

# Parish & Community Magazine

For the communities of Coed-y-Go, Llanyblodwel, Nantmawr,

Porth-y-Waen, Treflach, Trefonen and places in between and beyond



Produced by All Saints and St Michael's churches

Free of charge - please take one

Vol 35; No.1 February 2025

# Border Group of Parishes

Llanyblodwel, Llanymynech, Morton & Trefonen



Rector: Currently vacant

Benefice Administrator: Helen Parish

bordergroupadmin@hotmail.co.uk

01691 590025

*Helen will be in the office (the church office in All Saints Trefonen) each Thursday, 9.30am-2.30pm. Callers are welcome, but please phone first to let her know you're coming.*

Benefice website:

borderparishes.org.uk

Webmaster: Jeff Court:

itadmin@borderparishes.org.uk

See p.4 for the times of services at All Saints Trefonen and St Michael's Llanyblodwel this month.

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## Magazine

Editorial team:

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The magazine can also be read online and downloaded as a pdf file (in full colour) at either [borderparishes.org.uk](http://borderparishes.org.uk) or [trefonen.org](http://trefonen.org). The clipart in this magazine that appears on the cover, p.3 and p.20 comes from Freepik.com, used by permission.

**Note:** We warmly welcome all your contributions, but please be aware that on occasion these may need to be edited for length or to ensure relevance to our readership. I will always consult with the author if any substantive changes are needed, but in these cases please note that the editor's decision is final.

## Facebook diary

Please remember to let us have information for the weekly Facebook diary by Friday evening the previous week - the diary goes from Sunday to Sunday and we post it on the Saturday generally. Anything that's in the magazine, we will extract and add to the diary, but changes to timings/venues and anything that wasn't ready in time to go in the magazine (including posters), please send to [trefonenparishmagazine.com](http://trefonenparishmagazine.com) and we will include it. JF

## From the Editor

A belated Happy New Year,  
everyone!

# February



A New Year brings a few tweaks to the appearance of the magazine. You will now find information on the church services and church officers for both our parishes on p.4. We will no longer publish the names of people who are reading and/or welcoming. However, the rota for these will be posted in church and updated for easy reference.

This magazine of course exists in two formats – a black and white print version, with a colour cover, and a full-colour version which is posted on the Border Benefice website ([borderparishes.org.uk](http://borderparishes.org.uk)) and the Trefonen community website ([trefonen.org](http://trefonen.org)) every month. The online version is usually available first, as the magazine takes a few days to print.

In this month's magazine we have most of the usual features - thank you, contributors, for your faithfulness, without which the magazine would have nothing interesting to impart! As the magazine goes to press, the schools have only just opened for the Spring Term, so we have nothing from Bryn Offa and Trefonen School this month, and some of the organisations who regularly report in the magazine are taking a winter break, but Ann Hindley writes her usual blog (p.5), there are articles from the Sofa Club (p.10), the Trefonen Garden Club (p.32) and the Trefonen WI (p.24), Abi Tudor writes Thought for the Month (p.20), and Barry Evans shares some thoughts on the Book of Ecclesiastes in our Bible Introductions series (p.16). Lichfield diocese has provided us with an article about Robins in our churchyards (p.22), and one on racial justice in the church involving the 19th century Bishop George Selwyn (p.34), reproduced from a recent issue of the Lichfield diocesan magazine.

In addition, Margaret Etherington has sent an update on the Overseas charities that were supported by the 2024 Hillwalk (p.6), and we also have news on the progress towards appointing a new Rector (p.31). Malcolm Kirk shares some photos of the recent Carol service at All Saints Trefonen (p.28) where a highlight was the performance of 11 children from the local area, the 'Christmas Jingles'. A Letter to the Editor reminds us that we should be visible to motorists when walking in the dark (p.14), and we continue our occasional series of 'Did You Know' articles (p.12). A number of events are advertised in our pages this month: I was particularly attracted to the Wilfred Owen presentation sponsored by the Trefonen WI (poster p.40), but others may find different events to enjoy. I notice there are several Quiz Nights to choose from!

As always, our advertisers provide the backbone of our magazine and enable us to offer copies free to our readers. If you contact any of these services via one of our adverts, please let the company or person know that you saw their advert in our magazine.

We have a new member of the editorial team – my husband Martin joins us as proofreader - an immensely important job!

Do keep warm this month as winter bites. Spring is just around the corner (see Out and About, on the back cover).

Janey Fisher

## Church services in Llanyblodwel and Trefonen, February 2025

	All Saints Trefonen	St Michael's Llanyblodwel
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2025</b> <b>Candlemass</b> Malachi 3: 1-5 Hebrews 2:14-end Luke 2:22-40	10am Holy Communion  <i>Leader:</i> Rev Mike Cotterell with K Kimber	11am Morning Worship  <i>Leader:</i> Abie Tudor
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025</b> <b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday before Lent</b> Isaiah 6:1-8 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 Luke 5:1-11	10am Morning Worship  <i>Leader:</i> K Kimber	11am Morning Worship  <i>Leader:</i> Rebecca Colpus
<b>16<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025</b> <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday before Lent</b> Jeremiah 17:5-10 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 Luke 6: 17-26	10am Morning Worship  <i>Leader:</i> Linda Gladman	11am Holy Communion  <i>Leader:</i> Rev John Tranter With Abie Tudor
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2025</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Lent</b> Genesis 2:4b-9,15-end Revelation ch.4 Luke 8:22-25	10am Morning Worship  <i>Leader:</i> Chris Kirk	11 am Morning Worship  <i>Leader:</i> Rebecca Colpus

**Trefonen flower arrangers:** 2 & 9 February, Kath Howarth; 16 & 23 February, Helen Francis

### Principal church contacts:

#### Trefonen:

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Abie Tudor	abie.tudor@gmail.com	01691 830350
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## Ann's Trefonen blog: FEBRUARY ALREADY!



Well here we are in February already and as I am writing this in January, I am wondering if and when the snow may fall! In the meantime Santas, Trees and Rudolph are all drying out on our greenhouse!




Santa has been washed, dried and safely packed away again although he was sad to have missed any snow! He has had to make do with heavy rain and so got rather muddy!



Rudolph managed to keep his antlers despite the strong wind, the fallen trees were rescued by kind folk who stood them up again and Santa kept hold of his sack! RESULT!



Once again we are all probably holding our heads and wondering if we can survive a 'dry' January and avoiding the weighing scales! Why do we do it?? Simple really – it's Christmas and we enjoy it!

I love the fact that family and friends actually still want to share their time with us – my strapping grandson and 2 lovely granddaughters still want to give me massive hugs (and they are massive because they are all much bigger than me!!) This year they brought various partners (only one was the same as last year but hey ho, that's the way it goes until they find their ideal person?!) 

It will soon be time for the Hillwalk meeting and please continue (as good Trefonen folk) to support our new leaders, Julie and Dominic Cole, as they negotiate their way through the exciting, exhilarating quagmire that is Hillwalk!! Helen will still be around, adding her enthusiastic support, but please don't be shy of volunteering any help you can offer to the new team – I am sure they will welcome you!

So I wish you ALL the very best for a peaceful 2025 and look forward to another great year in Trefonen!

Ann Hindley



## Hill Walk 2024 Overseas Charities Update

The funds this year went to the Mkoba Polyclinic in Zimbabwe and also a two-day outreach clinic in Uganda.

In April this year I visited the Mkoba Polyclinic in Gweru, Zimbabwe and met with the new Sister-in-Charge, a very lovely lady. I explained about the Hill Walk and that, depending on how much money was raised, she would hopefully receive some new much-needed equipment for the clinic. Straightaway she said a new steriliser was her main priority. About three weeks ago she was completely surprised to receive two wheelchairs, two stretchers, a Glucometer with strips, a mobile blood pressure machine and a new steriliser. To say she was pleasantly overjoyed was putting it very mildly! In a couple of weeks she should receive two nebulisers, which will complete the order for equipment for the clinic – another brilliant surprise for her and her staff.

In Uganda a two-day medical outreach weekend was organised and took place on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June. James Senyonga, who is my main contact out there, met with the Church leadership and his family, where it was decided to run the outreach clinic. This was to give the whole community and neighbouring areas a chance to receive medical attention. The Church leaders also requested a dentist as the community of over 700 households had never seen a dentist. Saturday, 7.00am to 7.00pm, soon saw more than 200 people registered for the day. On Sunday people were arriving at 6.30am and unfortunately they had to stop admitting people as 350 had registered – remembering that people had to walk miles to reach the clinic, too! Over the weekend doctors saw 569 people and the dentist treated 112, some of whom had also been seen by a doctor.

On behalf of Mkoba Polyclinic and all the people who were treated at the outreach clinics I cannot thank enough Helen and her team and all the wonderful people who take part in the Hill Walk. Your support this year has been outstanding and has helped hundreds of people on the other side of the world. Thank you.

Margaret Richards

## Toy Service update: Thanks from the Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre

Montgomeryshire Family Crisis wish to pass on their sincere thanks for the donation of toys and gifts. Fleur Frantz-Morgans, Marketing and Media Lead said: 'Donations such as these make a huge difference to the vulnerable families we support. Sometimes victims of domestic abuse come to us for support with nothing and of course Christmas brings with it additional hardship, parents worry about having a gift under the tree for their children to open on Christmas morning. Your gifts will make a difference, they will bring happiness and hope for a brighter future to local families in need. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.'



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## Flicks in the Sticks - stop press!

*Venue:* Trefonen Village Hall

*Date:* Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February

*Time:* 7.30 pm

*Film:* Hampstead

Find out more at [artsalive.co.uk/trefonen](http://artsalive.co.uk/trefonen)



## Mel's charity event updates

The two whist drives (in November and December) raised £385 for the village hall.

The choral event raised £1430, which was donated to the church.

Many thanks to Val Smout and Trefonen church for thier help in making these events possible.

Mel Oakley

And thanks to you, Mel, for organising them! – Ed.

## Thank you to the Community Café

I would like to say a huge thank you to the Community Café. Nearly every week I am given something to send to Africa – sanitary pads, unwanted spectacles, paracetamol, ibuprofen, knitted baby clothes and teddies, plasters and clothing. Everything I am given is sent out and is greatly appreciated when received in either Uganda or Zimbabwe. Your support is invaluable – thank you.

Margaret Richards

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# The Community Café

## Trefonen Village Hall

### Tuesday mornings, 10.00–11.30am

A place to meet with friends and enjoy a cup of tea or freshly brewed coffee and homemade cakes. If you have never been before or are new to the area we would love to see you.



**Foot Health Clinic on 4<sup>th</sup> Feb. Contact Lorraine on 07714 244359 to make an appointment.**

### Café rota:

Thank you to all who help out - the Café is about the Community!

NB - The Café opens at 10am. please be there at around 9.30am to set up

For queries, please contact Malcolm or Chris Kirk at [kirk.garden@btopenworld.com](mailto:kirk.garden@btopenworld.com) or on 688595. If you are unable to do your turn, please arrange your own swap and change the copy of the rota at the cafe.

THANK YOU

DATE 2025	Set-up 9.30am Open 10am	10am to 11.30am	Close	Cakes
4 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Val/Dawn/Michelle	Val/Dawn/Michelle	Val	Michelle/ Dawn
11 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Jeremy/Nyria/ Marilyn	Jeremy/Nyria/ Marilyn	Jeremy	Nyria/ Helen P
18 <sup>th</sup> Feb	John/Diane /Helen F	John/Diane/Helen F	John	Diane
25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Malcolm/Chris/Carol	Malcolm/Chris/ Carol	Malcolm	Chris/ Carol

## Sofa Club



The first thing I have to do is to thank Jane Wood and Pat Stevenson for the hard work with their excellent craft skills, raising funds for the Alzheimer Society, during the run-up to Christmas. They attended Christmas fairs, coffee mornings and other activities. Thanks to Douglas for his assistance transporting goods, putting up stalls, making stands. Congratulations to them on raising £290, which has now been sent on to the Alzheimer Society. Also, thanks to the Benefice supporting their venture.

I am also able to pass onto you, that after a discussion and looking and seeking by the members of the sofa club, it was decided that the best venue for us to use during the winter months would be Pant Memorial Hall. Meeting just once a month, whilst we do have to pay for the hire, between us we can raise this small amount required. The Venue is both warm and central to the village of Pant, this in time may encourage people to come along, even if it's just to see what we do. The next two meetings are 20<sup>th</sup> February and 20<sup>th</sup> March; all the meetings begin at 2 .45pm and end at 4pm.

Next month we will be returning to looking at our churches and what we can do to make them more welcoming to someone living with dementia.



If you would like more information, please contact Lizzie (Churchwarden Morton) 07713083002.

### ***Prayer points for the Community***

Praying for:

Warmth in our homes and our hearts

Loved ones close by or far away, keeping them safe from harm

Those who help to keep us and this country safe



Giving thanks for:

The early signs of spring, for new growth and the joy of seeing snowdrops;

Those that love, care and protect us.

*Lord, accept our prayers. Amen*

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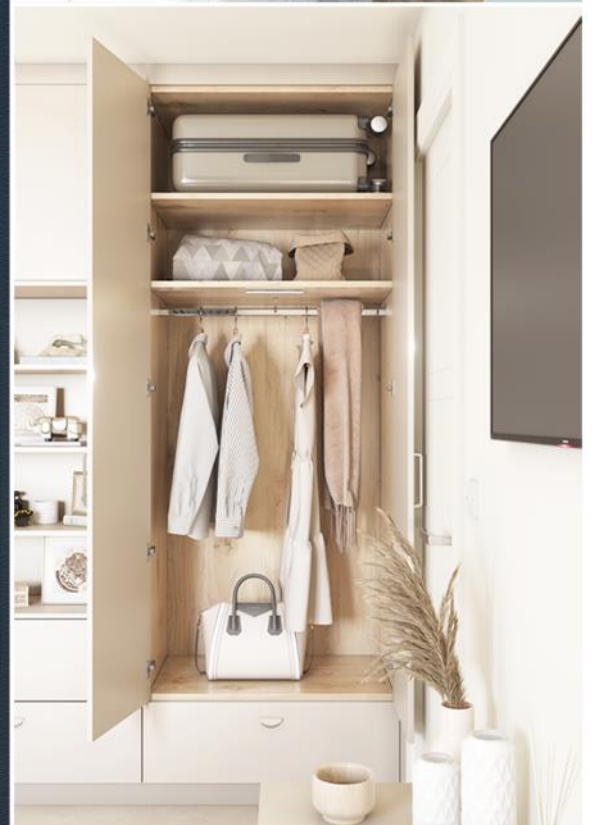
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Why, in the UK, as in two thirds of the richest nations on earth, is life-expectancy falling?

In the UK, cancer incidence rates among people aged 25–49 years increased by roughly 22% between 1993–95 and 2016–18. New research is proposed to look into this to try and discover the causes. Consumption of ultra-processed food and such environmental factors as exposure to microplastics and polyfluoroalkyl substances (aka 'forever chemicals') are high on the list of things to look into.

Sobering isn't it.

\*\*\*\*

Forties, Cromarty, Forth, Tyne, Dogger, Fisher, German Bight ..... Do you see where I am? No, this is not a quiz question where you're asked to name the next three.

'Dogger' comes from Dogger Bank, an area of the North Sea about 100Km (60 miles) off the Yorkshire coast where a huge sandbank reduces the water depth to between 15 and 36 metres. Large shipping avoids it, but it's possible to anchor the pylons of wind turbines on the sea bottom, and a new offshore windfarm is under construction there at a cost of about £11 billion. When completed later this year, it will be the largest of its kind anywhere and will give this country the three largest in the world.



OK. Let's turn this into a quiz. Answer: the next three are Humber, Thames, Dover. Did you get them? Yes? Clever Dick! Let's make it a little bit harder – what are the previous three?

Did you know that ours is the only country in the world to have anything quite like the Shipping Forecast? It dates back over 150 years and, in January, celebrated 100 years of broadcasting by the BBC. How many sea areas are there, and what five items of weather data are broadcast for each of them? One of the areas used to be known as Finisterre but was renamed in 2002 – to what?

(Answers on p.31.)



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At the bottom of  
Candy Woods

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

May I, through your pages, make a request of local pedestrians (including joggers and dog-walkers) and cyclists? Please do not walk or cycle on roadsides where there is no footpath wearing black, or similarly dark clothing, during hours of darkness. My optician gave me a thumbs up at a recent eyesight test, and the lights on my car are in full working order. But, when driving through our villages on dipped main beam, I've lost count of the number of times recently where I've not seen someone until I'm only yards away. Hi-vis is best, but any bright colour would be an improvement. Or carry a torch pointed in a direction where I can see it. I'd find it quite distressing to run you over, but I wouldn't be nearly as upset as you.



*Grumpy old .....*

*As a dog walker myself, I have taken note! - Ed.*

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## Bible introductions: Ecclesiastes

Do you sometimes find yourself using familiar phrases without any idea where they came from or why you say them? This book contains a surprising number of such gems, which you would never guess from its decidedly churchy and even off-putting title!

Here are a few:

*'There's a time for everything'*

*'There's nothing new under the sun'*

*'Meaningless, meaningless, everything is meaningless'*

*'Just chasing after the wind'*

The Book of Ecclesiastes is gaining in popularity amongst young people today, because the realities it presents and the questions it poses seem so relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

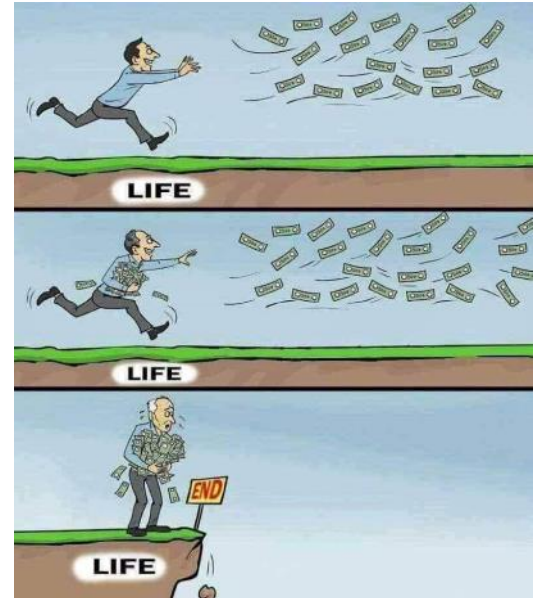
It poses mega-questions such as: What must I do to be happy? Why does chasing after pleasure, wealth and success still leave me feeling that there should be more?

What does all my hard work ultimately achieve? Why is life so uncertain – except for death? How can I gain true wisdom and happiness? Why is life so unfair?

Grab your favourite translation of the Bible (or a modern one if you don't have a favourite) and you'll find Ecclesiastes straight after Proverbs (a book full of wisdom and sayings, again many of which you'll have heard before).

The unknown author offers us the collective thoughts of a wise teacher (the leader of an assembly or *Ecclesia*), probably so that we might learn from the experiences and mistakes of someone who had 'been there, done that and got the T-shirt'. Perhaps it was based on King Solomon, who had the opportunity and resources through his huge wealth and power to pursue and test the potential rewards of wisdom, pleasure and work. The so-called golden age of Solomon had descended into Hedonism by the end of his life, beginning the decline of Israel.

The author takes a hard look at human experience, reflecting on busy people in mad pursuit of many things, trying one thing, then another; toiling away as if by our feeble efforts we humans could master the world, lay bare its deepest secrets, understand absolutely everything, burst through the bounds of human limitations to control our destiny and achieve a state of secure and lasting happiness! In short, he sees people labouring at life with an overblown conception of human powers and understanding, leading to the pursuit of unrealistic hopes and aspirations.





The Teacher begins by exposing the futility of human efforts to find wisdom, pleasure, and meaningful work:

‘Meaningless, meaningless, everything is meaningless’ (other translations say *vanity, smoke, pointless, or futile*); he mentions this 35 times!

He carries on to reflect that that ‘there is a time for everything, a season for every activity under the heavens’, and lists a few of them (you may recognise much of the list when you read it).

The following chapters are full of meandering thoughts about the apparent contradictions in life and the general messiness and unfairness of human experience – something most of us can identify with!

For instance, he warns against expecting too much from human wisdom. Although better than folly, it is incapable of solving all problems or understanding everything. Our brains are only so big, utterly incapable of getting our heads around the awesome power that created the whole universe!

The Teacher also points out that we cannot know or control what lies in our immediate future, let alone what will come after us. Therefore, all our efforts are tempered by uncertainty.

We all desire meaning in our lives. Often that search takes us along twisting paths filled with joys and sorrows, highs and lows, mistakes and successes. Life’s just not fair!

But unlike modern Existentialism, the Teacher gives us a vision ultimately seen through divinely coloured lenses. He says that life is destined to remain unsatisfying without our recognition of God’s intervention. Yes, we should accept the human state as it is, but also enjoy the life we have been given as fully as we can, following wisdom’s leading. In other words, he says: ‘Fear God and keep his commandments’.

He declares that God has ‘placed eternity in the human heart’, meaning that humans operate in a different way than other forms of life on earth. We somehow possess an innate knowledge that there is something more to life than what we can see and experience in the here and now. Jesus summed it up with these words: ‘What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, but forfeit his soul?’

I encourage you to read this book to the end to see how the author of Ecclesiastes eventually settles on a wiser, more seasoned perspective of our humanity, then decide for yourself.



Barry Evans

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# Prayer Chain

If you would like prayer for an immediate need, e.g. an emergency situation, you can ring any one of the people below. Your message will be passed to each person in the chain (who is available at the time) and we will pray for your need in complete confidence.

Betty Steele	652170	Carol Pickering	238561
Rita Mathias	657934	Chris Kirk	688595
Linda Gladman	07582 808588	Jill & Joan	656456

We have a small Pastoral Care team at All Saints Trefonen who are happy to offer prayer, a friendly visit, or practical support. If you, or someone you know, would welcome some help or support in this way, there is a Prayer/Visit box just inside the church (open daily between 10.00 and 4.00). Just write the details on one of the cards provided and pop inside the locked box. The box is checked at least weekly. Someone will then be in contact or we will pray for the need. Any queries, contact [lindajgladman@btinternet.com](mailto:lindajgladman@btinternet.com)

---

## From the Registers

All Saints Trefonen

Baptism: 1<sup>st</sup> December, Katie Mai Thompson.

Funeral: 10<sup>th</sup> December, Richard Anthony Hughes (Service in church only. )

Burial of Cremated Remains in the Churchyard: 17<sup>th</sup> December, Doreen Leggatt

Llanyblodwel

Burial of Cremated Remains in Churchyard: 11<sup>th</sup> December, Raymond George Wagg

## Thought for the month: St Valentine



February reminds me of cold winter mornings, snowdrops flowering, but also chocolates and roses, St Valentine's Day. Even if we have never sent or received a Valentine card, we all know the date and contemporary meaning of Valentine's Day, 14th February.

But who was the real Valentine and how and why is he associated with this particular day? there are three possible contenders who all lived at roughly the same time, and who would fit the bill. Valentine, Bishop of Terni; Valentine a Christian priest in Rome; and Valentine a priest in North Africa. There is even a probability they are the same person because their stories are so similar.

Thanks to Benedictine monks who in 1643 began publishing the 68-folio volumes of 'Acta Sanctorum' (Lives of the saints) after years of researching original manuscripts, we know there was a priest called Valentine who was beheaded on the orders of Emperor Claudius II in 269 BCE. He had attracted the emperor's attention by preaching the Christian message and conducting marriages between young men and women against the emperor's express orders.



Married men were considered poor recruits to serve as soldiers, and commit wholeheartedly to warfare. Valentine was arrested and put into the care of Asterius, an aristocrat. Valentine was so committed to trying to convert pagan Romans to Christianity, that he spent much of his time explaining the tenets of his religion, including all the miracles that had cured people of various ailments.

Asterius had a blind foster-daughter and he made a pact with Valentine that he would convert to Christianity if Valentine could heal her. As soon as she was cured, Asterius and his whole family became Christians and Valentine was released from prison.

Christianity enraged Claudius and he ordered that Valentine was to suffer a 'triple execution' of being flogged, stoned and beheaded. The date of the execution was 14th February.

In 496 BCE Pope Gelasius I erected a basilica over the supposed grave of Valentine on the Via Flaminia on the outskirts of Rome. Concerned by the continuing pagan celebration of Lupercalia between 13th and 15th of February, Gelasius decreed that St Valentine should be honoured on 14th February to detract from the old Roman feast days. Although before his

execution he left a note for Asterius' daughter signed 'From your Valentine' he was not associated with romance and love for another thousand years.

St Valentine was removed from the Catholic liturgical veneration of saints in 1969 because of the confusion surrounding his identity, but he remains on the register of officially recognised saints.

The poet Geoffrey Chaucer may have invented Valentine's Day as we know it. In his work, he often took liberties with history, placing his poetic characters into fictitious historical contexts that he represented as real. In his work 'Parliament of Foules' he links a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St Valentine's feast day, an association that didn't exist until his poem had received widespread attention. The poem refers to 14th February as the day birds and humans come together to find a mate.

St Valentine has wide-ranging spiritual responsibilities as patron saint of beekeeping, epilepsy, fainting, travelling and plague as well as that of lovers. Saints are expected to keep busy in the afterlife interceding in earthly affairs and hearing petitions for living souls!

The word Valentine comes from the Latin meaning strong and powerful or worthy.

A deeper meaning is about sacrifice and devotion, love and honour, in the face of overwhelming and dangerous odds. A true Christian.

Abi Tudor  
Worship Leader, St Michael's Llanyblodwel

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## A Song for Winter

January and February can feel like cold and grey months so it is very cheering to see a flash of colour and hear a little birdsong.

During the winter most birds do not sing, instead making simple calls, one or two syllables which are contact calls, allowing them to keep in touch with others within a flock, whilst they move around, foraging for food. Longer and more melodic songs are generally

heard in spring when male birds are using song to communicate that they are present and are holding a breeding territory. These territories will contain nesting places such as trees or shrubs as well as sources of food and male birds proclaim this by song, deterring rivals and

attracting females. The Robin however has a proper winter song as it holds a territory over the winter. Robins are not in pairs during the winter so both males and females sing and hold separate territories. These territories are giving them winter shelter and food and they will defend them fiercely, flying at intruders as well as singing.



In winter many Robins migrate from further north into the UK, flying in from Scandinavia, Russia, Poland and elsewhere. This also explains why we seem to see more Robins in the winter as our own summer Robins remain here all year round so numbers increase. The Robin's song is tuneful and a little melancholy but the reality of Robin life is harsher with an average lifespan of only 9 months. Many do not survive the winter so holding and defending a territory containing good sources food and shelter is vital. The combination of a churchyard with mature, sheltering trees, plentiful berries, seeds and insects as well as soil invertebrates such as worms make them attractive to

Robins. Churchyards tend to be rich in insect and other invertebrate life as no chemicals are used within them and the soils have been developing over decades or centuries, full of life. Churchyards are also usually surrounded by gardens so natural food may well be being topped up with mealworms, bird seed and fat balls too.

Why not look for Robins in your local churchyard or cemetery and listen for their winter song, you might like to put up some open-fronted nest boxes for them too, on churchyard trees and within gardens as well. Please let us know if you see or hear a Robin in your churchyard, use the iNaturalist app and photograph it if it will stay still long enough or else record its song – a biological record can be made either way.

Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, [harriet@cfga.org.uk](mailto:harriet@cfga.org.uk),  
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## Trefonen WI

It seems a long time ago but we enjoyed our Christmas party in mid December and made a good collection for the food bank. Many readers support this brilliant charity throughout the year either through the village shop, church or individually. Perhaps you would be interested in reading the thank you letter we received:



‘The Oswestry and Borders food bank made 215 Christmas hampers filled with food goodies, toiletries, gifts and toys. They were made as bespoke as possible and were all collected by agencies and schools: the agencies include housing, family nurses, health visitors, Early Help teams and social workers.

The volunteers have worked incredibly hard and have made up hundreds of emergency food packs in the last couple of weeks alone and the support services have been greatly in demand in number 58 ( the food bank building in Oswestry)- Samaritans, Womens Aid, Citizens Advice and mental health. Our building is key to helping people move out of the situations they find themselves in and there have been some real achievements in this.

We have a further year of funding for number 58 and we are praying that it is able to continue. I will be busy looking for funders in the new year. We are so grateful to all the people who continue to donate food, money and time.

Bless you and thank you once again for your generous and kind hearts in remembering the most needy in our communities.’

In our January WI meeting we were discussing other ways of making a difference. Every year all members vote for a campaign which will be the focus of National WI action for the year to come. This year we had 4 options. Which would you choose?

**1. Let’s talk about incontinence.** It is estimated that 14 million people in the UK of all ages are suffering from bladder problems and a further 6.5 million with bowel problems. However, it is still a subject that is misunderstood and very hard to talk about. We call upon the UK Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and Wales’ Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care to examine in detail all areas of health and wellbeing that are affected by incontinence issues. We call for the government to commit to an up-to-date audit to provide a national picture of incontinence care, offering a baseline from which to drive improved services. We call upon the members of the WI to raise public awareness, remove the stigma around incontinence, to help reduce the significant impact on people’s lives.

**2. Bystanders can be lifesavers:** There are over 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests a year in the UK, and less than one in ten people survive. Women have a lower chance of surviving than men. Early cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillating can more



than double the chances of survival. We call on WI members to work together to increase public confidence and training in the delivery of CPR and to work with local organisations to help improve access to defibrillators in their communities to give every person the best chance of surviving a cardiac arrest.

**3. Join the repair revolution:** There is a huge excess in clothing production which has devastating consequences for the environment. The WI calls on the UK Government to join the repair revolution and strengthen the law and investment to support a circular economy of clothing and fabrics in the UK, where repair and reuse are achievable, accessible, and affordable to all. We also call on WI members to promote clothing reuse and repair in their communities.

**4. Eliminate landfill of medication packaging:** Medication packaging, due to its complexity, is not routinely recyclable through local authority collections, usually leading to disposal in landfills. We call on the WI to proactively raise awareness by encouraging additional collection points where empty packaging can be easily returned for recycling. Furthermore, we call on manufacturing companies to acknowledge their moral responsibility to reduce their environmental impact by exploring simpler packaging alternatives that are easier to recycle or have less impact on the environment. These steps can significantly improve recycling rates to move towards eliminating landfill.

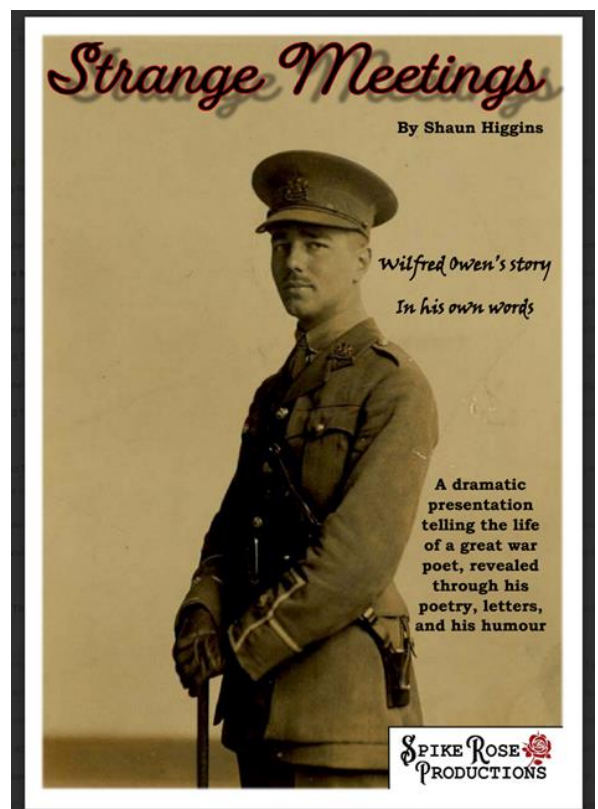
Our discussion was interesting and we came up with lots of ideas for what we can do locally to raise awareness of these issues. Watch this space!

*Coming up:*

Everyone is invited to our Open Meeting on Thursday February 6th at 7.00pm in Trefonen Village Hall (see poster on p.40). It's a great opportunity to see *Strange Meetings* written and performed by Shaun Higgins. It tells the story of Oswestry poet and soldier, Wilfred Owen, told in his own words beginning with his admission to hospital with shell-shock, his auspicious meeting with Siegfried Sassoon and the flourishing of his poetry that resulted, his return to France and the final and fatal battle in November 1918.

This performance is part of the Wilfred Owen Festival and we're very lucky to have it in our village! Looking forward to seeing you there. For

more information please contact Victoria on 07773364992, or [v.gemmell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:v.gemmell@hotmail.co.uk)



Victoria Gemmell



## News from St Michael's Llanyblodwel

*Christmas Fair:* Thank you everybody who helped with the Fair. Although the weather was not good, we still went ahead. The fair was successful, considering the weather. Thank you everybody who had a stall and a big thank you to Father Christmas for coming to see us; thanks to all for the raffle prizes that were donated.

*Carol Service:* It was a lovely service; thank you all who did readings, plus a big thank you to Jenny for arranging the choir, and to the bell ringers who performed for us.

We're holding a Quiz Night (see poster). The Social evenings will begin again on the First Friday of every month starting on the 4<sup>th</sup> April. More information in the March magazine.

Café Blodwel will be on the first Wednesday of the month as usual – February 5th, from 10.30am to 1pm at the church.

Wishing everybody a healthy and peaceful new year from Llanyblodwel PCC.

## Restart of the Llanyblodwel prayer meeting

The Llanyblodwel prayer meeting is starting up again in February. A bible study is now being included in this due to popular demand.

As we start a new year have the events of the festive season made us reflect? Do we wonder if God is relevant to us or we relevant to Him? I would say 'yes', so perhaps come along to discuss.

The studies will be looking at the statements Jesus made about himself – e.g. 'I am the good shepherd.'

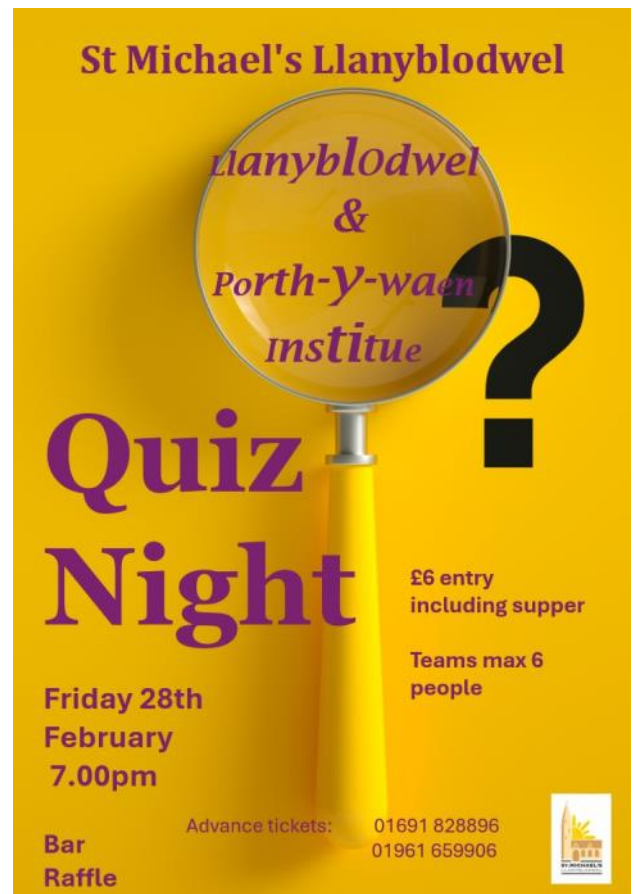
We meet on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday afternoons each month, 2.00–3:30 pm at Sharneyford, Coopers Lane, Porth-y-Waen, SY10 8 LY.

All are invited whether you attend church or not.

It will be great to meet you.

Blessings,

Rebecca Colpus



## All Saints Trefonen Carol service December 2024

On the Saturday before Christmas, All Saints was packed with people including families and children for the Christmas Carol service – many of them taking part in the service as well as singing Carols. All attending the service were welcomed by the Church bell, reinstalled the day before, after being silent for nearly 20 years (a story for another time).



The service was led by the Church's Mission Group and Worship Leaders, helped by musicians and singers from All Saints and St Michael's, and a children's choir from Trefonen School. The church was fully decorated for Christmas, with a large Christmas tree at the front and the service took place in candlelight, adding to a great atmosphere. Without a doubt everyone at the church thoroughly enjoyed the celebration and many were already looking forward to next year's Carol service.

Many thanks to the Mission Group, Worship Leaders, Musicians, Singing Group and the children from Trefonen, without whom it would not have been the success it was – and of course finally to all those who were there and took part.

Malcolm Kirk

*The church bell in the Cote prior to its final commissioning*





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Tuesday	5pm-10pm
Wednesday	5am-10pm
Thursday	5pm-11pm
Friday	3pm-11pm
Saturday	12pm-11pm
Sunday	12pm-8pm

## FOOD SERVED:

Monday	N/A
Tuesday	N/A
Wednesday	N/A
Thursday	5pm-9pm
Friday	5pm-9pm
Saturday (Day)	12pm-3pm
(Evening)	5pm-9pm
Sunday	12am-4pm

## Border Benefice Vacancy Update

We were delighted to learn that the advertisement for a new Rector for our four parishes will be published in the *Church Times* and on the Diocese of Lichfield's website on 17<sup>th</sup> January. The closing date will be 14<sup>th</sup> February.

After that there will be shortlisting. This is undertaken by Diocesan staff and an appointed person from each parish. The parishes have already appointed people for this and they will be the people involved in interviewing short-listed applicants on 25<sup>th</sup> March. Although we feel very positive about this, we know that there is no guarantee that a suitable person will apply and be appointed following this first advert.

Once someone is appointed, they will have to give notice and get DBS clearance; this would usually take about three months.

In the March magazine we will give more details about the interview day, which starts with a service, which all are welcome to attend. For the moment we offer the prayer which is at the end of our Benefice Profile, the document applicants consult in order to get to know about us and this area.

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and called us to be His Body in this place.*

*Send us your Holy Spirit,  
to fill us with vision, energy,  
and faithfulness in prayer,*

*that we may be true to our calling  
to bring new life to our communities.*

*Guide with your heavenly wisdom  
those who are to choose a new Incumbent for this Benefice,  
that the one whom we receive  
may be a wise and caring shepherd of your people:*

*ready to serve us with joy,  
to build us up in faith,*

*and to lead us by example  
in loving obedience to your Son,  
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

*Amen.*

K Kimber

### **Answers to the quiz on p.12**

The previous three are Viking, North Utsire, South Utsire (the last two named after an island off the coast of Norway). There are 31 sea areas. The data broadcast are (i) gale warnings, (ii) general synopsis of pressure areas, (iii) wind speed and direction, (iv) precipitation and (v) visibility. Finisterre was renamed FitzRoy.

## Trefonen Garden Club

As I write this we are in the middle of some proper seasonal weather – will this be a sign for a better spring and summer to come than 2024? But as gardeners we have to adapt and deal with what the weather brings.

In the last issue of the magazine I mentioned a few bulbs I had in flower in a pot. They are still in bloom, giving that little splash of yellow, and bringing joy, despite the storms and the freezing weather; that is some 2½ months!

2025 brings a variety of speakers and subjects to the monthly club meetings, to which all are welcome, whether a member or not. Our members and guests come with all levels of gardening knowhow, some more than others, but we never stop learning and are only too willing to share what knowledge we do have with others.

February sees our annual quiz night (see poster below); March is a first for us, when we learn about growing potatoes in pots and the start of the potato competition (more of that in the next magazine). April sees Paul Moss, who does all those amazing flower displays in town, giving a demonstration on hanging baskets, and May is a talk on hardy geraniums. In June we hear about the history of the NGS garden Cwn Weeg near Newtown and July is balancing wildlife with gardening.

We resume after the summer break, in September, with a fun evening of the results of the potato competition along with a fruit and vegetable show, and the final meeting in October, before the AGM in November, will be on pruning.



**Trefonen and District  
Garden Club**

### **A very special Quiz Night!**

Trefonen Garden Club's Quiz Night  
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Come along and enjoy a special Quiz Night, and not too many questions about gardening!

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## Racial Justice and Bishop Selwyn... what we can learn from history!

Bishop Michael recently hosted the first Selwyn Lecture since before the Covid 19 pandemic, based around three perspectives on racial justice. The final one, offered by the Bishop of Lichfield, drew on his recent brief sabbatical in New Zealand which afforded him the opportunity to study the ministry of the Rt Revd George Selwyn (1809–1878), first Bishop of New Zealand, and later 90th Bishop of Lichfield, after whom these lectures are named.



First, Revd Dr Evie Vernon O'Brien, born in Jamaica, spoke about 'No peace without justice,' drawing on her experiences of being a black woman living here in Britain, especially around her observations of church and the experiences of her parents' generation, arriving with and after The Windrush. She highlighted three particular current positive current stories in the West Midlands including the work of St Chad's & St Mark's Church, Wolverhampton led by Revd Ray Gaston.

The Rt Revd Dr Tim Wambunya, Bishop of Wolverhampton, followed with a perspective on Intercultural Mission and Worship. With disarming honesty, he drew on his experiences from selection for ministry to working in a parish where by his own admission he was pleasantly surprised to find the depth and authenticity of Christian faith in community with many Asian worshippers.



He pointed to the difference between what a multi-cultural church might look like compared with that of an

intercultural church, prompting us to consider ways in which we can achieve a preferred intercultural church. He gave this as an example of what intercultural church and mission looks like in our Diocese. Bishop Tim is also chair of the Anglican Network for Intercultural Churches.

The final perspective of the morning, following an update from Andy Wynter of the Diocesan Racial Justice and Inclusion Task Group on its achievements and aspirations, was from Bishop Michael.

He reflected on a pivotal choice made by Bishop George Selwyn during his ministry in New Zealand and connected that, and the circumstances in which that choice was made, directly with the theme of racial justice, contested history and contested memory.

The situation he described in detail is complex and Bishop Michael took a deep dive into the history to bring it to life, which can be heard in the recording of the Selwyn Lecture 2024 (available on YouTube - Ed.).

Maori Christians had been themselves responsible for spreading the gospel (originally brought to them by CMS missionaries) in their communities thirty years before Bishop Selwyn's arrival.

He and they formed a deep bond of mutual love and respect and he paid the price of some revilement among the settlers for his support and advocacy.

This was deeply tested when in the midst of increasing conflict with the settlers over Maori rights despite a treaty widely believed by the Maori to protect them, Selwyn accepted a post as a military chaplain. Although this may have been motivated by good intentions, it was a choice that was bewildering and difficult to understand for the Maoris.

So there was the choice - apparently to choose to side with the settlers after being a passionate advocate for the Maori Christians and there too was the contested history: the treaty which was believed differently by different people.

Things got worse when there was an atrocity perpetrated by the settlers during the military conflict against women and children in Rangiaowhia. Selwyn was accused of being present, though there is no evidence of that at all. He remained troubled by these developments for the rest of his time in New Zealand.

This village was however both the site of an atrocity and also the visible reconciliation experienced by Bishop Michael when he visited there and was greeted as a (spiritual) 'great-grandson' of Selwyn. This is a sign of the resurrection of Christ at work today, redeeming a situation where there has been death followed by forgiveness and reconciliation.

Among Bishop Michael's conclusions were that Selwyn's good intentions were not enough to prevent his wrong choice hurting the victims of injustice whom he deeply loved. Though even in the complexity of this situation, neither Selwyn nor the Maori people ever lost their love for one another despite hurt and bewilderment. It is never too late to work for racial justice.

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Whittington Music  
Festival

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Oswestry



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Martin Bussey - piano

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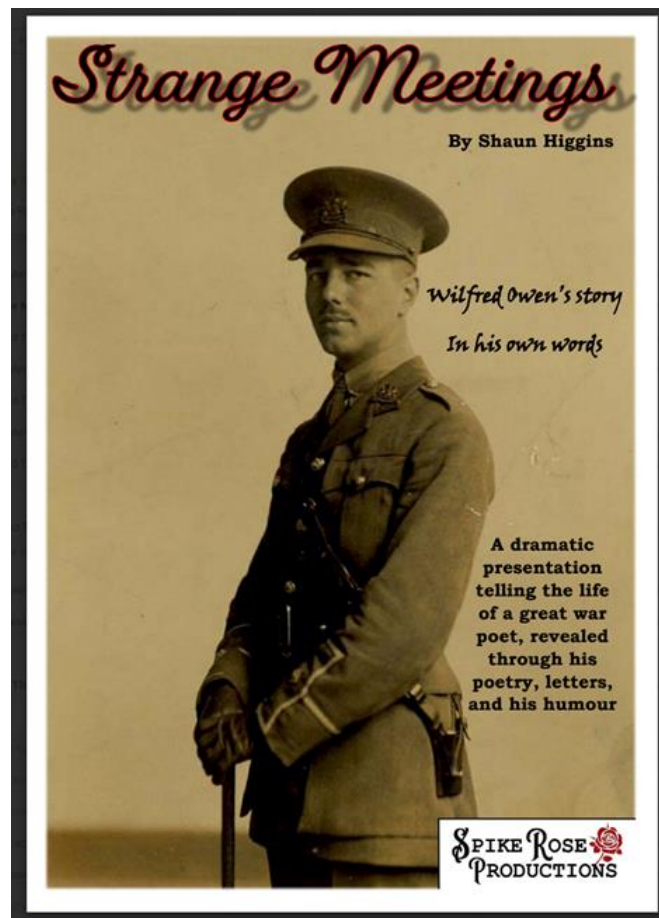


**Trefonen WI**  
**would like to welcome you to an**  
**Open Meeting**  
**on Thursday February 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm**

**All are welcome - £5 to include tea and biscuits**

**We will be welcoming Shaun Higgins who presents**  
***Strange Meetings* -**

**a dramatic presentation which documents the final 15 months of Wilfred Owen's life. Beginning with his admission to Craiglockart Hospital where he met Siegfried Sassoon, the resulting flourishing of his poetry, his return to France and his final and fatal battle in 1918.**



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**[pandselectrical27@gmail.com](mailto:pandselectrical27@gmail.com)**



## Planning a children's party or a family celebration?

Why not book Trefonen Village Hall?  
Lots of space and excellent facilities.

Contact:  
Val Smout  
Bookings Secretary  
01691 657011



## Trefonen Village Shop

### SHOP & POST OFFICE OPENING TIMES:

Monday - Friday:	8.00 - 6.00
Saturday:	9.00 - 1.00
Sunday:	10.00 - 1.00

Telephone 01691 671208



You will find all the items you would expect in a convenience store, but if there is anything you would like Hazel to stock, please let her know and she will do her best!

We are an **Amazon Hub**. Have your parcels delivered here to pick up later, and you can bring your returns to us for collection.

We are also an **Oswestry & Borders Foodbank Hub**. Add your donated food items to our basket which we will deliver, or make a cash donation and we will purchase goods from our stock.

We stock a range of **Local Craft Products** - you might just find that elusive gift that you're looking for.

And, as if that's not enough, there's the **Books and DVDs library** with items to loan or, if you like them that much, to keep!!!

## Mobile Library

Every other Thursday, 9.05 - 9.40am at the Barley Mow Inn. Visits in February: 6th and 20th.



## Local contacts

Jubilee Club	Alwena Martin	652791
Jubilee Field	K Kimber	679646
Llanyblodwel Parish Clerk	Amy Jones      llanyblodwelpc@gmail.com	829571
Llanyblodwel & Porth-y-Waen Village Hall Sec.	Bethan Cross	829368
Oswestry Rural (Trefonen) Parish Clerk	Kathryn Lloyd	07534 687663 clerk@oswestryrural-pc.gov.uk
Pre-School:      ring 07817 641528      or	Shropshire Council	01743 254452
Trefonen Garden Club	Chris Kirk	688595
Trefonen Indoor Bowling Club	Kath Barkley	828587
Trefonen School	Cathy Dunleavy (Head Teacher)	652960
Trefonen Village Hall bookings	Val Smout      valsmout@btinternet.com	657011
Trefonen Village Hall Caretaker	Clive & Kath Roberts	671360
Trefonen Village website	www.trefonen.org	
Trefonen WI	Gill Buckeridge	653172

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## Some useful services

Electricity (Scottish Power)	0800 027 0072	Citizens Advice Bureau	0800 144 8848
Severn Trent Water	0800 783 4444	West Mercia Police	0300 333 3000
Shropshire Council	0345 678 9000	Childline	0800 1111
National Rail enquiries	03457 484950	Samaritans	116 123
HOSPITALS:		Drugs & Alcohol Helpline	0800 776600
RJ & AH Orthopaedic	01691 404000	National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
Royal Shrewsbury	01743 261000	Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline	0808 801 0800
Wrexham Maelor	01978 291100	Victim Support (National)	0808 168 9111
Princess Royal Telford	01952 641222	National Missing Persons Helpline	116 000

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***Deadline for copy for the magazine is the 10th of each month.***

**This is important!**

It allows time for the editorial team to compile the contents, followed by printing in time for publication at a weekend towards the end of the previous month. The magazine can also be viewed online, usually a few days earlier, via either the Trefonen Village website ([www.trefonen.org](http://www.trefonen.org)) or the Benefice website ([www.borderparishes.org.uk](http://www.borderparishes.org.uk)).

## Out and About



*Above:* Residual ice and snow on Trefonen's recreation ground and the hill beyond, in mid-January. *Below:* But two days later, the very first signs of spring along Bellan Lane ...

