Welcome to the 2018 Christmas Newsletter, which hopefully you will receive before the community seasonal events commence!

2018 Rhossili Community Council

Below is a list of serving Community Councillors elected in 2017. Should you wish to contact any of them please contact the Clerk, Jo Scott, at: rhossilicc@gmail.com

Chair: Steven Campbell-Kelly
Deputy Chair: Ian Button
Treasurer: Stephen Walmsley
Committee Members: Jeff Higgins, Tom Higgs, Nicola Rees, Sally Thomas

Alternatively, contact details of Councillors can be found on the RCC website.

I am sorry to say that this will be the last Newsletter I shall edit and prepare so I am hoping that A N Other will take on the task of compiler and editor for next year onwards. I have enjoyed doing this but it is not always easy for me with a tight window for its completion at this time of year – increased seasonal work load was additionally compounded by funeral arrangements for my father who passed this last week.

There are so many articles in this year’s newsletter that it has been a struggle to get it complete within the two weeks allocated. In addition to the reports and updates from the various groups in the village, there have been a number of other interesting articles submitted and included and will hopefully provide an enjoyable and informative read.

Two articles which are of particular interest are ‘Dark Skies in Rhossili’ and ‘Being a Plastic Free Community’ which, together with Knelston School, looks towards the community for active participation to help create and ultimately obtain the award ‘Plastic Free Coastline Status’ for Rhossili.

Sustainable Community

Last year I spoke of a declining community in permanent residence. Property sales have been slower and a couple of other properties now host permanent residents where previously they were either holiday homes or second homes. This appears to have stabilised the declining numbers in permanent residence – good news for us all as without you there would not be a Newsletter such as this, which is packed full of all that we think about and do throughout the year.

Highways and Footpaths

Whilst many roads in the City show signs of decay, the main road through the community is relatively well looked after, mainly due to it being a bus route and that Rhossili is a main tourist destination.

Footpaths are particularly well maintained and when issues with traversing a route occurs Steve Parry and his team are quick to attend. The latest footpath which has received significant attention and clearance is the footpath by Little Vile known locally as the Barrel Path.

New Notice Boards

Rhossili Community Council has a programme for replacing the three notice boards in the community, found by Rhossili bus terminus, Rhossili Village Hall and Pitton Junction. Around ten years ago they were replaced with timber ones but the weather conditions in Rhossili meant that the life expectancy was never going to be more than five years or so. Rhossili noticeboard, being more exposed than the others, has received the most attention and, when the door finally fell off a few weeks ago, it was replaced with the new all-weather powder-coated steel double door unit, as below. Replacement of the Village Hall

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noticeboard will occur in due course but it is not intended to replace the Pitton one.

Planning Applications

There have been a number of planning applications submitted from our community but only a couple are of a significant scale. I do urge residents to regularly view the latest applications online as the Planning Department seem to be keen to allow new radical design and materials incorporated into new development and extensions to traditionally designed and historic properties. Should anyone have concerns or wish to pass comment on a proposal, please be sure to make your voice heard not just with the Community Council but also with Swansea Council too.

For further information on current and past applications, including comments made by Rhossili Community Council, visit:

https://property.swansea.gov.uk/online-applications/

and search for ‘Rhossili’ and this should return all planning applications for the community.

End of Month Gathering

This Newsletter only serves to give an annual flavour of village updates and events. Should you wish to be more in the social ‘loop’ of current and forthcoming affairs then why not join the ‘End of Month’ gathering at the Worm’s Head where all are welcome? Dai Cann does an admirable job of ensuring monthly reminders are sent to all and our thanks goes to him for this, thus ensuring friendly gossip keeps circulating! If you are not on the reminder list either contact Dai or RCC clerk Jo.

Clubs and Groups

There are many other groups that meet throughout the year which are not mentioned within the Newsletter, which may be of interest, such as, The Book Club, Keep Fit, Whist, Yoga, plus many more. If
you want to join or find out more information or start a new group yourself, why not contact Jo Higgins (RVH) on 01792 391509 for more information and contact details.

I would like to thank all contributors who have taken the time to make this extra bumper issue this year. Contributions for the next Newsletter will be most welcome; where possible, please send by end of October 2019.

Once again this year we have included a section to send seasonal good wishes at the end of this newsletter. I and the Council Members would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year and give a moment to remember absent friends.

Rhossili Community Council meets monthly on the second Tuesday at 7.15pm in Rhossili Village Hall or the ante-room behind. Everyone is welcome to attend, and to raise matters of interest in the community. Contact details of all the councillors can be found on the RCC website: www.rhossiliicc.org.uk. Please feel free to contact any Councillor if you think there are issues (either beneficial or challenging) that you feel the council should be aware of and/or consider, or you can contact the Clerk, Jo Scott, direct.

If you are new to emailing and are not on the village circular, please notify the Clerk (at rhossilicc@gmail.com) of your email address, or if you do not have one, please read the notice board from time to time for notices.

Steven Campbell-Kelly
Chair for Rhossili Community Council and Newsletter Editor
rhossilicc@gmail.com
www.rhossilicc.org.uk

RHOSILLI VILLAGE HALL AND BUNKHOUSE - 2018

www.rhossili.org.uk www.rhossilibunkhouse.com

This year, the Trustees have been able to carry out further improvements to the Hall and Bunkhouse.

Improvements included: painting the bedrooms in the bunkhouse; new laundry facilities; a new cooker and hot water urn for the kitchen. Outside we have fitted: new low energy lights, improved the paving surrounding the hall and constructed a re-cycling storage area.

The Village Hall was supported this year by donations from Rhossili Bunkhouse which totalled £16,369. This has built the amount available for improvements to the Village Hall to over £50,000 which makes it financially stable and sustainable. Next year we will start to carry out major improvements to Hall and the Ante Room behind the Hall. We will be consulting the community on what improvements you would like to see to the building and putting together a schedule of works for discussion and implementation.

Three new trustees (highlighted below in italics) joined this year bringing a much-welcomed influx of new ideas and skills. The current Trustees are: John Furneaux, Jo & Jeff Higgins, Vicky James, Derek O’Brien, Marion Potts, Mark Provis, Linda Shaw, Sarah & Steve Walmsley. All the trustees would like to express their gratitude to Gill Evans, a long time Trustee and supporter of the Hall, who stood down this year when she moved away to be closer to her family. We wish her the best and hope that she will continue to visit Rhossili. I would also like to thank the Trustees, past and present, for their help in making the Village Hall a continued success.

I would also like to thank our support staff, the Hall Manager (Jo Higgins), the ‘meeters & greeters’ and cleaning team for their dedication to looking after the Hall and Bunkhouse. Their continued efforts make sure that our facilities are welcoming and the Bunkhouse is an enjoyable place to stay.

As always, we are always looking for new ideas on how the Village Hall can be used by our community. If you have any suggestions about the facilities we offer, we would like to hear from you. Please feel free to approach the trustees with any suggestions and they will be considered and acted on wherever possible.

Thanks to you all for your support throughout 2018 and we would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and look forward to seeing you at the Hall in the coming year.

Steve Walmsley
Director of RBH Ltd & Trustee of RVH

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VILLAGE HALL SOCIAL EVENTS

Social Committee

Seasonal Greetings from Rhossili Village Hall Social Committee

Nadolig Llawen!

We have been busy again in 2018 organising events and having fun as a small group of busy bodies! We aim to put on events that bring people together to have a good time – what’s the point of having a village hall otherwise? We would love to hear your feedback on the events we have run and any ideas on how we could improve or put on events that appeal to you.

October

Presentation is everything!

We started 2018 with a lively evening of Poems, Pies, Pints and Puddings. As usual on occasions when cooking is involved, Marian stepped up to the mark and ran the kitchen with her usual aplomb. She is a gem! Also, in January Tracey put on a Quiz in aid of Parkinson’s which was great fun and raised worthwhile funds for a charity which is dear to her heart. Then in March, what must be the event of the year and Alison’s swansong (she orchestrated it all!) - Caribbean Night! Not only was there a magnificent buffet of authentic food prepared by Marian and a gang of community sous chefs, but the amazing Fantasy Steel Band who travelled all the way from Birmingham to entertain us. In May, there was a Beetle Drive and Indoor Kurling evening. In June Roger’s Quiz was up to his usual high standard and attracted a big crowd. The Harvest Supper was, again, a triumph for Marian and the kitchen crew and entertainment was poems and readings from the floor. Again, in October, we had a Halloween Murder Mystery with community ‘actors’ playing the parts. It came as a shock to everyone – even Jo - that she was capable of such a foul act! We are really grateful for Lynda’s creative talents for writing these wonderful mysteries! In November we were pleased to host a wonderful show, ‘Black is the Color of My Voice’, sponsored by the Arts Council Night Out scheme. Night Out is a brilliant scheme, designed to bring quality professional acts to rural areas. Over several afterwards. We couldn’t do what we do without all this willing support from the community. AND, of course, thanks for everyone for coming along to enjoy the events!
years now we have had at least one of these shows per year. In simple terms, the way it works is that Night Out has a list of performers that they promote and from time to time these performers will contact us directly or Night Out will bring them to our attention. Then it’s up to us to decide if we are interested. In the case of Pantasy Steel Band, Alison sought them out. Then, Night Out produce tickets, the performers provide posters and we promote the show locally. We must sell at least £300 worth of tickets. The Night Out scheme then pays the rest of the artists’ fees. There will be two of these shows in 2019; both of them plays – one on Mothering Sunday, 31 March called ‘Title and Deed’ and one on Thursday 9 May called ‘The Government Inspector’. Put them in your diary now. More details later.

Forthcoming Events - 2018

Carols Around the Tree - Saturday 15 December - 6pm

Our usual festive gathering of carols and music, with warming seasonal drinks and mince pies – and no admission fee!

Our collection this year will be for Help the Heroes.

Any donations of mince pies on the night will be gratefully received. (But don’t worry. You’ll be allowed in without them!)

PARTY, PARTY, PARTY!

New Year’s Eve – Monday 31 December – from 8pm

Dancing, eating, having fun!

Please bring along a sharing plate of savoury or sweet finger food for the buffet.

And beforehand, please contact Mary Provis with your five favourite dance numbers: wmprovis@gmail.com

Finally: ... we are looking for a techie person who’s willing to be called on from time to time to set up microphones and sound and (more rarely) our lighting. Is there a willing volunteer hereabouts? If so, please email me: Vicki.James@gmail.com

Thank you again for supporting our events and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Vicki James
on behalf of the Village Hall Social Committee

WI UPDATE

Llandewi with Knelston WI 2018

As usual, we have had a very enjoyable year. Our monthly speakers have included talks on such diverse topics from “Blood Bikes” to “The Lusitania”. We have also had several demonstrations, ranging from Spinning and Weaving, The Apple Story of Fairy Lodge, what Judges look for in Competitions to How the Law can Help you Plan your Future.

We enjoyed a lovely trip to Aberaeron and Llancaich Fawr on a lovely, sunny day in August and our year will culminate with our usual Carol Service in Llandewi Church, followed by our members’ Christmas Dinner at Parc le Breos. Our choir will participate in the service.

In 2019, we look forward to a full programme of meetings, interesting and informative speakers plus numerous demonstrations of skills and items of interest at our headquarters in Rhossili Village Hall, where we meet on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. New members are always welcome, so contact Marion Potts if you are interested.

Marion Potts
Llandewi with Knelston WI

PITTON CHAPEL

Pitton Methodist Chapel - Celebrations in December!

It was a privilege to welcome Marian Potts, Andrew Phillips and Colin & Isobel Everett into membership of Pitton Chapel on Sunday 25th November. We have been blessed by them and other newcomers to our fellowship in recent years. Maybe in 2019 we will have the privilege of welcoming you, too.
Christmas 2018:

- **Christmas Messy Church** will be on **Saturday 8 December** at Pennard Community Centre, from 3 pm to 5 pm. Everyone welcome!
- **Sunday** 16 Dec. 10:30 am with Dr Alan Cram.
- **Thursday** 20 Dec. 7.00 pm Evening Carol Service at St Mary’s.

**Christmas Day, Tuesday 25 December**

- **Tuesday** 25 December at 10 am with Selina Taylor.
- **Sunday** 30 Dec. 10:30 am with Rev Andy Walker.

The next **Breakfast Church** will be in Reynoldston Chapel on **Sunday** 20 January 2019.

The **Stable Trail** will be back in 2019.

We wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year! May God, who came to us in the Christ Child, be a source of blessing and light and peace as we look to follow his example and love as he loved us! Rev. Andy

Minister: Rev Andy Walker. Tel: 01792 232867  
Website: www.swanseamethodists.org.uk  
E-mail: andrew.walker@methodist.org.uk

**RHOSILLI CHURCH**

**Church of St Mary the Virgin, Rhossili**

Christmas Eve morning service with Holy Communion is the new tradition at St Mary’s – begun last year and continuing this. So, bring all your guests, children, family and friends to the 10 o’clock celebration of Christmas for the whole village on Tuesday 24th December, followed by sherry, chocolate cake and mince tarts. Sing your favourite carols, hear the old, old story, and take a moment’s contemplation before you settle down at home in front of the fire for a warm and cozy yuletide. (As last year, there is no Midnight Mass.) Before then, on Thursday 20th December at 7pm the Church ‘n’ Chapel Carol Service will this year be held at St Mary’s – do come along for a good sing amongst friends.

After a brief interregnum following Reverend Carol’s resignation in 2017, we welcomed Reverend Justin Davies, and his wife Heather, to St Mary’s on his first working day in his new job on Easter Sunday. He has been appointed to the United Parish of South West Gower as a full-time priest for our six churches of Rhossili, Port Eynon, Oxwich, Penrice, Reynoldston and Llandewi. What a difference Justin has made already. Previously managing director of First Cymru buses, he is a skilled organiser and engages easily with everyone he meets. His energy and vision for our churches is infectious, and he has galvanised people to think positively about our situation and the need to be more closely integrated into our communities, and for the churches to be more, well, united! Additional service times have been introduced, including a monthly relaxed Celtic Communion service at Port Eynon and a monthly mid-week service at Llandewi. More change is bound to follow – watch this space. The downside is that the Rectory at Knelston, where Justin and Heather should be living, still requires major repairs and everything is moving extremely slowly, despite local pressure. It means that they are still in Bishopston, and every day Justin has to travel in
to his ‘patch’, and we haven’t been able to get to know Heather as we would like.

Through the year we have experienced the highs and lows of village life. Several dear friends passed away, including Colin Wales last Christmas, Elvira Hinton and Peter Venables, all of this church. There were weddings in church, including Anne Morse Jones’ daughter, Christine Greening’s son, and a couple from the Netherlands who have had a long family association with Rhossili and wanted a blessing at St Mary’s. They brought all their family and friends with them to stay in holiday accommodation around the church: it was a loving, sincere and fun-filled occasion for their special day.

Recently, passers-by at St Mary’s were concerned to find hedges cut down and ground works in progress at Sailors’ Corner in the graveyard, when a neighbour set about re-establishing his boundary. Work had started without agreement from the Church and has now been halted whilst proper consents are sought. Supporting the local church, the Representative Body of the Church in Wales is managing the outcome on our behalf.

St Mary’s continues to open daily for all those seeking solace, visiting for interest, or attending services. We are thankful for the amazing donations that pour into the church every year, from the car park, from visitors, from local people and from regular planned giving. This means the church can always be open for everyone: it is well looked after by local skilled professionals and by dedicated teams of volunteers. In particular, we are grateful to Bobby Blewett and his team from Fall Bay Landscape Gardening who keep the graveyard and surrounds in immaculate order. Also, to Humphrey Glynternick who stays on top of the endless repairs and building maintenance; to Steve who opens the church for us every day, and Gill who closes it and who, with Anne, manages all the daily duties that ensure the church functions properly. We also thank the flower fairies who clean the church and provide fresh flowers each week, Roger for his regular intercessions, and Carl, our organist, who enriches our worship with wonderful music.

Weekly Sunday service times at St Mary’s are at 8.45am on the first and fourth Sundays of each month, and at 10am on all other weeks. The second Sunday is a united parish service, rotating between the six churches, and the 5th Sunday is also a united service always at St Mary’s. Why not come and join us.

Caroline Johnson

Service dates for your Diary

Christmas 2018:

2018 Christmas Events and Church in Wales Services – All Welcome

- **Saturday** 8th December 4pm Holy Eucharist RNLI Dedication – St Catwg’s Port Eynon
- **Sunday** 9th December 10am United Parish Holy Eucharist – St Catwg’s Port Eynon
- **Tuesday** 11th December 5pm WI Carol Service – St David’s Llandewi
- **Friday** 14th December 6pm Carols, children’s craft and entertainment – St Illtyd’s Oxwich
- **Sunday** 16th December 9am Breakfast Church - Reynoldston Methodist Chapel
- **Sunday** 16th December 10am Morning Worship – St Mary’s Rhossili
- **Sunday** 16th December 3.30pm Carol Service – St Catwg’s Port Eynon (no morning service)
- **Tuesday** 18th December 7pm Carols with Salvation Army Band – Reynoldston Lower Green
- **Wednesday** 19th December 10am Holy Eucharist – St David’s Llandewi
- **Thursday** 20th December 7pm Church and Chapel Carol Service – St Mary’s Rhossili
• **Sunday** 23rd December 8.45am Holy Eucharist – St Mary’s Rhossili
• **Sunday** 23rd December 4pm Lessons and Carols – St Andrew’s Penrice (no morning service)
• **Sunday** 23rd December 4pm Lessons and Carols – St George’s Reynoldston (no morning service)

Christmas Eve, **Monday** 24 December
• **Monday** 24th December 10am Family Eucharist – St Mary’s Rhossili
• **Monday** 24th December 5pm Lessons and Carols – St Illtyd’s Oxwich
• **Monday** 24th December 6pm Family Communion – St Cattwg’s Port Eynon
• **Monday** 24th December 8pm Holy Eucharist – St George’s Reynoldston

Christmas Day, **Tuesday** 25 December
• **Tuesday** 25th December 9am Christmas Day Holy Eucharist – St David’s Llandewi
• **Tuesday** 25th December 10am Christmas Day Holy Eucharist – St George’s Reynoldston
• **Sunday** 30th December 10am United Parish Holy Eucharist – St Mary’s Rhossili

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**RHOSILLI PEOPLE:**

**A Big Thank You**

Many of us grumble and even complain when our expectations are not met but how many of us say THANK YOU to those who help to make our lives a little better in one way or another.

The Village Trustees and particularly members of the Social Committee work energetically throughout the year to provide the village with enjoyable experiences. They decorate the hall as appropriate for each event, source raffle prizes and make everyone feel welcome.

But it doesn’t end there. People frequently carry out acts of kindness for others without expectation or reward. These are not always seen by others but are appreciated never-the-less.

People in the village organise the oil consortium, rotas for the church, chapel and newspaper collection from the village shop in Scurlage, open up the church each day for visitors, help those of us not technology savvy, and reminding us to meet up with friends and neighbours in the “Worm” on the last Friday of each month.

They run the book club, keep fit, Coastguard, Coast Watch and patiently rehearse those of us less musical to be part of the Village Choir for the seasonal “Carols around the Tree” event.

This list is not exhaustive so if I have failed to mention anyone, please forgive me and accept my apologies but a VERY BIG THANK YOU to you all.

Without your contribution the village would not be what it is.

_Linda Bartlett_

**St Mary’s Loyal Servant**

Ever since Lesley and I arrived in Rhossili, we have been amazed at Gill Wales’ energy as she hurries past Rhossili Gallery shop door every day in her duties to St Mary’s Church.

For many years, until his recent illness, and passing, Peter Venables would open the church each day. Gill faithfully continued with this, along with all her other duties of preparing for services, meeting and greeting, cleaning, bell ringing (the sound of now sadly missing): she’s always there and totally dedicated.

On a number of occasions, I offered to take some of the pressure off her and suggested one way would be to open up in the morning, but she was always keen to see it all through herself.

Time past, and her husband, Colin, became ill. Colin’s dependence became greater and she eventually relinquished the opening of the church and I was pleased to be able to help her out. Sadly, Colin passed but this did not alter her dedication.

The church is always immaculate as are the grounds so well-manicured, which is thanks to those few directly involved in its care.

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It is now rare to find a rural church that is open to the public all year round and it is important that the community treasurers this and ensures it continues.

This was bought home to me recently when this week I read an entry in the visitors’ book. The entry by the person just said Lisa, and she comments on how peaceful the church is and adds a symbol of a heart. It does not say her age, but I would say young and only she was present. Most strikingly was that she chose to come to Rhossili to say a prayer for the loss of her baby and left the prayer to be read at the next service...

It is important to help these people in crying need... how do we ensure future generations continue this care?

Gill is an absolute stalwart in the community – thank you Gill for being a major contributor to ensuring St Mary’s remains accessible to all.

Steven Campbell-Kelly

Just for Gerry

This year I lost my mother and my best friend who I had lived with for all but two years of my life. This poem was read at her funeral and means a lot.

It was written by my uncle a few years after we moved to Rhossili in 1985, as his family spent quite a few holidays with us and is called ‘Just for Gerry’.

Just for Gerry

Between the hedgerows windblown sideways,
Speeds the hatchback smoothly home.
Into Rhossili to the door of the white house,
Impressive Crossfields Gerry’s own.

The white-walled garden gives quiet shelter,
From buffeting blows of southerly gales;
through double-glazed and leaded windows
she stands and looks at her wild Wales.

In summer seasons, on warmer days,
they came, by bus, on foot, by car,
those folks who shrieked and splashed
and trampled and brought Southend to street and bar.

But empty now deserted, rain-washed,
Cliffs and beach stand stark and bare,
While waves crash on mist-shrouded Worm’s Head
‘tis only sheep that gather there.

At night when elements rage and threaten,
And wild winds whip up seas to foam,
In timeless Crossfields all is warm and cosy,
bright and cheery ‘cos Gerry’s home.

Jo Higgins

OUR YOUNG FOLK IN RHOSILLI

Isabel and Freddie Thomas

Cakes for Ty Hafan

On Sunday, 14 October, Isabel and Freddie held their fourth fundraiser, a cake sale and coffee afternoon in Rhossili Village Hall, once again raising much-needed funds for Ty Hafan.

Isabel and Freddie Thomas

Ty Hafan Cake Stall

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Ty Hafan offers comfort, care and support to life-limited children, young people and their families, whether it be in the hospice, in the community or in their own homes so that they can make the most of the time they have left together.

This year Isabel and Freddie raised a whopping £839.20! They were incredibly busy in the run-up to the event – they helped Grandma make Welsh Cakes, made apple crumbles, shortbread and LOADS of cakes – Grandpa and Daddy oversaw quality control!

We are so very grateful to all our family, friends and neighbours who support this event year after year and you know we really appreciate it. Gwyn and I are enormously proud of Isabel’s and Freddie’s efforts, having raised more than £4,000 so far for children’s charities, and for their compassion and drive to help children less fortunate than themselves. You won’t be surprised that they are already planning their next event and we are hoping to see you there! Thank you all for your continued support and encouragement.

Sally Thomas.

Tom Fisher

As you will remember from previous years, Tom Fisher represented Team Wales in Fishing and he continues this dedication by representing us for a fourth year. In 2018, he was off to Loch Fyne in Scotland and next year he’s off to Tralee in Ireland. We wish him the very best of luck in his continued search for “the big one”!

Daniel Fisher

Tom’s brother, Daniel, has also shown an interest in carrying on the family's strong tradition in fishing and entered his first competition earlier in the year, coming third in the Flounder Competition, supporting the Loughour Lifeboat Appeal. In his other “spare time”, Daniel is continuing with his entrepreneurship, collecting non-ferrous metals for re-cycling, so if you would like to support him gathering aluminium alloys, copper, brass, lead, electric cabling, car batteries or chrome taps, please contact Nicola or Steve on 390525, and they will arrange collection.

Alison Rees

You may have read about Alison’s achievements in gaining a First in her degree course at Brighton in last year’s Newsletter. We are so proud of her, as she has now gained a First in her Master’s Degree, studying Food Wastage and Sustainability in Farming and she is grateful for the financial support she had from last year’s Gower Show Bursary to help towards her studies. We look forward to hearing more about this increasingly important project as she embarks on using her knowledge into the world of work.

100 YEAR COMMEMORATION:

Should we Mark the Passing of 100 years in Rhossili Community?

I start writing this article two hours before the marking of 100 years since 11/11/11/18. I have just opened St Mary’s church for the day and note that today’s service is being held centrally at Reynoldston. In the absence of a congregation today I say my prayers and remember those who contributed and fought for the relative freedom and way of life we have today and place my prayer stone (it deserves the large one) in the dish and my poppy on the altar in offering of my thanks to God.

We are all aware of Signalman William Gibbs, as his memorial, raised by the parish, is clearly visible on the opposite wall on entry to the church. But how many of you will have seen another fallen soldier: ‘Killed In Action in France 1915’, is the inscription at the very bottom of the headstone erected in the SE angle of the porch and nave walls? His name - Martin Thomas Evans and a short piece about him is included below.

When I first notice this second soldier’s memorial, it set me wondering how many others from the community who fought for King and Country that I was not aware of and how much is known or remembered about these people by others.

The new Edgar Evans window was recently installed to replace one of the nave south windows and I noticed there was still a plain window illuminating above the organ. Thoughts moved to ideas for a design for a stained-glass window in remembrance; but why just for the fallen what about those who served and returned and what about the other residents who
worked the land to continue to provide food and such?

A couple of years ago, I planned and drew a design, which would be a foreground of poppies mixed with wheat in the fields of The Vile rolling out to the Worm’s Headland in the distance with light white clouds in a blue sky all reflected in the surrounding sea. It seemed a lovely way to remember and seemed so apt as it was a picture without words. For various reasons this idea eventually faded away. Today the National Trust are putting this very idea into practice with The Vile fields turned to wild flowers including poppies mixed with oats.

Time passed, a mention here and there in the community Christmas Newsletters and at community council meetings and, despite a couple of people expressing an interest, it failed to generate any real practical support for such a memorial. By Spring 2018 I had all but given up on the project, but this did not dull my feeling that the community should mark the passing of 100 years in some way.

During the last year casual conversations with various people changed the face of the proposal and it became fraught with various problems: what had become a simple idea has raised more questions than answers. Who or what should this be for? What if a name is missed off any listing on the monument? Why only for the fallen? What about those who served abroad? What about those who served at home? Or those who provided for the War effort producing machinery, munitions, fuel or food? Do we want to commemorate this dreadful period? Should we move on? What form should this monument take? Where will it be sited? Is anyone really bothered after 100 years?

So with all these complications, I was concerned this would pass us by and not materialise if community interest waned; was this turning into an ego trip? – certainly not - and never has been - even if no one else was interested, I still believed the community would miss out. After all, just because no one else in the last 100 years has erected a public monument to all, save for William Gibs, some sort of time-marker should still be deserving.

It soon became clear that with the lack of actual accurate information at hand without extensive further research, there would be a danger that names could be missed from any proposed memorial listing. This is something that cannot be risked and given all the other questions raised the consideration for a low-key proposition was least likely to affect or offend the many.

The Millennium stone erected on Rhossili Green in 2000 is of a quartz conglomerate sourced from Rhossili Downs and on permanent loan from the National Trust and stands as a Menhir to mark the passing of the last 1000 years. Thoughts moved to a simple stone to represent this new monument but to lie on its back, perhaps to form a seat.

So, what will this represent?

We are now a long way from the original stained-glass window idea even though this would be the most attractive option: perhaps one day… for now, the new proposal is for the open air – free from all the constraints of the modern world – sited on the smaller Rhossili Green adjacent to St Mary’s graveyard wall: a natural setting requires a natural monument and a local stone is the most appropriate.

Sourcing a stone which is very particular to the area and of a significant size is not easy. There are many on Rhossili Downs which are fit for purpose but the legal hurdles and hoops that must be negotiated make it all but impossible to obtain. Local sources of recycled stone were checked out but nothing was available. The stipulation by the land owner was clear, it must be locally sourced Devonian Quartz Conglomerate or Devonian Old Red Sandstone and must rest on the surface of the ground.

Rhossili Community Council Clerk, Jo Scott, recalled that when ploughing her paddock in the past, the plough would catch an underlying boulder and this should warrant investigation. Presently, this is partially exposed, but its full size is undetermined but looks very promising, providing it can be extracted and moved. Once the stone size is determined details will be sent to Penrice Estate for approval; after which, planning for its installation and ‘unveiling’ can then be organised.

Rhossili Community does not have a public 'memorial' in the village other than to individuals. As the time-marker of 100 years since the cessation of hostile activities in Europe (11/11/18) and as the subsequent Peace Day (19/7/19) approaches, Rhossili Community

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While every reasonable step has been taken to ensure the veracity of the article, Rhossili Community Council does not take responsibility for any omissions or errors. December 2018
This portion of headstone does not contrast well in the photograph, but reads:

Sarah Jane Evans  
THEIR BELOVED DAUGHTER  
WHO DIED 24TH SEPTEMBER 1910  
AGED 24 YEARS  
ALSO OF  
Martin Thomas Evans  
HUSBAND OF SARAH JANE EVANS  
KILLED IN ACTION IN FRANCE 1915  
WE CANNOT LORD THY PURPOSE SEE  
BUT ALL IS WELL THAT IS DONE BY THEE

The following are those who had signed up and who lived or had lived/ties within Rhossili up until 1916. Records for the years of 1917 and 1918 have not been located. At the time of collecting it is presumed that none of those listed were ‘missing’ and all are accounted for at this time of compilation.

Parish of Rhossili

Corporal William R. Williams, 26, SeaView, 1st Glamorgan Yeomanry Egypt.
Stoker Walter Jenkins, 17, Fern Hill Top, H.M.S. Faulkner. [(sic) = Faulknor, took part in the battle of Jutland]
1st Class Petty Officer Stanley G. Beynon, 18, Ship Inn, H.M.S. Exmouth. [mostly Mediterranean action]
Private Sydney Beynon, 22, Ship Cottage, 14th Welsh, convalescent. (sic).
Private John Beynon, 26, Cochrane in Canada, 137th Canadians, Surrey.
Driver Philip Richards, 21, Upper Pitton, 14th Welsh, France.
Private William Gibbs, 28, Mewslade View, 15th Welsh, France.

Driver Arthur D Thomas, 21, Sydney N.S.W., A.A.S.C., France.
Lance-Corporal Walter Beynon, 22, Riverside Cottage, 12th Welsh, Foreign Service.
Private Samuel Morris, 19, Pilton Green, 3rd Welsh, Barry.
Lance-Corporal George Beynon, 19, Swansea, A.S.C., Welsh Division, Egypt.
Driver John Beynon, 38, Cochrane, 89th Battalion Canadian Contingent, France.
Private George Palfrey, 21, Pilton Green, N. Lines, Grantham.
George Thomas, 39, Neath, 8/5th Welsh, Egypt.
Private Sidney Richards, 26, Upper Pitton, 14th Welsh, France.
Ingram Davies, 28, Cochrane in Canada, Canadians, Canada.
Edgar Davies, 26, Cochrane in Canada, Canadians, Canada.

In Summary:
1 was Convalescing
1 was in the Foreign Service
2 were in Navy
16 were in Army, stationed/located:
5 were in France
3 were in Egypt
6 were in UK
2 were in Canada
10 were specifically in Welsh Units

Steven Campbell-Kelly

MARTIN THOMAS EVANS
‘Killed In Action in France 1915’,

The Gower Church Magazine Role of Honour listing for 1916 does not list Martin Thomas Evans as a man who signed up to serve his King and Country, yet it is known that he was serving in 1915 as his memorial records this on a family headstone in St Mary’s

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Churchyard, Rhossili, Gower, confirming that he had been ‘Killed in Action in France in 1915’.

Having done a little research, there does not appear to be any military ‘records for Martin Thomas Evans, so more research needs to be done for this man, who enlisted, fought for King and Country in France and died for ‘Freedom and Honour’.

The family descendants still live in Rhossili and have the precious Memorial Plaque given to the next of kin of a fallen soldier in the Great War.

Nicola Rees, who is the great-great-niece of the widow of Martin, showed me this coin quite independently of me knowing and having seen the head stone with the memorial to Martin. When I read the name on the Plaque it was familiar and confirmed when I checked.

The Dead Man’s Penny was sent to next-of-kin and was accompanied with a scroll letter from Buckingham Palace. This is inscribed:

\[ \text{\textit{BUCKINGHAM PALACE}} \\
\text{I join with my grateful people in sending you this memorial of a brave life for others in the the Great War.} \\
\text{(signed by King George V)} \]

This was also accompanied by a card which read:

\[ \text{(plaque issue number)} \]

To be sure that as far as may be possible none of the next of kin of those who have fallen in the War shall fail to receive the Memorial Plaque, it is requested that on receipt of the enclosed Plaque this card be signed at the bottom and posted. No stamp is required.

\[ \text{The return address details on card reverse:} \]

\[ \text{ON HIS MAJESTY’S SERVICE} \]

\[ \text{The C.S.O.F. (Plaque Section), Ordnance Factories, Royal Arsenal, London, S.E. 18.} \]

\[ \text{(OFFICIAL PAID around above and below crown - stamp mark)} \]

Little is known about Martin Thomas Evans other than when and under what circumstances he died, and that he was married to Sarah Jane Richards of Fernhill Top. It is presently not known when he was born and the age of his death.

\[ \text{THE WEARING OF DIRECT DECEENDENTS WAR MEDALS} \]

When I was much much younger, my grandmother asked me - as the eldest grandchild - to accompany her to a Remembrance Service. My grandfather had recently past, so I agreed to go with her.

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She also asked me if I would honour her by wearing her father’s WWI war medals adding that it should be seen as a privilege for me to do so because she and my grandfather had previously been mayor and mayoress of our town. I did not question it and duly obliged.

My great-grandfather, whose medals I wore, had been one of six brothers who had all fought together in and returned from the battlefields of WWI, and to whom the King had written a personal letter of thanks.

Since then I have tried to establish if this is true that descendants can wear the medals of forebears. I know that it is okay for next of kin relatives to wear them, but what about more distant descendants?

The internet has made it easier to find out. I sent an enquiry to dbs-medals@mod.gov.uk and received this reply:

“ A custom has arisen in recent years of the next of kin of deceased servicemen and servicewomen wearing the Campaign Medals and other Decorations awarded to their forebears as a mark of remembrance on suitable occasions if they so desire. (The most notable of these occasions being Remembrance Day Parades and Services.) When doing so the medals are to be worn on the right breast in civilian dress only. It must be stressed that this is an entirely unofficial practice and carries no form of official approval.

Your great-grandfather’s medals were awarded to him for his courage which now allows us to be free. Therefore, it is most fitting that you wear them at peace day.

I would also advise you that if you intend to display all of his items that you should consider having them listed on your home insurance.

I am myself a frequent visitor to Gower, particularly Rhossili, I was just wondering where this memorial is to be placed?

Kind Regards
Sally Overthrow

DBS MODMO Ops Spt “

Steven Campbell-Kelly

RHOSSILI AWARDS:
The Welsh Hospitality Awards

Pitton Cross was awarded a Highly Commended for the Best Caravan and Camping Park in Wales - probably better than 2nd place, as there were few Highly Commended certificates given out.

Also, South Gower Sports Club won top place for their Music Festival over August Bank Holiday: well done to them too!
Reflections

Death is not the end but the beginning... ...

The beginning of a new life,
New friendships, new experience and memories to
Look back on, hopefully over the years ahead.
You don’t forget those that you have loved and lost
But look back on those shared moments good and bad.
Marvel at the beauty all around you,
Take each day as it comes and be thankful you have
memories to look back on.
Be kind, be forgiving, be gentle and treat others as
you would wish others to treat you.
For you pass this way but once, use the time left wisely.

Linda Bartlett
December 2018

Farming in The Vile

Way back in time though farming was done,
Ploughing was hard and never much fun.
Beynon, Williams, Bevan, Thomas and Jones,
All farmed The Vile in spite of the stones.
They grew the best veg in the whole of Gower,
Now we are blessed with the splendid sunflower!

Sundays were different, the Lord was to thank,
The men they would argue on Middleton Bank.
Swans may have lost, for Cardiff a win,
Then up went the shout, “the mackerel are in!”
Debates were forgotten, no need to say,
Home for their rods and off to Fall Bay!

Colin Dye
Formerly of Middleton, 2018

What are they doing to our Vile?

They are returning our Vile to a previous state.
What a delight,
It will be hard to wait
Like day dawning from night.

But what were they doing?
First they scraped away topsoil,
I thought to make money by selling
Like booty looted in war, their spoil.

But no, I was wrong.
It was taken away to put in a pile,
Brought back by equipment heavy and long
Later, to form banks for the new ‘old’ Vile.
(But I must be fair,
They have made to the track,
A temporary repair
Thus modest surface is back.)

So now we have a Vile not made as of old
By stones thrown to the edge from the field
But of mud; will this continue to hold
To provide for the crops a shield?

No matter, what a wonderful mission,
Farmers walking with single furrow plough.
Just like history I see on television,
The Vile to be a museum now.
Oh dear, I see fencing and barbed wire.
Is this some special signature stamp
Marking for our Vile its funeral pyre,
Reminding me of those dreadful pictures of a prison camp?

_Olive Hopker_
_Christmas 2018_

**Barbed Wire**

I don’t like barbed wire, but if you do
Then Rhossili Vile is the place for you.
Proudly it stands, row upon row
With wood posts like sentries on guard against foe.

About its purpose there must be some doubt,
To keep the enemy in or out?
But there it stays through night and day
Keeping the adversary safely at bay.

I can see it and touch it and in the wind hear it;
Feel its authoritative vibes with prison large writ.
You may think its tentacles a beautiful sight
Or perhaps, in the landscape, a terrible blight.

_Olive Hopker_
_Christmas 2018_

**Christmas is coming, and the crows are getting fat**

Christmas is coming, and the crows are getting fat,
Fields full of sunflower seeds, a super habitat;
They feed from dawn till dusk, a picnic through the day!
Forget pretty summer blooms; for crows this is their way.

As I walk by, their black wings fill the sky.
Alas, harried by crows, few little birds I spy,
The air no longer fills with their chatter and their song.
When sunflower seeds are gone, will linnets again here throng?

_Olive Hopker_
_Christmas 2018_

**The Magnificent Seven**

Now the council in Rhossili
Neither dailies nor it dillies
They speak up for us locals one and all
They meet on a Tuesday night
And they put the world’s to right
As they sit like regal elders in the hall

Steve Campbell Kelly in the chair
And he runs it fair and square
And he also volunteer’s on the coast guards
Ian Buttons number two
And he puts his point of view
When he’s behind the counter selling postcards

Steve Walmsley’s there to last
He’s a chairman from the past
In July you’ll see him on the Tour de France
Jeff Higgins there with vigour
And he’ also good with figures
So therefore he’ the expert on finance!

There’s Tom the Pitton charmer
Who represents the farmer
As he tends his livestock o’re the fields he’ll trod
And Nicola on the green
Who is very rarely seen
Cos she’s always going flat out on her quad!

And so we come to Sally
Who is always there to rally
Which brings my little story to an end
They are manna from heaven
The magnificent seven
A councillor, a leader and a friend

_John Beynon_

**Walking in Gower**

We are very fortunate in Gower that any potential walk can start right outside one’s door.
With a myriad of waymarked paths, the Wales Coast Path on our doorstep, The Gower Way and many others there’s no excuse not to wander a little further off the beaten track!! Having not done so much walking this year following surgery I still keep in touch with those who do.
Reynoldston Ramblers walk every month. Contact John and Judith Rock 01792 391316 usually 5-6 miles venues vary from local walks on Gower to the Brecon Beacons and anywhere in between. More details can be found in the Reynoldston News monthly publication.

Taste of Gower (Tog) walks also monthly tend to be on the last Friday of the month somewhat less ambitious at 3-4 miles. The criteria for them has been that they start at a point on a bus route, there is ample parking and basic refreshments, e.g. Hot and cold drinks and an available toilet. Originally funded by the Gower Landscape Partnership the scheme is now run by a small dedicated team aiming to get people who don’t normally walk out into the countryside.

Contact: John.Ashley@swansea.gov.uk for information and further details.

Swansea Ramblers and the Gower Society both organise walks throughout the year ranging from shorter strolls to 10-12 mile full day treks. Remember, you can’t always use the weather as an excuse it’s a matter of kitting up and being prepared for what the weather throws at you.

Roger Button

Being a Plastic Free Community

You will all have heard of Surfers Against Sewage, but did you know about the extra programme they have started, aiming to create a Plastic Free Community? They are encouraging residents to work together, to tackle the problems created by single-use plastic on our beaches, from us as consumers all the way back to the businesses who use them and the manufacturers who make them. It doesn’t mean removing all types of plastic from our lives completely, it’s about reducing our single-use plastic items and using our consumer power to change the system that produces them.

At our September Community Council Meeting it was unanimously agreed that we would register our interest in this programme, joining many coastal communities across the UK blighted by this problem and finding out what is involved in working towards the accreditation. Did you know that approximately 5000 items of marine plastic pollution is washed up on each mile of our coast?

At school, I have been working with the pupils to help raise awareness of the plastic problem. We entered a nationwide competition to become “Ocean Guardians” and were incredibly honoured to be one of 25 schools to be successful. The children worked tirelessly, and I am very proud of them all. Recently, I was contacted by BBC Countryfile, as they had heard of our pupils’ achievements and they filmed the children doing a beach clean on Rhossili and Llangennith Beaches. Keep your eyes peeled on the TV schedules in Spring 2019! They organise litter picks around the school grounds and plan at least one beach clean per term.

Not sitting on our laurels, the Ocean guardians of Knelston have now embarked on the programme to achieve the status of “Plastic Free School” as well. You will be pleased to know that we have just finished our final task and are awaiting confirmation that we have fulfilled the criteria. We held a “Single Plastic Boycott”, promoted a Plastic Free Lunchbox and have even made beeswax wraps as an alternative to cling film for our fruit Tuck Shop.

The commitment of these children to this cause, and their energy and enthusiasm to help make a difference and protect our beautiful Gower Coastline makes me very proud.

Now it’s the grown ups’ turn, to follow their example! We would like to engage in friendly conversations with local businesses so that they can achieve the “Plastic Free Stamp of Approval” and they can do this by replacing three single-use plastic items with alternatives – this could be using wooden cutlery instead of plastic, replacing polystyrene boxes with cardboard etc. When our businesses agree to use plastic free alternatives it will have positive and beneficial effects for our community and everyone in it. We also plan to approach the owners of holiday rental properties so that the visitors can embrace the whole ethos while they are staying in our community. (They may even be convinced enough to carry it out when they return home.)

When we achieve this, Rhossili will be awarded Plastic Free Coastline Status and we can all do our bit, no matter how small. Please support this campaign by trying to reduce your own plastic consumption. I am
on the local Plastic Free Coastline Steering Group and will be attending monthly meetings so if you require any further information, or would like to participate, PLEASE DON’T HESITATE TO CONTACT ME.

Sally Thomas

DARK SKIES IN RHOSILLI

It is very dark in Rhossili in winter and whilst this may seem to be a disadvantage when walking by torchlight, it is such a rare situation now that areas with really dark skies such as Rhossili, are sometimes awarded ‘dark sky status’. Dark sky status is granted by the International Dark Sky Association and it is claimed by some other areas which have the status to boost tourism, the local economy and also provide health benefits. Many city and urban areas are badly affected by light pollution, so-called ‘skylow’, caused mainly by the sodium and other streetlights (and it must be said, the ‘fry on the spot’ domestic security lights also play a part) and this makes it nearly impossible to see the splendour of the night sky.

Viewing the winter night sky from Rhossili provides a rare opportunity to view almost horizon to horizon and looking in a south westerly direction on a winter’s night gives a spectacular view towards the centre of the Milky Way galaxy and its many billions of stars. Current star number estimates derived from calculations of the mass of the Milky Way, indicate approximately 100 billion stars; it is very difficult indeed to connect with the size of such numbers.

If it were possible for us to view the Milky Way galaxy from another point in space, the galaxy would look like a central bulge surrounded by spiral arms, some large and some smaller, somewhat like the image here of a different galaxy called Messier 101, taken from my observatory, using a modest telescope and digital camera. It is located in the Plough constellation and was discovered in 1781, by the famous French astronomer Sir Charles Messier, who compiled a database of just over 100 objects in the 16th Century. The Milky Way's large arms are known as Perseus and Scutum Centaurus. Our sun is in one of the minor arms, called the Orion Arm. Because the sky is so dark at Rhossili, we are afforded this magnificent view of our local part of the universe.

What else can be seen? The answer to this question depends upon whether we use the naked eye, binoculars/telescope or a telescope and camera combination. With the naked eye, it is possible to see some of the larger galaxies and nebulae such as the famous Orion Nebula, which to the unaided eye looks like a faint fuzzy patch in the ‘sword’ region of the Orion constellation. If you follow the rising line of the three stars which constitute Orion’s belt out to the right, you will see a cluster of stars called the Pleiades. It is also possible to see our giant neighbour, the Andromeda galaxy in the constellation of Pegasus. Some folks can detect the colour of stars and you can only see this if the sky is really dark. Some good coloured stars to look for are Arcturus (follow the handle of the plough down in the same curve). This is a noticeably red coloured star. Another red star is Betelgeuse (pronounced ‘beetlejuice’) which is the top left star in the constellation of Orion. Stars in the Pleiades cluster look blue and white, whilst the Star Procyon has a shade of yellow. I have found that the sky needs to be clear and steady in order to detect these colours.

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If you are fortunate enough to own a telescope, there are many more objects you can see, but you’ll need a sturdy tripod and some star maps such as Norton’s Star Atlas in order to locate some star clusters, nebulae or galaxies from Messier’s list. If you are thinking to buy a telescope, don’t be caught out by retailers’ marketing data which nearly always cites ‘magnification’ as the power of a telescope. The real power of a telescope is the diameter of its objective lens (or mirror if it is a reflecting telescope) which needs to be as large as your budget can afford. For a refracting (lens type) telescope this is denoted as the ‘objective diameter’ and needs to be 80mm minimum. For a reflecting (mirror type) telescope, it is denoted as the ‘primary mirror diameter’ and a mirror size of 100mm would be a good starting telescope. Don’t forget that tripod - larger aperture telescopes can be heavy and you won’t be able to hold it still enough to see those lovely night sky objects.

Binoculars are a good wide field option and a pair of 10 x 50 or 10 x40 can be useful especially to view star clusters such as the Pleiades or the Milky Way itself. If you have a digital single lens reflex camera (DSLR) with a telescopic lens and a tripod, you can take brilliant photographs of the Orion Nebula. The image here was taken with a Canon digital SLR camera and a Canon 200mm lens. It shows two nebulae of particular interest, as they are thought to be areas of star birth. The nebulae are M42, the Orion Nebula, and to its right, an area called ‘the Running Man Nebula’ - because it is possible to make out the image of a human figure in the clouds and dust making up the nebula. In terms of size, the Orion Nebula is 12 light years across. How many miles is that? Roughly 7 followed by thirteen zeros.

Choose a still, clear, moonless night when the stars don’t seem to sparkle too much, as this is a good indicator of clear skies for astrophotography. On those nights when the moon is visible, it also presents some great photographic opportunities.

Over the years, I have been through various observing phases, from naked eye through binoculars and small telescopes and I am now fortunate to own a sky tracking computer controlled tripod, a large diameter telescope and a digital camera attached to it. I made my own observatory to house it all. The sensitivity of this kind of setup far exceeds what can be seen with the naked eye and it is possible to take detailed photographs of galaxies which are many millions of light years distant and not visible to the naked eye. (You can see some examples by exploring my website here: www.Gowerobservatory.org).

With Christmas close by, it would be appropriate to mention a ‘bright star in the east’. During winter, there is a bright star rising in the east, it is called Sirius and is the brightest star in the night sky (part of the constellation Orion - at the bottom left - very bright, you can’t miss it), but as with all the objects in the night sky, they rise and set and move across the sky at a rate of 15 degrees per hour, so a star in the east won’t be there for long....

If you have a computer and would like to find your way around the night sky, there are many free programs and web sites you can use. One very good
free program is Cartes Du Ciel (https://sourceforge.net/projects/skychart/). This program can act as a planetarium and help you to find astronomical objects such as nebulae and galaxies and it will display images too. There are many other websites and programs and a quick Google search will provide many links.

If you like your information in book form, then Norton’s star atlas will provide you with maps of the night sky and is readily acquired from retailers. If you feel you’d like to explore the Messier objects, I can recommend a very readable book ‘Deep-Sky Companions The Messier Objects’ by Stephen James O’Meara.

Whichever viewing route you choose, having the dark skies of Rhossili underpins it all. It is not possible to see much of what I have described if you live in or near to a city, as the skyglow obliterates the faint night sky objects. I hope you have some cloud free nights and enjoy some dark sky views.

Paul Kirk
Pitton
December 2018

FARMING INSIGHT:
Great Pitton Farm

What a fantastic year to be farming!!

Although 2018 was a challenging year with extreme weather conditions, it was definitely a great year to be working in the Gower countryside. Spring seemed to take forever to arrive and by early April our forage stocks had virtually run out meaning cattle had to start going out to grass, even though it was unseasonably cold - they spent their days sheltering behind walls and hedges, making a mess! We did manage to plant some of our spring crops on time, however most planting had to be postponed due to ground conditions being too cold and wet.

By the middle of June things were starting to look extremely dry causing the grass to stop growing and the crops to ripen prematurely. Consequently, we started harvest the earliest we have in years - although our crop yields had been reduced slightly, the quality of the grain and straw was the best I have harvested.

Combining started on the 5th July and finished on the 7th August, which is 3 weeks earlier than usual! This suited me nicely, as my wife Jess gave birth to our son Henry on the 27th August - he is already learning the farming ropes from his older sister Isabel.

There are always challenges in farming and as much as we have all enjoyed the wonderful weather, it did mean we were not able to make as much silage as previous years, which is essential fodder for the cattle during the winter months. However, luckily, the rain did eventually arrive and combined with the high soil temperature, we managed to cut the grass much later than usual and our cattle have enjoyed a fantastic autumn.

As we fast approach the middle of December, and are greeted with cold, wet and dark days, at least we can look back and remember the brilliant summer!

Tom Higgs

GOWER LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP
- in it for the long run

The Gower Landscape Partnership – “protecting Gower for all its worth” – has now finished its Heritage Lottery Fund programme, and is now starting its 10 year maintenance stage. GLP have run about 60 projects, worth nearly £2m, over the last 4 years to inspire and help local people learn more about and look after Gower’s special and distinctive features.

The Vile featured heavily, reflecting its importance, but hay meadows, cultural history and Gower dialect also featured.

Now we will be building on the legacy of these projects, to make sure that GLP has a long-lasting impact on Gower, helping to safeguard its special features and characteristics for future generations.
For details please visit our Facebook page (ThisIsGower) and look at our website:
http://www.thisisgower.co.uk/

Mike Scott,
AONB Officer, Swansea Council,

NATIONAL TRUST

The Vile: providing for nature in a cultural landscape

As I write this the wind is rattling the tiles and the windows of the National Trust office at South Pilton Green farm. The trees have resumed their time worn battle with the prevailing winds and any birds I can see fly past the window at extraordinary speeds as they play in the autumn gale. It all seems so far away from the endless summer we enjoyed this year. But before I settle into a hibernation state of mind too much I am able to reflect on what a fantastic summer it was for wildlife in Rhossili and in particular on the Vile. The sunflower fields were a draw for thousands of people and spawned tens of thousands of ‘selfies’ on Facebook and twitter but wildlife enjoyed the sunflowers just as much if not more than the visitors.

A rough calculation done in the peak of the flowering season estimated that we had approximately 400,000 sunflowers and loosely there could be found on most days at least one bee on every other flower head giving around 200,000 bees. Not bad considering the previous summer the same field was a silage field with no flowers and very few invertebrates. Similarly, the hay meadows were literally buzzing with life during May June and July and insects such as great green bush crickets, and dark green fritillary butterflies were seen on a daily basis.

At this time of year, I have the very good fortune to be already planning for 2019, deciding where our resources will be best used, where money should be spent – and most importantly – how we can best look after our wildlife. Over the last three years we have been developing our High Nature Status farm at the Vile. We grow varieties of crops not often seen in west Wales such as sunflowers, lupins, linseed and millet. We have changed the large open fields of highly productive rye grass back to small traditional hay meadows where flowers such as ox-eye daisy, forget-me-not and knapweed thrive. As a result the landscape is now awash with a pallet of greens, browns, yellows, reds and even the occasional blue, as rare cornflowers have made a very welcome return to the land! Landscape is just one of the reasons for our choice of management on the Vile. Another is that we now have flowers continuously in bloom throughout the spring and summer. By doing this we can provide food for all of our pollinating insects such as butterflies, moths, bees and hoverflies, but at this time of year the choices we have made become very important for overwintering birds. Farmland birds (sparrows, goldfinches, linnets, starlings and chaffinches to name just a few) have had an increasingly hard time in the UK of late and we are doing our bit to help increase their numbers.
On the Vile we have made a very conscious decision to make space for nature. We leave a proportion of our crops standing in the fields, creating a giant bird table for all to come and enjoy! The results so far have been spectacular. On any given day at the moment you can walk from the Rhossili car park towards the Vile and long before you see the brightly coloured goldfinch feeding on the seed-laden sunflower heads, you will hear them-deafeningly so and in their hundreds!

Take a different route into the fields along the Vile lane with its tall mature hedges and if you stop and listen for a moment you will soon hear the wrens, chaffinches and sparrows as they feed and shelter. Sparrow numbers have plummeted within my lifetime across the whole of the UK and it is a pleasure (and a relief) to still find this once ubiquitous bird still on Gower. Wander a little farther into the fields and soon you will hear the chattering of hundreds of linnets socialising as they pick their way through the oats and linseed left for them and overhead starlings perform their winter murmurations. Amongst the larger birds you will regularly see a parliament of rooks feeding, lapwings with their heads down and plumes up looking for food, golden plover down from their upland summer homes to their overwintering territories and if you are lucky you may even see short eared owls and barn owls as they silently scour the ground for a vole or shrew to snack on – increased numbers of small mammals being another benefit of our less intensive farming.

Even now there are still a few remaining flowers in the fields to brighten up even the dullest autumn
morning – poppies nodding gently amongst the crops we have left as food for birds and occasionally corn marigolds shine like gold sovereigns in the margins.

The results of just a few years of giving nature some space on this land has produced astonishingly good results. Our land is still productive (we produce bird food to ensure garden birds are as well looked after as their rural cousins) yet simply leaving wider margins and slowing down the pace of work, nature has quickly re-established itself in its rightful home.

Seeing the sheer volume of farmland birds over winter is an absolute pleasure in a season when everything else is silent and dormant and my office work is regularly interrupted by a ‘vital’ need to investigate something at Rhossili! But, maybe tomorrow – when the storm has passed!

I’m not alone in those bright fields!
The endless ranks attract the crowd,
Some people to temptation yield
And take away those blossoms proud.
Cameras click and ‘phones deploy,
For such a sight gives endless joy.
The land lies cold in Winter’s track
Wild winds blow in persistent rain.
The golden heads have turned to black.
I wander through those fields again;
The crowds are gone, to shelter seek
(And in their place)
Are hungry birds, with busy beak.

Alan Kearsley-Evans,
Countryside Manager for Gower & Ceredigion National Trust

Vile Sunflowers

Tipping my hat to W S Churchill, who wrote:

“The proud giant of the garden race,
Who, madly rushing to the Sun’s embrace,
O’ertops her fellows with aspiring aim,
Demands his wedded love and bears his name.”

and with a nod to William Wordsworth, I wrote the following:

‘Neath Summer skies of cloudless blue,
To please the soul as I passed by,
There stretched away a different hue
A golden vista pleased my eye
Beside the paths, between the walls,
Dancing Sunflowers, standing tall.

In endless rows of yellow bright,
Their heads, majestic, face the sun
To all who come, a wondrous sight.
And as the orb his course does run,
Heads turn as well to face the light
That gives the life that from him came
And proudly do they share his name.

Peter Scott

PROTECTING GOWER’S HEDGES

GOWER HEDGEROW HUB – A new project looking for volunteers!

Hedgerows are fascinating and very significant features in Gower’s landscape and are incredibly important for wildlife. A new project funded by Natural Resources, National Trust and Swansea Council is working with landowners to enhance and protect them, and raise awareness of their importance.

*Gower Hedgerow Hub* is offering training, volunteering and crafts opportunities over the next 12 months. The lead officer, Helen Grey, said “We are looking for volunteers to help look after Gower’s hedges – learning to prepare and “lay” them in the traditional way, to plant new sections, and to carry out hedgerow surveys. Our first Introduction to Hedgelaying course was a huge success with 7 volunteers who learned the basics of laying a hedge in the local ‘Gower Style’ at Hardings Down farm to create shelter for cattle and provide a wildlife corridor. We had really positive feedback. Our next course in Dec is full but there’s another in January.”
Upcoming dates for volunteering are on Tuesdays, between 10am and 4pm: 11th & 18th Dec (Santa outfit optional); 8th, 22nd, 29th Jan; 12th & 19th Feb; 5th & 12th March. Please book your place as we need to know numbers in advance. Tools, equipment, training will be provided. Full details and location given on enquiry.

We would welcome groups too and are happy to make arrangements to suit. We will also be running a series of ‘How To...’ training days, please see our Facebook page “Gower Hedgerow Hub” or call 01792 636992.

Helen Grey
External Funding Programme Officer
AONB Officer, Swansea Council,
who had managed to dial 999 himself. A search team member spotted him in the sea off Overton and he was rescued by Lifeboat.

7 November saw Rhossili CRT tasked to a medical emergency on Rhossili beach, where the team administered CPR and we are pleased to say the casualty made a full recovery and came back to Rhossili to thank the team.

The team lost two members this year in Alison Carey and Ian Brown; we are sorry to lose them as both were dedicated members. But as two leave two will be joining us in the new year after they have completed their initial training course. Sarah Tucker who was a team member some years ago, re-joins carrying on the Tucker family tradition as her Dad Martin was a valuable past member for over 40 years. We also welcome Matthew Fifield. We are still a few members short to make up our full team complement, so if you think you have the time and commitment please get in touch with any team member. Being part of active and busy team, you will see being a team member is something to be proud; to be part of and know you are helping others in their hour of need.

Finally, the team are looking forward to the annual "Silly Willy" award in the Worms Head and we will be getting "off the rock" to go to Mumbles for a few beers and a curry. We will be taking partners to say thank you for being patient when well cooked meals have gone to waste! but like us, they wouldn't have it any other way!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Steve Jones
Rhossili Coastguard
to wish everyone a Happy New Year, and please could they use our toilet – it must have been a good celebration!

We have gained seven new Watchkeepers during the year, have three more in training, and we have lost two, with a few on long-term sickness leave but we continue to do our bit to keep the public safe on the cliffs. Three Watchkeepers have been presented with their 10-year service pins, six more with 5-year service pins and early in the year we were invited to spend the day with Milford Haven Coastguard Station, putting faces to the voices we hear over the phone and radio.

We have had numerous difficulties to overcome this year, not least the failure of our new heating system, which was unable to operate successfully in the conditions down there due mostly to the amount of sand and soil in the wind blocking the air intake. There have been long hours of research to find a reliable system but to no avail at the moment. Because the National Trust and the Gower Society upgraded the windows to double-glazing there is no longer the problem of condensation fogging them up so we couldn’t see outside to do our job of “Watching”, and even the snow in March didn’t stop us!

As I wrote my Annual Report, I was told that the wind generator was not working properly so it would have to be taken down and examined. Further investigation has revealed the hub has burnt out and is no longer charging, but fortunately, we have managed to buy a very efficient solar panel to make sure we have enough energy to power our small, but vital pieces of equipment. If the generator can’t be repaired by the manufacturer, we will have to invest in a more reliable type that can cope with the extreme conditions we sometimes have on the cliff top.

So far this year we have been directly involved in nine incidents, ranging from suspected broken shoulders and ankles, to the usual stranding on the island. Some were picked up by the RNLI, others waded back and one couple even swam back, receiving strong words of advice from Rhossili Cliff Rescue Team. We have also had to use the siren many times to warn people that they are at risk of being cut off by the fast-rising tide and have received many a “Thank you” for the Watchkeepers’ timely interventions, making our job very rewarding.

During the only wet week-end in June, NCI Worms Head underwent its annual assessment of Declared Facility Status, but the high winds and driving rain prevented the planned exercise with Horton-Port Eynon Lifeboat, which everyone had been looking forward to. However, despite the weather, we passed and the four representative Watchkeepers collectively breathed a sigh of relief at the end of the day – it’s quite stressful knowing that your performance carries the responsibility for the whole band of fifty Watchkeepers remaining in the Search and Rescue family.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported and encouraged us over the past year, and on behalf of NCI Worms Head, wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Andy Bowen
Station Manager,
National Coastwatch Institution Worms Head

Twelve Years Watching

It is twelve years, nearly thirteen, since NCI Worms Head came into existence, and we have been members since the beginning. Fresh from total retirement as teachers with long careers, we found stimulation in using our knowledge and expertise for the benefit of a new set of people. We’ve been involved in several incidents requiring the attendance of our Cliff Rescue Team, but most of our time is spent talking to the many visitors from around the World. It has been our great pleasure to increase our knowledge and understanding of the local history and culture and to pass it on, hopefully adding to their enjoyment of the visit.

NCIWH started work with just nineteen members, five of whom came from our community around Rhossili. Over the years, recruitment has stabilised at fifty members but still only five from Rhossili. At present, no new members are required but they will be in the future as some may be moving out of the area. It would be of real benefit to maintain local involvement in the future, so we are asking anyone in the Three Villages who may be approaching retirement age to think about registering an interest in joining Worms Head NCI so that real local knowledge is passed on.
Contact the Station Manager, Andy Bowen, or us, and we will pass your details onwards.

Jo and Pete Scott

RHOSILI WORKING GROUP

Rhossili Working Group - Update: Christmas 2018

Lagoons, Windfarms, Porpoise…and the European Court of Justice

Our story started with opposition to the Atlantic Array Wind Farm, continued with a watching brief on the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon, all the while following the plight of the Harbour Porpoise and the Government’s failure to provide appropriate conservation areas for this endangered species.

Following a year with no talks between the authorities and the developers, the Government finally rejected the proposals for the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon on 25 June 2018, on the basis that the project did not offer value for money. Various facts and figures about the cost have been bandied about: at the end, the developers were asking for a price of £89.50 per Megawatt hour (down from an initial asking price of about £180 per MWh) compared with £92.50 for energy from the new Hinckley Point nuclear power station – but the Lagoon’s price was dependent on a large upfront Government loan, otherwise the price rose to about £118 per MWh. This compares with an agreed strike price of £57 per MWh for offshore wind farms coming on stream in 2022. It was estimated that the lagoon would cost every household in the UK an extra £700 between 2031 and 2050.

A reconfigured economic plan was put forward on 26 July which would by-pass the Government’s ‘contract for difference’ method of subsidizing green energy. This would set up an independent company to produce electricity, but required huge private investment as well as a direct £500 million subsidy from the Welsh Government, with all the inherent financial and commercial risks. At this date, although it had planning permission, the Lagoon had still not received the requisite Marine Licence from Natural Resources Wales (NRW), a sign that there was still environmental concern about the project. On 20th September, Tidal Lagoon plc entered into a Company Voluntary Agreement in order to meet its outstanding debts including £2.5 million from the Welsh Government.

And thus, it stands. We used to joke that David Cameron and Carwyn Jones had a gentleman’s agreement to deliver the Lagoon and also rail electrification to Swansea – when one was on, so was the other and vice versa. Now both seem to be off the table.

Although a disappointment for green energy, it is a huge relief for Swansea Bay. The credentials for lagoon power are impeccable: regular and predictable power production no matter what the weather with a life span of 120 years. But the impact on the environment of Swansea Bay would have been disastrous: the tides could no longer clear the sediments brought down the River Tawe, meaning that Blackpill would become mudflats, and there would be saltmarsh right along to Mumbles; the water quality would deteriorate, whereas at the moment, Swansea Bay is on a path to meet the standards for clean water set by the European Water Framework. This is besides the concerns for fish and marine mammals which are still a concern for NRW – hence no Marine Licence. The real failure is that the media were absent at some of the crucial Planning Inspectorate meetings and have told only one side of the story to the public.

Rhossili Working Group formed in 2011 to focus opposition to the proposed Atlantic Array Wind Farm, a gigantic wind farm to be sited between Gower and Lundy covering 200sq km with 240 turbines reaching 220 metres height (Rhossili Down is 193 metres high). In late 2013, RWE withdrew its plans. However, along the way, it became apparent that Swansea Bay and the coast of Gower are the location of high densities of Harbour Porpoise: this is a protected European species, but at the time there were no conservation areas for the species in UK waters, even though 56% of the Atlantic range of the Harbour Porpoise lie in British waters. Formal complaints by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Porthcawl Environment Trust were lodged in 2012 with the European Commission that the UK had failed to implement its statutory obligation to provide conservation areas for the species. Further inaction by the UK led to EC legal
infringement proceedings against the UK Government, and subsequent referral to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) on 23rd December 2016.

The ECJ issued its judgement on 18th October 2018 (case ref: C-669/16) finding the UK to be in breach of its responsibilities – costs were awarded but no fine.

Meanwhile, the UK has belatedly nominated six SACs (Special Areas of Conservation) for the Harbour Porpoise around the UK coastline, which it submitted to Europe in January 2017. These areas were derived by a highly dubious statistical methodology, rather than by empirical evidence, further compounded by sleight of hand in internal JNCC email correspondence in which a 25% possibility became a 100% certainty (emails available on request) – the chief statistical reviewer resigned because he was so unhappy with the process.

The dubious methodology has resulted in an area called the ‘Bristol Channel Approaches’ being nominated as our local conservation area and stretches between Pembrokeshire and Lands End. Not only is this sea area not part of the Bristol Channel, but there have been no sightings of Harbour Porpoise in 80% of this sea area in the last twenty years. Worse, the breeding area of Scarweather Sands off Porthcawl, and feeding areas of Swansea Bay and the Gower Coast are still not protected at all – there are many commercial interests in this area including ports, dumping grounds and the Hinckley Point nuclear development.

To end on a positive note, one achievement by Rhossili Working Group will hopefully stand the test of time: we persuaded E.ON to release in to the public domain Chris Pierpoint’s research paper A two year pre-construction baseline of Harbour Porpoise activity at Scarweather Sands Offshore Wind Farm (2008a). This shows harbour porpoise activity in our own sea area to be amongst the highest in all UK waters. As it had previously been withheld, the authorities maintained there was no evidence for porpoise presence. Future developments will now need to take this into account.

Carl Johnson,
Rhossili Working Group
28 November 2018

The Rhossili Oil Consortium (ROC), founded by Barbara Powell in our village, exists to secure the best possible price for its members who live in or around Rhossili. We have over 50 members who place orders for home heating oil through the consortium. By ordering together we are able to get a discount, and usually the orders are delivered together too, which is more economical for the oil companies. Although we combine for discount, members’ orders are dealt with separately by the supplier: each member has their own account and pays their own invoices.

The order cycle runs six times a year. Members can choose on each occasion whether or not to order. Many people only order through the consortium. Others place an occasional order through the consortium and then top up out of the cycle by going to their preferred supplier directly, which is fine. Every 2 months starting in January I ask members for their order quantities and then I call a list of suppliers, and haggle for the best price. A spreadsheet with the orders goes to the chosen supplier, and I inform members about delivery details and the price.

Several ‘newbies’ have joined the consortium this year and a couple have dropped out because they don’t use oil anymore. Anyone can join in, so if you haven’t yet considered it, please ask me for details.

May I take this opportunity to wish all our members a very happy Christmas and all the best for 2019.

Caroline Johnson
email: rhossiliroc@gmail.com
25/11/2018
HAY MEADOWS – YEAR 4

It was a difficult year this year, what with the bizarre weather we had from Spring onwards. The sward grew well during the winter, and then came to a stop because of the drier time and the growing cycle was interrupted. The yellow rattle that had seeded early in Year 3 germinated with a vengeance and all the fields showed great swathes of colour. The small blue butterflies loved it and we could hear myriads of grasshoppers and crickets from all directions. We were really pleased to see the number of orchids increase from one to sixteen and from one species to two and, delightfully, a significant increase in the spread of cowslips in the field Kiln Hay; we hope to see them in Slade Acre next year, with seed spread from the westerly winds that came in August.

We were not able to organise a cut of the fields this year, as all the machinery was at work in other fields, so with a significant decrease in available fodder elsewhere because of the drought conditions during the summer months, we let the sheep and lambs into the fields early to eat it off instead. They did a fine job, and we’re hoping that the yellow rattle will have reduced in thickness when it germinates next year.

Managing hay meadows is a human struggle and although mechanisation has changed the actual work, the reliance on several days of fine weather at the right time, the length of the growing season and the pressure to provide feed for the sparse winter months balanced with the need to rest the meadows is a rhythm that has been unchanged for thousands of years.

In the AONB of the North Pennines, where Peter lived and was brought up, we are familiar with the progress they have made over the past few decades since 1988 to protect the still-existing upland hay meadows. One of the things they did was to gather information from local people of their memories of Hay-making time, how they did it, who did it, when they did it, how did they collect it and how was the end of it celebrated, if at all – our understanding is they were so tired they were just glad it was finished with! We hope that there will be an extension to the Gower Landscape Project in regard of Hay Meadows, so that local folk can be asked about their memories before it is too late; so that old machinery, rusting away in a corner of a yard can be rescued and restored because that would make the picture complete. Our efforts in our small way have made our fields a wonderful habitat for small wildlife, and when it joins up with other meadows on The Vile you may all see some sights that have not been possible since you were young (er!).

Jo and Pete Scott

VILLAGE SECURITY

Just to introduce myself, my name is PC Richard Jeavons and I am based at Reynoldston police Station in Gower. I am now the new Neighbourhood Beat Manager for Gower, having taken over from the now retired PC Phil Davies who left in mid-March 2018. I have been a Police Officer for nearly 19 years and Phil leaves very large boots to fill as he was the local Officer in Gower for a very (very...) long time. He had a wealth of knowledge as a result and I am hopeful that I will attain a similar stature in due course. I will certainly do my best and am still settling into my new role. I have to say, I am thoroughly enjoying it! I worked in Townhill prior to coming down to Gower, however, I have extensive knowledge of Gower sector overall having worked it for many years previously.

While every reasonable step has been taken to ensure the veracity of the articles, Rhossili Community Council does not take responsibility for any omissions or errors. December 2018
My first few months have been very enjoyable, and also very busy. I have been ably assisted as usual by my colleagues PCSO Andy Brown and PCSO Joelle Borthwick. Gower does not traditionally have a high crime rate and I am happy to report that continues to be the case. I will endeavour to ensure that it remains so as well. Recently though, there has been a spate of dwelling burglaries across Swansea and Neath. Nothing down Gower thankfully, however, we must not be complacent. Please be vigilant at all times and report anything suspicious. Ensure your doors and windows are locked, house alarms set and that we look out for our elderly neighbours. By following basic crime prevention advice, it goes a long way to protecting your properties.

There has also been a recent spate of car thefts in Caswell, Mumbles and Sketty areas...again, nothing of note recently in Gower itself. Keys are being left with vehicles by surfers, secreting them about the car. This is against our advice and despite our efforts, this continues to be a common practice. Regular attention is being paid at all Gower beaches, but again I would urge you to be vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour, no matter where you live.

My contact mobile number is the same one that had been used as the Gower Officer for many years, 07805 301600 and my email is richard.jeavons@south-wales.pnn.police.uk. I am here to help you so if you want any advice, please give me a call. Alternatively, if you prefer, pop into Reynoldston police station for a chat when I am on duty.

All that remains for me to say is to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous new year.

PC Richard Jeavons
Reynoldston Police Station
Mobile 07805301600

Rhossili Community Council and business representatives attended the Dark Skies meeting recently and a summary follows, a more detailed report on the scope of the project can be found above.

**Dark Skies – Gower AONB Application**

Members of Tourism Swansea Bay and other local businesses recently attended a meeting organised by the Gower AONB team at Swansea Council and Dark Sky Wales. Businesses were invited to come along and learn more about the Gower AONB application to the International Dark Skies Association to become a dark skies community and to see inside a mobile planetarium. Tourism Swansea Bay hopes to organise a repeat of the event for its members.

**Gower Ambassadors Project**

The Gower Ambassadors project commenced in 2017 and resulted in around 60 trained ambassadors of Gower who are passionate and knowledgeable about the area, here to help at, and enhance Gower events, available to meet and greet visitors to Gower and share knowledge / stories / hidden gems / recommendations.

In July 2018 tourism trade association ‘Tourism Swansea Bay’ took the lead on the project and was by the Sustainable Development Fund with support from the Gower Landscape Partnership. Tourism Swansea Bay aim to raise awareness of the ambassadors as well as putting their skills to good use. We have already had ambassadors greeting coaches of German cruise ship visitors to Rhossili, and volunteering at events such as Gower Walking Festival, Gower Cycling Festival and the Gower Show.

*More information on Tourism Swansea Bay at [www.tourismswanseabay.co.uk](http://www.tourismswanseabay.co.uk) (details of projects can be found in the members area of the website menu)*

Dean Jeffery
Administrator
Tourism Swansea Bay

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**UPDATE FROM TOURISM SWANSEA BAY**

Local independent tourism trade association - regarding Gower related projects they are involved in.

While every reasonable step has been taken to ensure the veracity of the articles, Rhossili Community Council does not take responsibility for any omissions or errors. December 2018
Digital Promotion of Sustainable Transport in Rural Swansea

Tourism Swansea Bay has partnered with BayTrans to deliver a project to bring renewed focus on the merits of public transport, cycling and walking for visitors to Rural Swansea and for Rural Swansea to be a beacon for sustainable transport for visitors. The project is part funded by the Swansea Rural Development Partnership and supported by Gower Landscape Partnership.

A new updated interactive version of existing website www.swanseabaywithoutacar.com will be coming soon featuring:

- Information on getting to and around Swansea Bay (including rural communities of Swansea e.g. in Gower & Mawr)
- Walking & Cycling information (including rural areas) – maps, links and more
- Bus timetables, bus and train ticket information - all in one place
- Rural walk guides
- Details of attractions across Swansea Bay and what buses to catch
- Details of local businesses offering discounts to bus users, cyclists and walkers

Follow the projects on social media featuring stunning interactive panoramic images of rural Swansea, and useful public transport, walking and cycling information:

www.facebook.com/swanseabaywithoutacar
www.twitter.com/swbwithoutacar

RECYCLING BAGS AVAILABLE

Don’t forget that you can collect new supplies of recycling bags from Pitton Cross Caravan Park if you run short. You can collect green and food bags from the shop daily between 10am and 4pm. This service is in addition to the kerbside replenishment service already provided by Swansea Council. Now also available are Kitchen Waste Bins and Garden Green Bags.

Tracey Button, Pitton Cross Caravan and Camping

Recycling Centre

This year here at Pitton Cross Caravan Park had a great year with regards to campers and the weather being really helpful. The recycling has been a little challenging to say the least with regards to Swansea City Council removing us as a distribution centre for Recycling Bags, etc.

I had heard that Reynoldston Post Office was also removed from this too.

My mission was put before me to get us re-instated.

I contacted the Recycling Residential and Commercial Department (RRC) asking why we were removed, which they had done the previous year and Richard Lewis, was kind enough to back us all the way, which got us back as a distribution centre.

It was mentioned that people could go and collect from Pennard or Crofty or the Town Hall. I thought that it was ludicrous, as many people at the West end of Gower are a little older than myself and don’t drive. With this in mind I mentioned to them that it would require a resident to either take 2 buses minimum to get to the other distribution points or wait for a friendly neighbour to pick up for them. I made it clear that we do not have shops just next door to our
houses and that we had been a distribution centre for a minimum of 7 years.

I sent emails to Rhossili Community Council, Port Eynon and Reynoldston Community Councils, Richard Lewis. I also included the Gower MP Tonia Antoniazzi.

We were told that residents need to put the tags out on the bags and they would be dropped off, but I mentioned and also Richard Lewis, that we do this and none are left at request!

After a battle on emails over the last 2 months, here at the campsite we are now reinstated. There are conditions with this and that is that we will only stock Green Bags, Reusable Pink Bags, Food Bags, Kitchen Bin and the Large Green Kitchen Road Side Bin. I approached the department again mentioning that parts of Rhossili are on the single use pink bags; after several days the council replied to me and they will only let us have 2 boxes of single use pink bags.

Our open hours are from 10 am to 4 pm daily - 7 days a week to top up your bags, etc.

Obviously, Reynoldston Post Office, also now hold Green and Pink single use bags, so if we have none please go there.

You must also contact to let the RRC department know that you have not received your recycling bags when you have requested - If you don't tell them they can't sort it out!

I would suggest making a note of when you put out the tag and keep a track of when they do not deliver your bags.

Rebecca Tribe is the Team Leader of the Recycling Residential and Commercial Waste. 01792 635600 or email: rebecca.tribe@swansea.gov.uk

I am meeting with Tonia Antoniazzi MP in the middle of December 2018 to discuss further our Recycling Issues.

If you would like to know any further information or have any questions you would like to ask, then please do pop into our shop here on the campsite. I would like to thank all helped to support us in being reinstated.

Tracey Button, Pitton Cross Caravan and Camping

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A note of thanks to Jim Harford of Print Partnership, who provides a great printing service to so many people on Gower. His company always demonstrates professionalism and quick turnaround – ensuring that this newsletter will find its way to our doorsteps in good time for the Christmas season.

Rhossili Community Council
Season’s Greetings

Dave & Barbara Powell: “Wishing all our friends & neighbours a very merry Christmas & happy, healthy year ahead”

Vicki James: “Festive Greetings to everyone in Rhossili and wishing you all a happy, healthy and peaceful 2019 (also hoping to see lots of you at the NYE party in Rhossili Village Hall)”

June Thomas: “June wishes her friends and neighbours a Very Happy Christmas and sincere wishes for a peaceful 2019 at home and abroad. June would also like to thank the Village Hall Social Committee for the entertainments that they have organised for the village this past year”

Lynda and Sam Shaw: “Christmas Greetings to all our friends. We hope you have a great time with family and friends”

Audrey Frank: “Audrey wishes all her Friends and Neighbours a Very Good Christmas and a Happy New Year – and hopes she is still here to share it with them!”

Linda Bartlett: “Sends greetings to friends and neighbours in Rhossili Community. A very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you all”

Jo and Peter Scott: “May Christmas sparkle with moments of love, laughter and goodwill and may the year ahead be full of contentment and joy – Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Nadolig Llawen ac Blwyddyn Newydd Dda”

Mark, Mary, Dyfrig and Huw: “Mark, Mary and family (Pitton Cottage) wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Nadolig Llawen a phob bendith yn 2018.”

Carl and Caroline Johnson: “We wish all our Rhossili friends and neighbours a most enjoyable Christmas and we look forward to a peaceful and happy New Year”

Steven, Lesley and the Campbell-Kelly family send, “Season’s Greetings to all in Rhossili Community. Wishing you all Good Health, a Merry Christmas and a Happy & Prosperous New Year. Thank you to all who offered and gave support to us all at The Green, hopefully we will have a healthier year in 2019!”

Dai Cann: “Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all friends and neighbours. Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda I chi gyd. With love from Dai Cann”

Sarah and Steve Walmsley: “To all our friends in Rhossili, wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a prosperous and enjoyable 2018!”

Selina Taylor: “Wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year, from Selina”.

Gaynor and Trevor Morris: “A very Happy Christmas and a healthy, prosperous New Year to all from Gaynor and Trevor Morris in New Park Cottage.”

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Gill Evans: “Dear Friends, Well, here I am in Scotland but thinking of you all with many happy memories and very much aware that making new friends takes a VERY long time and that old friends are remembered with love. I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and hope that the New Year will bring you joy, hope and peace for the world. With love, Gill Evans - Meikle Logie Farmhouse, Trochry, DUNKELD. PH8 0BP”

Sue and Paul Muddeman: “Sue and Paul at Meadow View would like to thank everyone for their kindness shown when Alma passed away earlier this year. We wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas”

Sally and Gwynn Thomas: “Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year, with our very best wishes, Gwyn, Sal, Isabel and Freddie at Picnic Cottage.”

Jeff and Jo Higgins: “A very happy and healthy Christmas to all our friends and neighbours who have helped us all get through this very sad year. Jo, Jeff, Josh, Zak, Charlotte and Ben xx”

Marion Potts: “I would like to wish all my friends and neighbours a very Happy Christmas and New Year. “Thank you” to all of you who have been such a great support to me through what has been a difficult year ”

Roger, Eira, Ian, Tracey, Felix & Ripley Button: “wish everyone a Happy Christmas & a Wonderful New Year to Jeny & Sharon who have helped us year after year and to you all in Rhossili”

All at Great Pitton Farm: “Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas from all at Great Pitton Farm”