

Llangwm Village News

Issue 63 Spring 2026



- *Why sailors dump their boats on our shores**
- *How an osprey pointed the way home**
- *The father & son who started a brewery**
- *And how Katelyn & Keisha celebrated Wales**

Llangwm Village News Issue 63 Spring 2026

STOP PRESS: Bad news from the Litfest - as we go to press we've learned that David Wilson won't now be appearing because his book isn't back from the printers.

It's always good to have an excuse to talk about the Litfest, but this year it's super-good because it includes a book by the festival's amazing founder Michael Pugh. Back in 2014 Michael arrived in Llangwm having recently come from Moscow. By horse, so quite a journey. He's now written a book about this extraordinary adventure and he'll be talking about it.

We have a couple of new correspondents: Llinos Martin reporting from St Jerome's and Claire Phillips on Village Voices. Both claim they were not bludgeoned into it. We welcome them.

You may have read about Rhys and Brandan Jones who liked their beer so much they started a brewery – well we've persuaded Rhys to tell us all about it. Will of Will's Farm is back to outline why Llangwm is, er, second league when it comes to growing wheat. And Polly Zipperlen has taken time off from rowing the Atlantic to say how much she misses us now that husband Rev Marcus has decamped to a parish in Sussex.

And finally you may notice that the name of one Llangwm man tends to recur: Graham Brace who writes our Nature Notes has also penned a terrific review of photographer David Wilson's autobiography (featured at the Litfest last year) while also figuring in our story about Steve Wait, an ex-local man now living in Nova Scotia. In this issue Graham expands his Nature Notes to take two other Llangwm chaps birdwatching. Anyone who watched Channel Five's delightful *Sam & Ade Go Birding* will know their exploits are part of the currently fashionable genre of taking a couple of men to a nice location and filming them talking to each other. So should we send them off with a camera? Whoever said Llangwm wasn't up to the minute.

Heather Payton (heather@words-plus.co.uk)

Calling all brides & grooms

St Jerome's are looking for couples who tied the knot in the church and would like to take part in a Wedding Memories festival on July 3, 4 & 5, sharing their memories. So dig out your photos, dresses, guest lists, invitations – they're all of interest. Contact Gill Hill (gillianm_hill@yahoo.co.uk).

And here's an inspiration: if you look at the Talking Tapestry you'll see that one of the panels features a happy couple. That's David de la Roche and his bride Johanna de la Roche (a distant cousin from Ireland) who got married right here in St Jerome's, in 1315. If you listen to the soundtrack accompanying the tapestry (some of you might recognise the voice) you'll hear a description of the quite extraordinary event.



The printing of Llangwm Village News is funded by our Community Council and the black & white version is delivered to all Llangwm homes. It's also available in colour on the Llangwm Local History Society's website:

<https://www.llangwmlocalhistorysociety.org.uk/llangwmvillagenews.html>

Our cover:

Our cover girls this spring issue are Katelyn, Keisha, Tabitha and Maddie, all year two pupils at Cleddau Reach School. They're seen here taking part in the St David's Day parade. You can see the report from their headmaster on page 4.

The abandoned boats littering Llangwm

Hands up if you own a boat, anything from a posh cabin cruiser all the way down to a kayak and beyond. Lots of us do in Llangwm. Problem is boating can turn out to be an unexpectedly expensive hobby which raises the problem of what you do if you want to get rid of your former pride and joy, especially if it's past its prime and no-one wants to buy it, not even on ebay for £1.

For 21 boat owners in Llangwm the solution was simply to dump it, to leave it somewhere and walk away. It's not just a Llangwm problem or a UK problem but a worldwide one, and growing. Back in the 1950's it was discovered that this wonder material, GRP, could be moulded cheaply into hulls for recreational boats. In the years that followed as disposable incomes and leisure time increased, a new industry, pleasure boating, blossomed. It's those boats and the ones that followed that are now reaching the end of their useful life.

If you abandon a boat it will quickly leak nasties into the water, harming marine organisms. Even worse, scientists at Brighton University found tiny shards of GRP in oysters and mussels downstream of a boatyard. The only good news is that the affected shellfish tended to die, so at least the stuff is unlikely to enter the human food chain.

So why do people dump boats? Unlike cars you get no financial help to dispose of them. Recycling is expensive, reckoned by Britain's largest practitioner, Boatbreakers, at £100 a foot, and hellishly complicated. They say GRP itself can be disposed of by pyrolysis, chemical composition whose end product can be used as a natural gas replacement but that's only after removal of engines and all the other materials used in boatbuilding. It's also expensive and labour intensive. So most boats in fact end up as landfill. Boatbreakers

say they'll deal with your boat, for a price, and sell off any bits they can salvage – which might in the end be cheaper than mooring charges.

There are solutions – if they can be made to work. In Cornwall, a tiny charity called Clean Ocean Sailing is hoisting derelict boats out and towing them to a recycling station – where they usually end up as landfill

but at least are no longer clogging the creeks. But that depends on either a grant or cash up front and someone willing to do the dirty work. Because there's no requirement for a boat licence in coastal waters, unlike on canals, owners frequently can't be traced, though in Llangwm one abandoned boat still bearing its mooring number remains where it was left. There's also no compulsion on port authorities to remove offending boats unless they are a hazard to navigation. A small dent in the problem has been made by Natural Resources Wales who removed five abandoned boats from the Dee Estuary last year and as featured in our report from Llangwm Boating Club on page 19 are now turning their attention to our neck of the woods.



So what to do? One possible solution may lie across the English channel. Most countries have no rules for the scrappage of boats, with the exception of France where manufacturers have to pay a tax at point-of-sale to contribute to recycling and disposal costs. Plus there's a network of companies there operating dismantling sites. The RYA think that's a good idea and are doing their best to raise awareness. Other possibilities rest on finding a cheaper, greener way of recycling, which sadly is felt still to be years away. And the basic truth is that any option that's felt to be too expensive will lead to owners simply dumping their craft, frequently in quiet spots such as Llangwm.

Success in sports, the classroom & more

Rhys Buckley

It is difficult to believe that we are already entering the summer term of this academic year, but here we are and, again, it has been another busy, successful, and enjoyable time for the pupils of Cleddau Reach!

From continued sporting success and fantastic expressive arts performances to events that have brought the community together, there has been so much for our school to be proud of this academic year.



Y6 rock climbing during their residential week

Looking back to December, our school community enjoyed a fun-filled festive season as always! Each year group delivered a superb Christmas production which they performed to their families in our school hall, we all enjoyed our annual 'Cleddau Reach Has Talent' show, with children from each year group showcasing a variety of talents to the school and, thanks to our wonderful Friends of Cleddau Reach committee, we also celebrated our school Christmas Fayre, which I know many of you within the village community attended and enjoyed.

We should also make special mention of the community concert that we held in our school hall in December, as family members joined with community members to enjoy a stunning performance from both our school choir and the Village Voices choir, beautifully accompanied by the Cleddau Chamber Orchestra. This was the second consecutive year we have hosted this event and we are already looking forward to making it three years in a row!



Y6 assault course on their residential week

The beginning of 2026 has started at a similar pace, with a variety of topics being covered across the school and a wide range of enrichment activities taking place. We once again competed in the annual cross-country championships, with some superb standout performances from individuals and the squad as a whole bringing home the coveted title.

However, it's not just the sporting arena where we are celebrating success. In classrooms and in our outdoor spaces, the children have continued to produce some wonderful work, supporting each other and demonstrating our school values consistently well. A notable example of this comes from our outdoor learning activities, with our pond and garden area providing each class with more opportunities to get their hands dirty with some practical learning.

We continue to get the children out into their local community and beyond, with three of our classes again taking part in the annual St David's Day parade in Haverfordwest, year groups enjoying challenging themselves in places such as Heatherton and Year 6 enjoying their residential trip to Sealyham. Our Year 5 pupils will soon be going on a residential trip of their own as they head to the Urdd Centre in Cardiff for an action-packed few days of activities in our nation's capital.



Y5-6 dance squad

Looking ahead, we are hoping that there will be a continued upturn in the weather now that the summer term is upon us so we can spend as much time as we can in and around the county. However, while we cannot guarantee the weather, the one thing that is guaranteed will be the continuing pace of school life, with plenty of further opportunities for our children to demonstrate their abilities both here in school and out and about.

If you'd like to keep up with events and goings-on at the school, the best place to do so is either on our new website (www.cleddaureachschool.org.uk) or our Instagram page (@cr_primary_school) which are both updated weekly with newsletters, pictures and videos of what the children have been up to.

When an osprey came to visit

Just before Christmas, Llangwm bird expert and Village News correspondent Graham Brace received an email from a reader about his column in our autumn issue featuring that iconic bird of prey the osprey. The reader, Steve Waite, had a story to tell and enclosed a photograph of an osprey balanced on a signpost in the water outside his home....in Nova Scotia, south-eastern Canada. And the signpost, pointing east, read 'Llangwm'. Wow!

Steve it turns out is an avid reader of Village News and he shared his story with us.



He now lives in the town of Annapolis Royal on the shores of the Bay of Fundy but was born in Haverfordwest and grew up in Johnston after his parents returned from several years in Canada. He has fond memories of working alongside his father, a builder, in Llangwm on Guildford Row, learning the trade. Llangwm made an impression: “The village wrapped itself around me and became more than a place of work” he says. “I carry it in my heart always”.

But it was during his schooldays ‘with Mrs Roach from Llangwm’ that he became fascinated with the First Nations people from north America, plus stories from his parents about their time there, so as a young man he went to see for himself.

“I soon found myself working on high rise construction, walking the steel beams at great heights – this was before health and safety – and it was here I met Mohawk Indians, the best climbers in North America. I fell in love with their culture, their beliefs in nature and all that they are”.

There followed a period back in Johnston where he built

his house and raised his two daughters – one of whom now sends him copies of Village News. But Canada and his skill as a climber called and back he went, to spend several years working on high rise buildings.

Steve is now retired and visits Pembrokeshire as frequently as he can but is passionate about his adopted home in Canada: “Its beauty isn’t just something you see, it’s something you feel – the quiet stillness of a lake at sunrise where the mountains reflect perfectly in the water and the air feels impossibly clean. It’s the vastness of forests in British Columbia and the rugged coastline here in Nova Scotia where the ocean crashes against the cliffs in a rhythm that feels timeless.

“Whether it’s watching the northern lights shimmer over the Yukon or hearing nothing but wind through the pine trees, it reminds you that nature doesn’t rush and neither do you when you’re in it.

“So when I try to explain Canada and the life here it’s not just about mountains, forests or cities. It’s about a feeling of space, of calm, of connection to nature, to history and to each other.”

But although he’s now well enmeshed in his life in Canada ‘where we get five foot of snow in winter’ his connection to Llangwm remains strong enough for him to have erected the signpost in the river at the bottom of his garden pointing to Llangwm, 2,800 miles away across the Atlantic.



“The sign is very dear to my heart – I often sit on my deck and watch the rising sun and the stillness of the water and think back to that time. Gone but never forgotten” he says.

And then one day last May an osprey came to sit on it.

“I’d watch her for hours as she caught fish from the river. She stayed with me for more than three months returning most days to hunt before she left. I’m hopeful she will return one day.

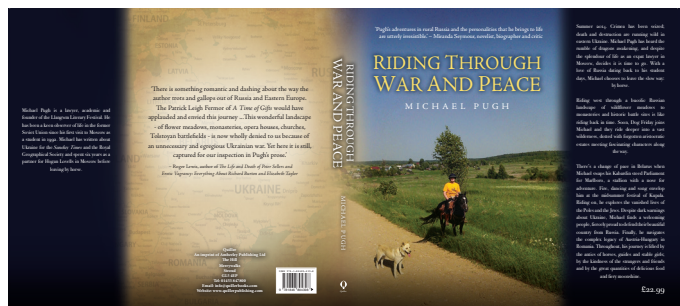
“And this story comes about because of her.”

Wartime adventures, politics & a famous horse ride

If you organise a successful book festival you're not normally expected to write the books as well. So it comes as a surprise, albeit a nice one, that Llangwm Litfest founder Michael Pugh has written an account of his remarkable trip home from Moscow in 2014. Michael had spent the previous six years as a partner in a law firm in the Russian capital. But life was getting a bit sticky with the annexation of Crimea and a general gathering of storm clouds so he decided sensibly it was time to get out. Most people in that position would simply hop on a plane. Michael decided to ride his horse via nations including Ukraine and Belarus, hostile environments for all but the most intrepid these days. And that makes Michael talking about his book *Riding Through War and Peace* a must-see part of this year's Litfest.



Ex-Chief Whip Simon Hart with ex-PM Rishi Sunak



War is also part of a debut book by Adam Hart, aged just 25 and so bringing the average age of festival authors down a notch or two. Adam is from Pembrokeshire and his debut book *Operation Pimento* has been getting terrific reviews. It is a gripping account of his great-grandfather being shot down in France during the second world war and taking a tortuous route back to the UK whilst evading the Nazis, collaborators and benefitting from the help of the occasional angel.

Festival favourite Miranda Seymour has agreed to come to Llangwm again and share her latest release, *I, Vera*. Miranda's new book documents the life of Princess Vera Gedroits, the first female surgeon in Russia who famously threw Rasputin down the stairs and then trained the Romanov family as nurses.

Pembrokeshire's offering includes Tenby's Dame Vikki Heywood and her intriguing *Miss Ham and Miss Veal*, and Lord Simon Hart's *Ungovernable*, an exposé of life as chief whip in the last Conservative government.

So a good time to ask: do we deserve better from our politicians of all colours? Yes we do, says Cardiff-based and now Guardian journalist, Will Hayward, who will talk about his new book *Who Cares About Wales?*

Haverfordwest has been the birthplace of many exceptional people, and not least the artist Gwen John. Overshadowed by her brother Augustus, Gwen's work has been celebrated this year in an exhibition at the National Museum of Wales. The Litfest is lucky to host the grand-daughter of Augustus, Rebecca John, to talk about the work of her great-aunt Gwen. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Rebecca is an acclaimed writer in her own right.

Disabilities, physical and mental, exclude many. With this in mind, the Llangwm Litfest is hosting a supportive and nurturing three-day writing workshop for those with disabilities. Get in touch if you'd like to find out more because we want to hear your voices and read your words.

As ever there'll also poetry, music, art, events for children, foraging and lots more. The Cottage Inn will host a feast to commemorate 50 years since Dame Agatha Christie left us to write crime books in the sky. Due to popular demand, there'll be a fancy dress theme in the style of Agatha Christie's books and films. Come as your favourite character from *Death on the Nile*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, or just as Hercule Poirot or Miss Marple.

The patrons party will be on Litfest Eve (6 August).

This year the Llangwm Litfest is offering internship opportunities for students who might want to get a bit more experience of being involved in an arts festival. In addition, there are always opportunities for volunteers, hosts for writers and visitors and suggestions for the programme. If you have suggestions or would like to be involved, please get in touch with your usual contact or email llangwmlitfest@gmail.com

The Llangwm Litfest: August 7-9

The father & son brewers who want to give back

Rhys Jones

Back in February Llangwm father and son Rhys and Brandan Jones decided to do what lots of us secretly would love to do, and opened a brewery. Just over a month later they were supplying pubs and restaurants. Is this a record? Rhys told Village News their story:

“If you’ve been following along in the village Facebook group recently, you’ll know things have been moving at a serious pace. What started as an idea between me and Brandan is now fully up and running, with Cleddau Brewing Co. brewing and supplying from our base in Pembroke Dock.

The last few months have been a bit of a whirlwind. We’ve gone from setting up the brewery to pouring in local venues, attending national trade shows, and opening conversations with wholesalers, farm shops and retailers across Wales and beyond. There’s even been early interest further afield, which is exciting, but we’re keeping our feet firmly on the ground and building this the right way, starting locally.

You can now find Cleddau Red on the bar at The Cottage, where it’s been getting a brilliant response. That’s been a proud moment for us, seeing something we’ve built being enjoyed properly, in a local pub. As with all our core beers, it’s available as both HI and LO. Same recipe, two expressions, giving people the choice between full strength and low alcohol without losing the character of the beer.

At the time of writing, Langum Lager is just about to land. This one’s a real crowd-pleaser. Crisp, clean and refreshing, but still brewed with proper body and flavour. Like Cleddau Red, Langum will also be available in both HI and LO, which is quickly becoming what sets us apart when people first try the range.

Behind the beer, there’s a bigger picture we’re working towards. You may have seen us talk about “Brewed to Give Back.” That’s not just something we’re doing ourselves, it’s something we’re actively encouraging other breweries to adopt as well. The idea is simple: as breweries grow, they commit to putting something back into their local environment or community.

For us, that takes shape as the Cleddau Contribution. A portion of what we do goes back into projects that benefit the river, the surrounding environment, and the community here. It’s something we’re building into the business from the ground up, not something we bolt on later.

We’ve also recently invested in a mobile bar, which will be out and about very soon. This gives us the chance to get properly involved in local events, from village days and festivals to beach spots, campsites and beyond. It’s a big step for us in getting the brand out there, but more importantly, it means we can bring Cleddau directly to people in a way that’s



social, relaxed and local.

Looking ahead, the focus is on steady, sensible growth. More brewing capacity, more local venues, and more visibility, while keeping the quality and the ethos exactly where they need to be. There’s a lot happening behind the scenes, but we’re making sure we build this properly.

As always, none of this happens without support. Every pint ordered, every recommendation, every bit of encouragement genuinely makes a difference at this stage.

So if you’re in The Cottage, give Cleddau Red a try. Keep an eye out for Langum landing. And if you see the mobile bar popping up over the coming months, come and say hello.

We’re proud to be building this with Llangwm”.

The long and the short

Barry Childs

More years ago than I care to remember a university lecturer told me that the days of the long novel were over. That seemed to make sense then but how wrong was she! If you walk into Waterstones or any other decent bookshop you will not have to look too hard to find considerable tomes. One I'm reading at the moment is a case in point: *Caledonian Road* by Andrew O'Hagan. It's as long as some of Dickens's most extended works. So, the appetite for such novels is still there.



Andrew O'Hagan

However, for those less inclined to devote their time to novels such as the above there are alternatives, one of which is the short story of which there is a long and proud tradition in English stretching back to Chaucer in the fourteenth century. In recent times the work of Roald Dahl (born in Llandaff in Cardiff) will be familiar to many, some of his tales also having been made into full length films and into television adaptations. Among his short stories are: *The Hitchhiker*, *Lamb to the Slaughter*, *The Enormous Crocodile*, and *The Landlady*. They have proved over time to be popular with all age groups with their unusual themes and cunning twists. Dahl was never afraid to shock, in fact it was his stock in trade.

Staying in Wales there are, of course, the stories of our greatest writer, Dylan Thomas. He's better known for his poetry and, of course, *Under Milk Wood* - recently

performed at the Torch Theatre. His short stories, however, should not be ignored. *Collected Stories* edited by Walford Davies is a full and rich edition of Thomas's work in this genre. Best known, I suppose, is *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. This funny, brilliantly imaginative piece captures so evocatively the world of the child at that time of the year. Another favourite of mine is *A Visit to Grandpa's*. No-one has quite used the English language as this writer did: 'Grandpa might have been driving a bison, so tightly he held the reins, so ferociously cracked the long whip, so blasphemously shouted warning to boys who played in the road, so stoutly stood with his gaitered legs apart and cursed the demon strength of his tottering pony.' No-one has captured more comically or affectionately what it is to be Welsh or Welshness and his short stories embody this.



Under Milk Wood at The Torch

Coming up to the present, the short story is still alive and well. *After the Funeral* by Tessa Hadley is a collection of twelve stories the shortest only four pages long, the longest just thirty two. Her subject is ordinary people encountering ordinary but for them significant experiences. There is honesty and even in the title story humour in her work.

Finally, someone whose name has appeared here before – Amor Towles. Apart from being an outstanding novelist he has also turned his hand to short stories. *Table for Two*, published in 2025, is a collection of six stories set in New York and one in Los Angeles. A critic in *The Times* newspaper said, 'if you only take one book on holiday make it Amor Towles' short stories.' It's hard to disagree with that opinion.

'A story of adversity, triumph and love'

Graham Brace

What a story! This inspirational autobiography which tells of Llangwm photographer David Wilson's journey from an aimless teenager to one of Wales's foremost landscape photographers makes for compulsive reading.

David left school with few qualifications and no idea of what he wanted to do with his life, as he drifted into a deadly dull job at the Royal Naval Armaments Depot in Trecwn, near Fishguard. His boredom was alleviated by the purchase of a motor bike and what followed was the stuff of nightmares, as a near-fatal accident at the age of eighteen not only nearly ended but reshaped the rest of his life. There followed a six-month confinement in Cardiff's Rookwood Spinal Injuries Unit where he was surrounded by similarly severely damaged patients. During this time his thoughts swung from despair to elation and back again as his rehabilitation progressed, slowly, assuming - unwisely as it turned out - that his former fitness and mobility would return and that he would make a full recovery.

Back home in Haverfordwest life became dogged with frustration, as his physical inabilities led to feelings of despair, self-loathing, occasional glimmers of optimism, but all too often dragged down by suicidal thoughts. An aborted law degree at Cardiff University sapped his confidence further. Eventually, though, he enrolled on a business degree course and graduated from the University of Glamorgan with a renewed sense of purpose. At the age of 33, having wasted so many years, he felt ready to take on the world!

David had been into photography since the age of seventeen, when he used to ride around on his motorbike taking pretty ordinary photos. Now, with a car, he dug the camera out of the wardrobe and began re-discovering Pembrokeshire and occasionally farther afield as he set about photographing the landscape. A seed was sown.

Then his life changed dramatically for the better. He met Anna, a journalist on the local paper who was to become his adored wife. They very soon moved to Llangwm, buying the terraced cottage which became their home and where they were eventually to raise their two sons, Charlie and Harry. David enrolled on

an evening course at Pembrokeshire College where he learnt the basics of photographic processing and producing black and white prints. His lecturer persuaded him to join Tenby Camera Club where the enthusiasm of the other members encouraged him further, culminating in him winning the landscape category of the Welsh Photographic Federation's 2004 Salon. This was a phenomenal achievement which encouraged the dream of making a living from photography. Flushed with success, he bought himself a digital camera which helped elevate his work to another level concentrating on dramatic, high contrast, atmospheric landscape imagery and with Anna at his side he set about building a portfolio of quality work.

Coming to the end of his tether working in a soul-destroying job at a call centre he was persuaded by Anna that it was time to take the plunge and turn to photography full time. With her unstinting faith in his ability and encouragement they began showing his work to gallery owners who readily agreed to exhibit and sell his prints. Very soon he came to the notice of Cardiff-based publishers, Graffeg, and a succession of books, now eight in total and based mainly on his stunning landscape work were published, including collaborative projects with broadcaster Jamie Owen and the makers of the lauded TV series 'Hinterland'.

During this period of his life, the Grim Reaper came calling, not once but twice, in the guise of sepsis and but for the dedication of the medical team at Wityhush Hospital and the love and devotion of Anna and his two young sons his life might have come to an abrupt end. During each of these traumatic episodes his bloody-minded determination again helped to pull him through.

This book is a story of adversity, triumph, determination, and most of all love. An emotional rollercoaster from start to finish, it is an eloquently documented story of high achievement in the face of unimaginable odds. I really couldn't put it down!

David has dedicated this book to his inspirational late wife, Anna.

You never know....

Neil Martin

In the world of music performance, you can never be sure how things are going to turn out even when you have done the similar gigs before.

Just before Christmas, Wrong Direction were invited to join in with a fund-raising event for the Air Ambulance – our chosen charity at the moment. We had done several of these over the years with some success and were always well received. This time just happened to be in Pennar Church Hall so we went off with some confidence to perform.



Sadly, the weather that day was dreadful. The wind was cold and the rain was pounding down unrelentingly. We had promised so we all turned up on time; hauling in the piano and amplifier, setting up and psyching up for the performance. The only thing that seemed to be lacking was an audience! There were the other members of the event and a representative from Tesco's who were supporting the event financially.

We waited until after the starting time – just in case – but then decided that we just had to do our stuff anyway. What little audience we had did their best to give us encouragement and we got through it, finding the humour in the situation rather than letting it depress us. The Air Ambulance did OK from the event despite the weather and the rather empty hall. We contributed and so it ended happily enough with a rather damp and cold choir getting home earlier than expected.

By total contrast, we were invited on March 1st to sing at a Festival of the Seas event in the Milford Haven Marina. This was the first time we had done this and it transpired that it was a very new event and the organisers were 'feeling their way' through things. When we turned up, it didn't look very promising. The event was in a large open room with stalls and presentations of a number of sea related organisations. The RNLI had a big display and were very prominent in the space, not surprisingly.

To start with we were given a place by the entrance where the crowds were coming in and out and donations and charges were made. The RNLI did their very best to accommodate us but we soon realised that this spot was completely unsuitable. So, all change! Thanks to the very good grace of a couple of other presenters, we found a space in the middle of the hall and started our performance there. Who could have guessed how well it went. There was another group dressed as pirates and singing sea shanties (which was the bulk of our programme) and rather than feeling out of sorts because of the similarity of material, instead they roamed around the hall joining in with the songs and encouraging the audience to sing along with them.

Despite the un-promising start it turned out to be an excellent gig and a lot of fun all round. That explains my title – YOU NEVER KNOW!



Wrong Direction at last year's Llangwm Litfest. This year they'll be taking part in Songs, Poems & Pints at the Rugby Club. See them there: 7-9 August.

Ethereal to timeless modern - it's all there

Claire Phillips

Looking back, our Winter season was defined by evocative choices from our Musical Director, Paulette, including Sherri Porterfield's *Something told the Wild Geese* - a piece that beautifully echoed the arrival in Llangwm of winter geese, reminding us with their call that winter is on the way. We also embraced the challenge of Eric Whitacre's *Glow*, with its soaring harmonies and the uplifting energy of Emily Crocker's *Gloria Hodie*.



Winter highlights were performing Christmas classics with the talented children of Cleddau Reach School accompanied by The Cleddau Chamber Orchestra, and the very magical candle-lit Carols and Lessons at St Jerome's Church led by Rev Marcus Zipperlen, who we wish the best for his new parish. We were thrilled with a retiring collection that raised £300 for the Paul Sartori Charity.

For our Spring Concert held in St Jerome's Church on 15th May, we've worked hard on a diverse programme that blended contemporary choral beauty with familiar modern classics. Highlights include the gentle, ethereal *Ecce Novum* by Ola Gjeilo, timeless modern classics like *The Sound of Silence* by Paul Simon and *Fields of Gold* by Sting.

We were thrilled to be joined in our Spring Concert by the Vilni Ukrainian Band. This talented group featured our own pianist, Polina, and her Ukrainian friends, who performed both modern and retro Ukrainian music. Their mission is to share the vibrant

richness of Ukrainian culture with the community of Pembrokeshire and they delighted the audience with their beautiful music. We thank you for the support shown for our Ukrainian friends at the collection for their charity.

As Summer approaches our eyes are already on the horizon. We are looking forward to our summer programme and eagerly anticipating whatever new challenges Paulette will set for us next! For those who like to sing but are not in a choir, keep a watch out for our upcoming 'Choir Karaoke' which will be a fun night full of well known favourite tunes to sing along to.



Join the Song

New members are welcome all year round. If you've ever felt nervous about joining a choir, please get in touch. We'd love to help you find your voice and enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of singing. We also send our warmest wishes to choir members unable to attend rehearsals at the moment; we look forward to seeing you back in the fold soon.

Contact us via our Facebook or Instagram pages.

Castles, forts & walls: all part of our rich history

Jane Mills

Now in its 24th year, LLHS continues to celebrate the rich and varied history of our community and surrounding area. It is amazing just how much there is to discover and how many amazing people there are in Pembrokeshire who are passionate about researching the county's incredible history. And that is before mentioning the numerous people looking into their own family history, many of whom LLHS is able to assist.

After our usual fun quiz night in January – a relaxing evening after the busyness of Christmas - we started our programme of events with our good friend, Dr Simon Hancock, who talked us through the battles and sieges of Haverfordwest Castle. Simon's knowledge of history is quite amazing and, to our knowledge, we have only ever seen him refer to notes once!

March saw us joined by Andi Jones who was probably one of the most dynamic speakers we have ever had. Andi is the lead volunteer of a group bringing St Catherine's Island in Tenby back to life. Once a 19th century fortification, then a stately home known for its wild parties, and then a zoo which many of you will remember, it is now open to the public – tides permitting – and is well worth a visit if you can manage the steps. Andi and his team are continuing to unearth stories of the island and are hoping to enable the island to be used for a variety of events.

St Catherine's Island & Fort. Copyright George Lloyd Licensed under Creative Commons



If you missed the talk, you can see a BBC programme about the island called "Our Tenby Island – Our Lives". It's well worth a watch.

Our April talk was given by Malcolm White, a volunteer with the Pembroke Town Walls Trust (PTWT) which has been working to repair and consolidate Pembroke's town walls. Malcolm gave us an insight into the history of the walls, the background of the Trust and an overview of the projects undertaken to date. In

addition to restoring the medieval stone walls, PTWT are rebuilding traditional stone masonry skills with a partnership between themselves, Pembrokeshire College and the Tywi Centre, running a Basic Heritage Construction Skills course through funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund. These courses will help to address the shortage of traditional stone masons – a vital skill given that at least 30% of Pembrokeshire's buildings were built before 1919. To learn more about these amazing walls, book a guided tour which runs weekly from Wednesday 23rd July to 27th August.



Pembroke Town Walls

Dates for your diary:

Monday 19th May – Mark Muller: Slave owners in Pembrokeshire

Thursday 11th June – Members visit to Scolton Manor

Monday 13th July – Members visit to Carew Castle

Monday 21st September – John Brandrick: Talk on Whitland Abbey

Monday 19th October – Howard Rudge: Discoveries at Pembroke Castle discussing the amazing archeological finds in Wogan's Cavern which have recently hit the headlines

Monday 16th November – John Evans: Early Pembrokeshire Aviators

Lastly, work has progressed on our Heritage Trails project. The research has been completed, QR sites identified and permissions sought. Grant applications have been submitted and we are waiting for decisions. Hopefully, we will be able to update you in the next Llangwm Newsletter.

Do come along and join us – membership is still only £5 per year or £2 per talk for visitors – you will be very welcome.

Our ancient fields

Nikki Bosworth

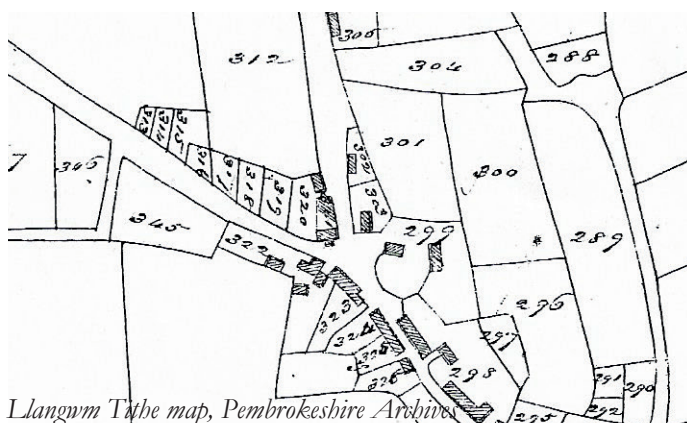
You may be wondering why the new houses being built at the top of the village have been named “The Croft”. According to the Tithe Map and Award of 1841, the area was originally divided into two fields and known as Croft and Upper Croft.

Many of the fields in and around the village were given descriptive names such as East Field or Square Field or even West Big Field. Other fields found in the village include Wilderness, Clover Meadow, Rock Park, Hill Park and Long Stone Park. The word “Kiln” occurs in different field names throughout Llangwm due to the proliferation of kilns for processing limestone as a soil improver and building material. The villagers may also have been burning kelp (seaweed) for use as an agricultural fertiliser.

The fields on the east side of Wellhead Lane were Long Meadow, Home Meadow and Row Park. On the other side of the lane, they were Morgan’s Field and Robert’s Field. Gail Rise was built on Long Field and Leys Park. The fields to the east of The Gail were known as Gail Meadow. The area at the north end of The Gail was recorded on the 1861 1st edition Ordnance Survey map as “The Jail” which has been misinterpreted by some people as being the location of a prison in Llangwm. It is thought that ‘gail’ meant ‘narrow lane’ but it could also be a term for an area of uncultivated land.

The houses at Glan Hafan are situated on land that was previously owned by the Church known as Glebe land, some of which was arable and some pasture. The area on which River View is built was just known as Guilford and the houses on The Kilns were built on fields simply described as meadow. The rugby field was always known as Pill Park.

Finally, did you know that “Pill”, a tidal creek, and “Lake” (as in Lake Villas), a stream, reputedly derive from words originating in the West Country?



Llangwm Tithe map, Pembrokeshire Archives

Sunshine super grain

Will Scale



What a difference a month makes! April always has to be the most optimistic time of year on a farm. Things are on the move and not enough has gone wrong yet if things have got through the winter.

The dogs are no longer lying on a mattress in the shed away from the rain, they are now lying in the middle of the yard doing their morning sun salutations. Our oldest dog Ben is about 14 now and I think he is finding winters a real drag (aren't we all Ben?) but if he can get the chance to lie on his side and charge his furry solar panel then he is happy with his lot.

I really noticed the difference between winter and spring this year because I went away to New Zealand for 3 1/2 weeks recently. We definitely left in winter and almost arrived back to a different country by the middle of April. Oilseed rape was in full yellow flower and the beans had also started to flower and will really enjoy this sun. When I left there was barely a leaf on a tree.

It's not just the extra warmth that propels these crops to grow but it's the daylight too. There are now six hours of extra daylight and that really has a cumulative effect. The art of growing wheat is to have a nice big flag leaf which is the last leaf before the seed head comes out; if you can keep this big leaf (another solar panel!) free of fungus and with adequate nutrition you can get grain. It can and does go wrong - 2012 is etched on my memory. That July was a washout and all the crops struggled very badly. It's a horrible experience and it does happen.

Interestingly enough the three locations which are constantly vying for the world record wheat yields are in Scotland, Lincolnshire and in the Canterbury Plain in New Zealand - the combination of long days, not too much heat and soil type means from now until August they can keep their plants full of potential.

The world record wheat yield is currently held in Lincolnshire and is 17.96 tonnes per hectare, beating the last one set in New Zealand which was 17.39 tons. Our typical “good” average would be 10 tons per hectare. The world record yield would provide 32,000 loaves of bread.

A sad farewell but we carry on

Llinos Martin

As most of you know, St Jerome's faces uncertain times as we wait for a new priest to be appointed to the area, but as usual, people in our community pull together and carry on.

Since the last Village News, we have been busy with numerous events, not least the sad farewell to Reverend Canon Marcus and his family, who left for the South of England in February (*see Polly's report page 16*). Everyone enjoyed a farewell evening with the family at the Cottage Inn and on February 15th he took his last services in the parish, followed by a get together in Llangwm Village Hall for a 'bring and share' lunch and time of fellowship. We presented the family with gifts from all the Churches; things that we hope will remind them of their decade in our parish. As is traditional, a cake was cut, food was shared and a good time was had by all.

It was good to hear from Marcus at Easter that he is settling in and those gifts are a reminder for all the family of their time in Pembrokeshire.



Before Christmas the Church put on a display of Christmas trees, decorated by local groups and clubs. Although we didn't ask for themed trees, each one was a good representation of the donors and lots of visiting people commented on how wonderful they looked. The Church certainly felt at the centre of Christmas in the village. Reverend Marcus took the Crib Service on Christmas Eve, which was well attended, as usual, by the village, followed by the Midnight Eucharist and a Christmas morning service.

The Village Hall was again smelling deliciously of bacon for three Saturdays at the beginning of the year as people gathered for a chat and the renowned Bacon Butties.

During March, myself and Neil did a presentation evening about our visit to Patagonia last November to visit the Welsh settlements there and to take part in concerts to raise funds for the Welsh schools in that area.

The weather wasn't with us for the children's Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Saturday but the children enjoyed hunting through the grass to collect their eggs, regardless of the weather.



Many thanks to those who have been taking the services since Marcus' departure and we continue with our services until a new priest is appointed.

Sunday Services

Morning Prayer – 1st and 3rd Sunday

Parish Eucharist – 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month.

All but the 3rd Sunday are at 9am with the 3rd Sunday at 10am at present.

Midweek Eucharist

Wednesday 9am in St Jerome's or St Peter's, Johnston.

Contact details – Reverend Canon Chancellor John Cecil JohnCecil@churchinwales.org.uk

The Vicarage, Steynton.

Forthcoming Events

Wedding Memories – July 3rd, 4th and 5th – *see page 2*

Central Asian Presentation - date to be confirmed

Afternoon Teas (Village Hall) – 3rd Saturday of May and June and during the Wedding Event in July.

Mr Dixon's choir

Margaret Brace

Every service at Galilee brings back memories and images of the chapel in its heyday, when the building was full of worshippers and the hymn singing 'raised the roof'.

Many reports of those days gone by are recorded on the Llangwm Local History Society's website – under the headings Llangwm History (Galilee), LLHS Archive (Religion) and Bygone Days (various articles). The collection includes the history of the chapel and photographs of the old chapel, a rather sombre building which - not many people today realise - occupied the space now taken up by Galilee's car park next to Guildford Bridge.

Of particular note was Mr Dixon's choir (in the 1920s) – some 70 strong, for which a special tiered platform had to be constructed.



One can only imagine the atmosphere of the special occasions on which that choir sang. Such a shame they didn't have recordings in those days! Galilee's fine acoustic is still remarked on today, at larger services and occasional concerts.

You can find the picture in better quality on the History Society's website.

Present-day Galilee continues with two services each month, on the first and third Sundays at 10.30 am. All are welcome to join its traditional worship.

Get ready for the Carnival!

Chloe Davies

Llangwm Events Group have been working hard over the last few months to raise funds for the various activities and events that are enjoyed by many throughout the year. Thank you to everyone who supported the quiz night which helped raise vital funds for the group. We hope to make this a regular event or maybe even a league - keep an eye on our socials for more information.

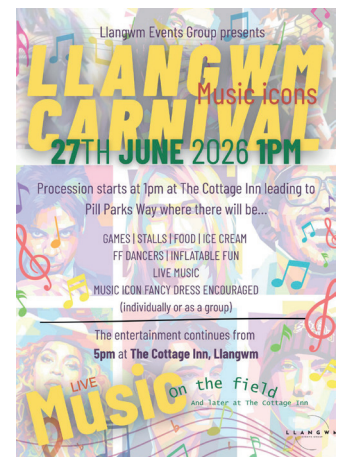
The Great Llangwm Curry Off was held in November and proved to be a highly anticipated and fiercely contested event. Five competitors, including the previous reigning champion, Tony, went head-to-head in a bid to impress and claim the coveted Curry Champion title. With a fantastic range of flavours, aromas and creative dishes on display, the standard was exceptionally high and the judging far from easy. After much deliberation and some very stiff competition, Ollie Davies emerged victorious, earning the honour of being crowned Curry Champion for 2025.

In December our village was alight again. Light up Llangwm had some stiff competition but ultimately there could be only one winner. Congratulations to Diane Morgan for a fantastic display. We look forward to the village being lit up again during the festive season of 2026.

The annual Santa run was held again in the run up to Christmas with Santa and his helpers being chauffeured around the village in a vintage VW sleigh. We would like to say a huge thank you to David Petrie for letting Santa and his helpers travel in such style, and to all the individuals who donated section boxes. A special thank you to Ryan John from Cleddau Electrical for

the donation - the children say they very much appreciated them and the left over selection boxes were donated to PATCH.

Looking forward to the summer season, the Annual Llangwm Carnival will be held on Saturday, 27th June 2026, and this year's theme is "Pop Icons." Festivities begin at 1 pm, with the procession leaving The Cottage Inn and making its way to the field. Enjoy live entertainment from FF Dancers, The Greenacres Dog Show, and a few special surprises along the way. Don't forget to take part in the Best Dressed Competitions for both individuals and groups — so bring your best Pop Icon look!



The after-party will once again be held at The Cottage Inn, featuring live music from Green Jam and Loose Fit, keep an eye on our social media pages for further details.

Llangwm Events Group is a small dedicated group of volunteers who are always looking for more members to get involved or help at events. We also welcome suggestions for events and activities that the group can host. If you would like to get involved or have any suggestions please email Llangwmeventsgroup@gmail.com or get in touch with us on social media.

Thanks to all as we search for a rowing club

Polly Zipperlen



Marcus and I lived in Llangwm for 10 years, moving in when the boys were six and eight. Years that have both rushed by, but also during which so much has happened and changed.

We were welcomed to the village at a time when St Jerome's was being restored, but within no time we were back in the newly refurbished church which stands as a true testament to the community spirit of Llangwm. Spearheaded by Pam Hunt, the restoration of St Jerome's involved a huge swathe of Llangwm's artistic and administrative talent in a truly corporate effort to save a community building. It is this quiet but co-operative approach to village life that we will always remember Llangwm for.

But the time to move had come, as Marcus's dad went into a nursing home in East Sussex, leaving his mum home alone and my mum needing more support too.

But leaving Llangwm and starting afresh in a new Parish will be a long and bumpy road and there is much settling-in yet to happen in Sussex, and MUCH to be missed about our lives in Llangwm.

Our search for a rowing club continues, and I have wondered whether the answer lies in setting up our own! But once we do manage to get out on the water, the local river Adur is close by and runs into Shoreham Harbour, which offers rowing much like Milford Haven. Marcus's running buddies are irreplaceable and I know he misses their friendship greatly, but we have made a few forays onto the South Downs, which offer long stretches of (dry) footpaths and sea views.

Devastated as we are that we could not bring the Llangwm community with us, we do have some

reminders of our time there and we will always be thankful for your friendship. Every single time we drive our van, we will remember and be grateful for Frank and Chris at the garage – how they have kept our two cars going for the last 10 years is truly miraculous. And we would like to have brought Matthew and The Cottage Inn to Southwick, and will be on a lifelong look-out for a local pub that we can walk into with a friendly face at the bar (and a pint that costs less than £7.50).

And what would our new rectory be without a rowing boat in the drive; we've brought along Llangwm Rowing Club's Teifi Skiff, just the right size for two and are looking forward to exploring the local waters.

So although this is cheerio, it is definitely not 'goodbye' as Llangwm will always have a special place in our hearts and we will undoubtedly be back.

With love from Polly, Marcus, Sonny, Malachy and Neymar (the Fox Terrier - who we have somehow managed not to lose yet!)





County Council Report

Cllr Michael John

The Croft Development 24/0120/PA

Progress on the site continues, and at last update it is advised that the 1st occupancy could be October this year. This will be dependent on continuation of the current schedule and meeting the Natural Resources Wales directive on nitrates. "Early Bird" applications have been advertised for the shared ownership properties. Applicants will need to meet the "local letting policy" which has been agreed for the site following discussions with myself and the community council.

There have been some continuing concerns raised over issues such as water run-off and noise, and I continue to meet and raise these issues with Ateb and Morganstone, as well as the relevant departments at PCC.

Full details of the application, discharge of conditions and any non-material amendments can be found at:

<https://planning.agileapplications.co.uk/pembrokeshire>

Save The Cleddau Petition The "Friends of the Cleddau Project Team" recently presented a petition to PCC raising concerns over the poor quality of the river.

The Cleddau rivers and estuary (from NRW Water Assessment Report 2024) are the worst polluted Special Area of Conservation designated rivers in Wales, worse than the Usk and Wye rivers, and also worse than the neighbouring Towy and Teifi. The decline in the river impacts the economy, public health and the natural environment of the county.

A recording of the meeting can be seen on this link, and The Cleddau item starts at 48mins and 50secs:

https://pembrokeshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/1050537

Withdrawal of Emergency general surgery at Withybush Hospital Following this recent decision, PCC debated that "The Welsh Government intervenes in Hywel Dda University Health Board's recent decision to cease this service at Withybush hospital, and immediately reverses their decision". It is believed by many that removing this service critically undermines the sustainability of Withybush hospital's A&E department. This was agreed with an amendment that the Health Board be asked to visit PCC to answer questions on their long-term

intentions for Withybush.

A recording can be seen on this link, and the Withybush item starts at 7hrs 58mins:

https://pembrokeshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/1050537

Bus service changes 308 (Haverfordwest-Burton circular) –

Following the recent consultation on changes to some buses across the county, changes to the 308 service came into effect on the 30th March. The morning service departs 15 mins earlier, due to congestion at Merlins Bridge, and the afternoon service departs 10 mins earlier.

Joint Patrol with PCSO I continue regular patrols and contact with our local PCSO Adam Thomas who covers the Freystrop, Hook and Llangwm areas.

There have been recent reports of "COLD CALLING" in neighbouring areas and all residents are encouraged to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour on 101.

Milford Haven and Neyland Police · Follow
2h · 📍
PCSO Adam and County Councillor: Michael John have been in Freystrop, Hook and Llangwm today discussing local issues and patrolling ASB hotspots. They then attended Llangwm Village Hall for the warmer rooms coffee morning engaging with local residents.



Government help for oil or LPG heating costs. A one-off payment of £200 for eligible households will be issued following an announcement by WG, and the allocation of £3.8 million by the UK Government. PCC will contact households on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme directly and invite them to apply. If you are facing severe financial hardship but do not qualify for this payment, there is a Discretionary Assistance Fund with a maximum award for heating oil of £750. People can now apply up to twice in a 12-month period. For further information or support please contact the Community Hub on 01437 723660.

Pembrokeshire enhances support for local foster carers

As part of its ongoing commitment to support foster carers, PCC has announced an increase in foster carer allowances from April 2026, and is also introducing a new two year initiative offering reduced Council Tax payments for foster carers.

Foster carers provide a much needed and valued service ensuring a safe home for children in the community. Anyone considering fostering can benefit from a wide range of support and help.

To find out more please call 01437 774650

LLANGWM Rugby Club 140th Anniversary

Congratulations to Llangwm RFC on reaching its 140-year season. This is such a fantastic achievement for a village club. As club President I had the honour of welcoming all guests to the Gala Dinner held at The Imperial in Milford Haven. With guest speakers Nigel Owens MBE and Bill Carne BEM, it was a memorable event with over 110 people present.



A Reminder Residents can ask questions direct to Council or one of its scrutiny committees on any service issues. For further information contact : Democraticservices@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Webcast most council meetings are livestreamed and can be viewed here:

<https://pembrokeshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you need to contact me, please do not hesitate to get in touch. I can be contacted on 01437 890175 or cllr.michael.john@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

You can also contact PCC direct on 01437 764551 or - <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/resident>

A year in review

Debbie Hanney

Over the past year, your Community Council has been working steadily on a wide range of issues that affect daily life in Llangwm — from the housing development at The Kilns to community initiatives and village events. This article offers a look back at some of the key themes, achievements, and ongoing work.

Supporting a Growing Community

One of the biggest areas of focus this year has been the new housing development at The Kilns. Councillors have worked closely with Ateb and Morganstone contractors to ensure that the development reflects the needs of the village. This has included raising concerns about drainage, traffic, and communication with residents, as well as pushing for a fair local lettings policy so that local people benefit from the new homes.

As the development progresses towards completion in 2026, the Council continues to monitor its impact, particularly surface water run-off and infrastructure pressures.

Standing Up for Transparency

The Council has consistently raised concerns about the Morganstone Community Fund, seeking transparency on how much funding is available, how it has been spent, and how local groups can apply. While discussions are ongoing and despite a number of requests over an extended period, opportunities to discuss the fund have been limited. The Council has made it clear that transparency and proper community involvement are essential to ensure these funds genuinely benefit Llangwm and remains keen to engage positively and work together to ensure the fund is managed in a way that best supports the local community.

Tackling Drainage and Flooding

Drainage and surface water issues have been a major concern in parts of the village, particularly at Gail Rise and Nash Road. The Council has worked with Pembrokeshire County Council and developers to push for solutions, including improved drainage systems and ongoing monitoring.

Residents are encouraged to continue reporting issues, as evidence plays a key role in getting action taken.

Investing in Community Projects

The Council has supported a number of local initiatives this year. One highlight is the Llangwm Heritage Trails Project, which will create walking routes around the village with QR codes linking to historical information.

The Council has pledged financial support to help secure further grant funding.

Other contributions have included support for youth events, improvements to community facilities, and ongoing discussions about introducing a small grants scheme for local groups.

Improving Village Infrastructure

A number of practical improvements have been progressed or planned, including:

- Installation of a salt bin at Gail Hill to improve safety in icy conditions
- Plans for a safe, permanent electrical supply on the Village Green for events and Christmas lights
- Ongoing work to address traffic and parking concerns throughout the village
- Maintenance and monitoring of Pill Parks, common land, and public facilities

The Council has also been addressing long-standing issues such as electricity supply at Black Tar Toilets and general upkeep of community assets.

Listening to Residents

Public concerns raised during the year have included parking, road safety, dog fouling, access issues, and environmental matters. The Council has acted on these wherever possible, working with County Council departments and other organisations to find solutions.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the coming year, key priorities include:

- Securing clarity and fair access to community development funds
- Continuing to resolve infrastructure issues
- Supporting delivery of the Heritage Trails project
- Improving facilities on the Village Green
- Ensuring the housing development integrates positively into village life

The Council also remains committed to representing residents' views on wider issues such as planning, transport, and environmental concerns.

Get Involved

Community Council meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month in the village hall and are open to the public. Residents are always welcome to attend, raise concerns, or simply find out more about what's happening locally.

Llangwm's sad abandoned boats

Chris Thomas

At the time of writing, the river is bathed in sunlight and not a cloud may be seen in the sky. The memory of Storm Dave and the inconvenience he caused is fading. We look forward to the new season, hoping for fine weather through the coming months.

The club has now received payments from all current members for this year's mooring licences. Positions for new moorings will now be allocated. Anyone wanting a new mooring at Llangwm should contact the Mooring Officer Bog Tyler (llangwm.boat.club@gmail.com) without delay.

The club has been advised that there may be possible requirements under the forthcoming new 'Port and Marine Facilities Safety Code'. We feel that compliance may not be required but are concerned that any costs may be beyond our means. We have therefore contacted the RYA Legal Team for advice and hope for an update shortly.

At a recent Milford Haven Users Association meeting, Joanna Soanes of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) announced a proposed 'Derelict Vessels Initiative' for Milford Haven waterway. It would be similar to a scheme trialled in North Wales and undertaken by NRW, Pembrokeshire County Council and Milford Haven Port Authority.



This matter is a concern to Llangwm Boating Club. Our volunteers have previously removed abandoned dinghies blocking access at Black Tar. The scale of this present problem is beyond Llangwm Boating Club's remit or club resources.



We note NRW reports that Llangwm has 21 abandoned vessels. We are not aware that any Llangwm Boating Club members have abandoned their boats on the foreshore, as members are known and contactable through the mooring licensing process. However, owners of abandoned vessels, locally or living away, are encouraged to deal with this issue before external agencies become involved.

Finally, it is our sad duty to note the passing of Paul Morgan. For more than a quarter of a century, he diligently held the office of club Treasurer and more recently has been our Chair. All the committee are saddened by his death and convey their condolences to his family.

Here's hoping for a safe and enjoyable season on the river.

Marathon magic

Bill Muldrew

The club continued to have a successful 2025, winning the Southern League yet again with the presentation taking place in Aberystwyth at the Welsh Sea Rowing annual dinner in October. The winter proved to be a quiet time for the club, with little opportunity for training due to continual poor weather conditions. Much of the period after our annual end of season bash was devoted to support for our Chair, Helen Heaton, who departed at the end of November for the Canary Islands in preparation for the World's Toughest Row which commenced on the 14th of December.

A 24-hour marathon row in Broad Haven saw many of the club members taking part to raise funds for the team. The race was also followed closely with messages of support from our club and many other supporters.

The team (Helen, Liz, Denise and Heledd) in their boat "Cariad" successfully completed the race which had 43 boats taking part in different categories. They are the first all-Welsh ladies' team to complete the race – a great achievement and we congratulate them all. Charities Sea Trust, RNLI, Action for Children and Popham Kidney Support all benefitted from the funds raised.

The 2026 season has now begun, and the teams are limbering up for our first race in May. A few upcoming events in June include a new event this year, Dale Marathon, which the club will be hosting on Saturday 13th June. This will be from Dale to Haverfordwest and it is hoped to have a good attendance. Llangwm Regatta is scheduled to take place on Sunday 21st June, and we look forward to welcoming everyone, participants and spectators to enjoy the day with us.

U6's team next season!

Mike Preddy

Another fantastic year of football for the Llangwm Lions



We continue to grow, learn and have fun



With the introduction of a new U6 team next season, the future is very bright.



Ladies leap, men show promise

Sara Jeffrey

I am writing this report the day after our first 2026 men's matches and the day before our first ladies' match and yet it is not the beginning of the story for LCC this year.

The ladies' started their efforts in the indoor league in January and made a huge leap forward in their indoor game, beating three 3rd division sides: Haverfordwest, St. Ishmaels and Burton. Their match against Pembroke was tied. All in all a brilliant performance given it is only their second indoor season.

Cricket for the men got off to an interesting start. For the first team, an exciting contest against Hook saw them defeated with only three balls remaining. The team delivered an outstanding all-round performance, showing spirit and determination right to the end. Despite the narrow loss, it was an incredible display that shows much promise for the season ahead.

all who attended and to all those who sponsored races and purchased horses before the event; we raised over £1200, a great success. Feedback since the event has been so positive, we are now considering a mid-season fund raiser at the club and a golf day in August. Do keep an eye on the Llangwm Facebook page and on your local telegraph pole for details.



Ewan Griffiths, 1st team captain

Gareth Brawn, captain of our second team, says they had 'a fantastic game up at Pill Parks with the seconds hosting Hundleton seconds. There were fine batting performances and a great team spirit, which helped Llangwm come out victorious.'

In their first match of the season Llangwm Ladies beat Saundersfoot scoring 112 for 3 against Saundersfoot's 73 for 2. I am hoping we see as much village support for them as we did in their first season last year.

On the run up to these opening matches, there was the usual hive of activity, with everyone doing all they could to make Llangwm village cricket happen in 2026. We held a race night at the club on 'The Green' to raise much needed funds for kit and coaching training. Simon Brick kindly donated one of his signature curries, catering for the 70 to 80 people there. Thanks to the generosity of

In recent weeks Martyn Inward and Ian Gow, as well as the late and much missed Mark Davies, have all been busy up at the field working hard to prepare the ground and bring it to the peak of perfection you see at Pill Parks today. It was only last year the LCC committee voted to make Mark Davies a life member, in acknowledgement of the many years he played for and served the club, and it is with great sadness we mark his passing. Our thoughts are with Dai & Susan Davies and with all Mark's family at this sad time.

We are so fortunate to have such a wide circle of knowledgeable supporters, who step forward again and again to keep the club running, growing and prospering.

The junior section, which was re-established in 2024, is growing again this year with the addition of under 13s coaching as well as 9 to 11 year olds and All Stars training for 5 to 8 year olds starting on Monday May 11th at 6.00pm at Pill Parks! To enrol your budding cricketer, the link is [Clubspark / All Stars / Coaching / Course](#) for All Stars.

Copies of this year's LCC fixture booklet are available up at the stand and contain details of the ladies' league matches as well as those of our first and second men's teams. We are hoping to welcome many villagers up at Pill Parks this season.

Do try to make it to at least one match, it really is a lovely way to spend an afternoon and there's always plenty of cake for everyone.

Here's to the next 140 years

Dan Chesmer

As the season draws to a close, we would like to thank everyone who has celebrated another year of rugby in our village and the proud 140 year legacy of Llangwm Rugby Club. The club is a symbol of community, perseverance, passion, and values. These qualities have carried us through 140 seasons and helped shape our identity as a true village rugby club.

This year has been an exciting one, filled with moments of fun, determination, and togetherness both on and off the pitch. The energy, commitment, and talent shown throughout the season are truly worth celebrating. At the heart of it all is what keeps this club alive: our people and our community.

Our incredible volunteers, who dedicate their time, effort, and hearts to keeping Llangwm Rugby Club running, are the backbone of everything we do. Their hard work and devotion make it possible for all nine teams to step onto the field each week, proudly wearing the Wasps' black and amber. To everyone who has worked tirelessly throughout the season and behind the scenes, thank you. Your contributions are invaluable, and your efforts are the fuel that keeps this tradition alive.



Llangwm RFC Senior XV team 25-26

The senior team has performed well this season under the coaching setup of Jordan Evans, Gethin Thomas, and Dan Richards. It has been fantastic to see eight lads from last year's youth team represent the senior side this season, strengthening the squad alongside a few new faces at the club. Being one of the first clubs in Wales to complete all league fixtures is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the players, coaches, team manager James Lewis, and club captain Morgan Rees. We look forward to building on these positives and are excited to see this squad continue to progress next season.

We are incredibly fortunate to have nine teams at the club, starting from the Under 7s. It is amazing to see hundreds of young players enjoying being part of a team, learning important skills, exercising, and making friendships that will last a lifetime. The coaches and volunteers do a fantastic job, and our Under 12s and Under 14s teams have done themselves and the club proud. The U14s beat Aberystwyth 31-26 in the Pembrokeshire Plate Finals in Crymch.



Llangwm RFC U14s team

A huge thank you must go to Simon Brick and his team for their outstanding work in ensuring that players and members can enjoy the clubhouse throughout the season. Their behind the scenes efforts are hugely appreciated and allow us all to enjoy that all important food and drink after matches. Watch this space, as we hope to refresh the clubhouse and open over the summer so keep an eye on our socials for opening times.

Finally, thank you to our committee members and sponsors, who work incredibly hard throughout the season to ensure that rugby continues to be played in Llangwm, hopefully for another 140 years. The 140th events including golf days, parties and the celebration dinner with special guest Nigel Owens (MBE) have been great fun. Your continued support and dedication play a vital role in steering the club in the right direction as we move forward.

We are a friendly and inclusive club and we are always looking for new players and people to join and help at our club. If you are able to spare a couple of hours on a match day weekend or can help out in the week, please see the contact details on socials or website and get in touch.

Your club needs you!!

Victory in Crymych for the U14s

Rhiannon James

Minis and Juniors rugby is almost over for 2025/26, with all matrix fixtures done and dusted. We have been very proud to have eight teams representing Llangwm in the club's 140th anniversary year, with around 100 youngsters training and playing matches for the young wasps each week. This is a great achievement for a village club and our teams are definitely holding their own against bigger clubs in the county.



All our teams had plenty of success this season ending in a resounding victory for the U14s against Fishguard 31-26 in the District Plate finals, winning the plate for the second year running. The U12s, in their first final appearance, drew 14-14 to share the silverware with Aberystwyth. The finals were held in Crymych.

Recently, the minis teams enjoyed playing in the county festivals of rugby, with some excellent results recorded and plenty of fun had by all. To finish off the season, the U11s are heading to Minehead on tour and the U9s

and U13s are heading to Pencoed to try their luck against some of the best teams in South Wales at the popular rugby festival.

Remember to have fun, play for your team and wear the Wasp with pride!

The annual presentation nights are being held in the clubhouse during May, when we recognise the efforts of all the players over the season and thank the army of coaches, team managers, parents and supporters who make Llangwm the special club that it is.



*Llangwm U9s top left,
U10s above & U11s left*



New players are always welcome to join. No experience necessary, just a desire to have fun and make friends. Head to our Facebook page to find out more. Keep an eye out on our Facebook and Instagram pages to find out when training will re-start ready for the next season in September!

A grand day out with birds galore

Graham Brace

On 28th January, fellow Llangwm birders Graham Stephens and Mervyn Hopkins and I paid a visit to Marloes Mere.

En route, the day started well when we spotted 11 whooper swans in a field at Rickeston (these uncommon winter visitors from northern Europe and Russia had been there for weeks). A brief visit to the Gann and Pickleridge Pools revealed nothing of note on the tideline as the tide was high.

On the lagoons and surrounding banks were dozens of wigeon, oystercatchers, lapwing, golden plover, curlew and a handful of redshank and a couple of greenshank. A single female red-breasted merganser was the highlight and a couple of little egrets fished in the shallows. Groups of gulls included all the common five species (greater black backed, lesser black backed, herring, common and black headed) as well as a smaller number of Mediterranean gulls. No sign of the usual godwits, dunlin, knots and Brent geese which were probably enjoying more sheltered conditions across the Haven in Angle Bay.

Then off to Marloes Mere...now a spectacular volume of water after the heavy, continual rain and since the National Trust have done extensive clearance work. We had an hour in the Britton Hide and were able to enjoy the superb vista over the water and reed banks. Six species of duck were present here...wigeon, shoveller, gadwall, tufted, mallard and pintail...plus coot and a couple of dabchicks (or Tom Puddings in the local vernacular). There must have been 1500 lapwings and a few hundred golden plover present...what a sight when they took to the air spooked by the arrival of a peregrine falcon. It seemed disinterested and just flew through.

There was also a flock of about 60 Canada geese on the water. Another mix of gulls were resting on the reed banks and water. A possible harrier (probably a female hen harrier) was spotted on the far side of the Mere as we arrived. Sadly, it disappeared and we weren't able to confirm it. Small birds were mainly hunkered down out of the wind but we had nice views of a male stonechat and meadow pipit. All in all, a very satisfactory day out.

Closer to home ... as I write (16th April) the Pill is virtually devoid of birds now that the overwintering wildfowl and waders have returned to their breeding grounds. However, it is a relief to see that following the success in rearing four cygnets last year, once again our two mute swans have opted to nest on the same

high point on the north side of the Pill as last year. The pen is currently sitting on eggs (quantity unknown). Hopefully, high tides and predators will be kept at bay and last year's success will be repeated.

Meanwhile the toll on the finch and tit species in our back gardens taken by killer diseases such as trichomonosis and salmonella has been very much in the news recently. Trichomonosis has already decimated the greenfinch population in this country and other affected species are also in decline. The RSPB has publicised the following rules to prevent these diseases affecting the birds in our gardens:

- **Clean feeders and bird baths at least once a week.** In wet or humid weather, clean more frequently to prevent mouldy seed.
- **Use hot soapy water or a 5% mild bleach/disinfectant solution.** Scrub with a dedicated brush, rinse thoroughly with cold water, and ensure they are completely dry before refilling.
- **Always wear rubber gloves when cleaning,** and wash hands thoroughly afterwards. Clean feeders outdoors, not in the kitchen sink.
- **Move feeders around the garden** to prevent the buildup of droppings and waste.
- **Change water in bird baths daily** and scrub them weekly.
- **Put out only as much food as birds can eat in a day or two** to prevent mould. Remove mouldy or wet food immediately.
- **Avoid using bird tables or feeders with flat surfaces** as they accumulate droppings and increase disease transmission risk.

Also from 1 May to 31 October consider reducing or stopping the use of seed/peanut feeders. This period sees higher bird numbers, nesting, and higher disease transmission, making proper hygiene even more critical to prevent outbreaks.

Note: Getting to Marloes Mere. Park in the National Trust carpark for Marloes Sands and it is a five-minute walk down the much-improved lane passing Runwayskiln Restaurant on the left. The Britton Hide is shortly visible on the right, overlooking the Mere. Other significant birdwatching localities within easy reach of Llangwm include Fowborough and Sprinkle Pill, Westfield Pill, Angle Bay and Castlemartin Corse.

Please report any unusual bird or animal sightings to grahambrace@btinternet.com