

Also in June we had our Race for Life at Bellevue Park. Every child took part and we raised over £3,300 for Cancer Research UK.

We were thrilled for Vanda Wright, who was nominated for Wrexham's Role Model Employee Award. Vanda, a dedicated and passionate member of staff who has been with us for 40 years won the award!

Mr Graham Evans our fabulous caretaker, has been busy jumping out of planes to raise money for our new school minibus!



Noticeboard

Hysbysffwrdd



Salisbury Park URC CHRISTMAS FAIR

On December 3rd we have our Christmas Fair from 12pm until 4pm.

We have various stalls and light refreshments.

COFFEE MORNINGS

Also in the new year from February onwards we hold our regular coffee mornings on a Saturday between 10.30am - 12pm

All are welcome.

FREE Advice Service available to all residents in Offa

DROP IN SESSIONS, NO APPOINTMENT REQUIRED.

We can help with a variety of issues including benefits, housing and council tax benefit, rent arrears, debt, housing and consumer problems.

Every Monday Luke O'Connor House Resource Centre, Barter Court, Hightown
 10am to 12pm

Every Wednesday Parciau Community Centre, Bellevue Park
 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm

Supported by Offa Community Council and Caia Park Advice Service



Offa Community Council
Parciau Community Centre, Bellevue Rd, Wrexham LL13 7NH
Tel 01978 291562

Offa Community Council was formed in April 1985 following a Boundary Commission Review. It is one of four Town Community Councils serving the town of Wrexham and its voting population is in the region of 7,000. The Council prides itself on being a forward thinking authority and pursues its policies with the aid of the Clerk to the Council and a team of Youth Workers. The Council is composed of 18 elected members, nearly all of whom live within the Community.

The Offa Community Council area is made up of four wards, Brynyffynnon, Erddig, Hermitage & Offa. It covers a large part of the retail town centre of Wrexham and also the 'café quarter' where most of the bars and nightclubs in the town are now located. Also located within its boundaries are the historically important 15th Century St Giles Parish Church (1 of the 7 wonders of Wales), the National Trust property 'Erddig' and the Maelor Hospital.

In a recent study Offa Community Council was highlighted by the Welsh Assembly Government as being one of the most active and innovative Community Council's in Wales. It provides a wide range of services and facilities for the Community including a community resource centre in Hightown and a youth service. Offa Community Council is involved in partnership working with the National Trust on environmental projects and with WCBC in the provision of traffic calming measures.

This magazine is edited and published by Karen Benfield, Clerk to the Council.
Please send items for insertion to: clerk@offacommunitycouncil.gov.uk

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