

Parish & Community Magazine

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



For the communities of Coed-y-Ga, Lanybloe, Nantmawr,

Produced by All Saints and St Michael's churches

Free of charge - please take one

Vol 36: No.1 February 2026

Border Group of Parishes

Llanyblodwel, Llanymynech, Morton & Trefonen

Rector: Currently vacant

Benefice Administrator: Helen Parish, bordergroupadmin@hotmail.co.uk

Helen will be in the office (the church office in All Saints Trefonen) each Thursday, 9.30am–2.30pm. Address for mail: The Administrator, All Saints' Church, Oswestry Road, Trefonen, Oswestry, SY10 9DG.

Benefice website: borderparishes.org.uk



Church services

See p.4 for the times of church services in February. Please note services are subject to change at short notice sometimes. Please check the magazine Facebook page and local church noticeboards for updates.

Principal church contacts:

All Saints Trefonen:

PCC Secretary:

Helen Parish, helen-parish1@hotmail.co.uk, 01691 670979

Churchwardens:

K Kimber, bobnkkimber@btinternet.com, 01691 679646

Malcolm Kirk, malcolm.ref1170@gmail.com, 01691 688595

Safeguarding: Jeanne Bradley, jeannemccarley@hotmail.co.uk

St Michael's Llanyblodwel:

PCC Secretary:

Sioned Lindsay, sioned@gmail.com, 07775 437101

Churchwardens:

Roger Taylor, roger@blodwell.com, 07967 652217

Alec Gordon, alecgordon@btinternet.com, 07970 544945

Safeguarding:

Sioned Lindsay, sioned@gmail.com, 07775 437101

Bookings and events: St.Michaels.Llanyblodwel@gmail.com

From the Editor



A belated Happy New Year to you all. I hope you have had a good year so far, managing to keep warm and avoiding accidents on icy surfaces!

This issue focuses on hope, with the theme 'Spring Will Come.'

Hope is essential to living well; the opposite is despair, which it is all too easy to fall prey to, especially when everything around seems bleak! So even in the often cold and gloomy month of February we can look for signs of spring, whether it's snowdrops in the verges, the tips of daffodils pushing up, or the gradual departure of the dark mornings and early evenings. In our Thought for the Month (p.14), Rebecca Colpus characterises February as an 'inbetweeny month'; the Garden Club offers some thoughts on garden resilience (p.36); and Harriet Carty introduces us to some early spring wildflowers (p.26).

February 18th sees the start of Lent in the Church calendar – a period of six weeks of reflection that ends at Easter, the ultimate season of hope. Helen Emery, who has the wonderful title of 'Whole Life Discipleship Officer' in the Lichfield Diocese, writes on the season of Lent as a preparation for Easter (p.13). We also have the first in a new series - Verses for Life. These are verses from the Bible or from other great and timeless literature that speak to our lives today, whatever religious or non-religious beliefs we hold. We've started with one about hope (p.5).

Also in this issue Ann Hindley looks back at Christmases past, with special memories of plucking the turkey (p.10); and the Porthwaen Silver Band recall some more recent events they took part in over the Festive Season (p.20). There are three reports from John Davies on the Community Speed Watch (p.7), Offa's Dyke Support (p.16), and the 2025 Trefonen Fire Festival (p.31). Trefonen WI are celebrating their centenary (p.32), and their article reminds us of the trail-blazing activities of the WI since the organisation began in 1915.

We have also included some puzzles (p.9), and a colouring page (p.8), and there are some important announcements this month: Trefonen CE School is looking for a clerk to the Governors (see announcement on p.39), and All Saints Trefonen is very keen to find a keyboard player to help with services (p.18).

Events in February are, as you might expect, a little thin on the ground, but Trefonen's Community Café and Llanyblodwel's Café Blodwel are functioning as usual (every Tuesday at Trefonen and the first Wednesday of the month, at Llanyblodwel). We also have two Film Club events to advertise - the first one at the very end of January (31st) - so with luck you should be reading about it in time, and the second on 28th February (see p.27 for details of both), plus the Garden Club quiz night (see p.37).

If you are putting together a contribution (whether verbal or visual) for the magazine, may I remind you to read the Notes to Contributors on p.50.

Janey Fisher

(Images: pp.9, 14 and 40 from Freepik, used by permission; p.8 © Alamy; and p.30 © the Woodland Trust.)

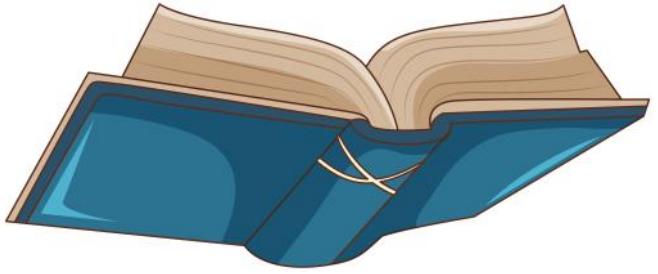
Church Services in Trefonen and Llanyblodwel, February 2026

Date	All Saints Trefonen	St Michael's Llanyblodwel
Sunday February 1st Presentation of Christ in the Temple Malachi 3: 1-5 Hebrews 2: 14-end Luke 2: 22 - 40	11.00am Holy Communion Rev. John Darch With K Kimber	11.00am Morning Worship Rebecca Colpus
Sunday February 8th Genesis 1:1-2:3 Romans 8:18-25 Matthew 6: 25-end	10.00am Morning Worship Peter Woollam	11.00am Morning Worship Abie Tudor
Sunday February 15th The Transfiguration Exodus 24: 12-end 2 Peter 1: 16-end Matthew 17: 1-9	10.00am Morning Worship Chris Kirk	11.00am Holy Communion Rev. Adrian Bailey With Rebecca Colpus
Wednesday 18th February Ash Wednesday	12 noon Holy Communion with imposition of ashes Rev Dr J Reeves With Linda Gladman	No service at Llanyblodwel
Sunday 22nd February Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7 Romans 5:12 - 19 Matthew 4:1 - 11	10.00am Morning Worship K Kimber	11.00am Morning Worship Rebecca Colpus

Verses for Life:

Romans 8: 24–25

Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.



This remarkable definition of hope, written by St Paul in his letter to the Romans nearly 2000 years ago, gives us lots to think about.

First of all, the very nature of hope is that it concerns something we can't see (yet). Hope always deals with the future, and therefore with something uncertain; yet hope in itself implies - and provides -- the inner certainty that something good is round the corner.

Yet it is only if we truly believe in this 'something good' that we can wait for it with patience. Hope stills our anger and frustration with the situation as it is, and lets us wait in a positive frame of mind for what is to come – for hope is the antithesis of despair.

The idea behind this new series, 'Verses for Life', is that there are verses, phrases and individual sentences in the Bible, in Shakespeare's plays, and in some of the great poetry written across the ages, that can be relevant for us today. Some of them do not even need much explanation – their wisdom speaks for itself. Each month one will be chosen to complement the theme for that issue. I'm hoping others will share with us verses like this they feel have something to offer all of us, not just those who have religious beliefs.

Jane Anstey

Meeting with Lucinda Burns

A high priority for all four of our parishes, when discussing aspirations, is further engagement and greater involvement with our local communities. The Rev. Lucinda Burns has been appointed by the Lichfield Diocese to support parishes in vacancy, and she has offered to come and talk with us about outreach and mission. We have been able to arrange an open meeting, for people from our parishes to share their thoughts with Lucinda. This will be on Monday, 2nd February, at 2.30pm in Trefonen Village Hall, ending by 4.00pm. Much is happening across the Benefice and we hope you will be able to join us to share and explore ideas.



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Prayer Pointers for the Community

Lord, as we come at this time of year, with hope in hearts for a fairer, kinder world, we pray for your justice to prevail.

May we be able to reach into our hearts to forgive others and help bring healing and reconciliation.

Help us not to forget the needs of others.

Let your light shine through us in all we do.

We ask your blessing on our families, friends and ourselves. Amen

The Blessing of Old and New

Thank you, dear God, for the blessing of things that stay the same: for people we have known for ever and familiar paths where we walk.

Thank you, dear God, for the blessing of things that change: for newcomers with their new customs, new ways of doing things, new paths to discover.

Thank you, dear God, for the blessing of the old and the blessing of the new.

Amen

(from *A Treasury of Prayers for Now and Always*)

Community Speed Watch

The CSW volunteers have certainly noticed an increase in awareness by local drivers (including our group members!) of speed limits in our villages.

Unfortunately, there are some who regularly drive too fast through our villages. We can and will report them to West Mercia Police if we register them on our radar gun.

It might take some time, but regular offenders will be contacted by the police, and action will be taken if necessary. This is a last resort, and we ask for your help with our attempts to make the roads safer for our elderly, our children, our grandchildren, and for us all.

Finally, we are constantly on the lookout for volunteers to bolster our ranks. Initial training is approximately two hours, after which we would need you to commit to one hour per week.



John Davies

Colouring Page

Bring these crocuses to life by colouring them in.



Puzzle Page

Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 to 9. Use logic and solve the puzzle without guesswork. Answer on p.40.

(Thanks to Krazy Dad for allowing us to reproduce this puzzle. For puzzle solving tips, and more puzzles, visit Krazydad.com.)

SUDOKU

By KrazyDad

			2	8	7		
			6	8	1		
1		4				5	
7				2			
	5				6		
		8				3	
	1			3			4
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5	2		8				

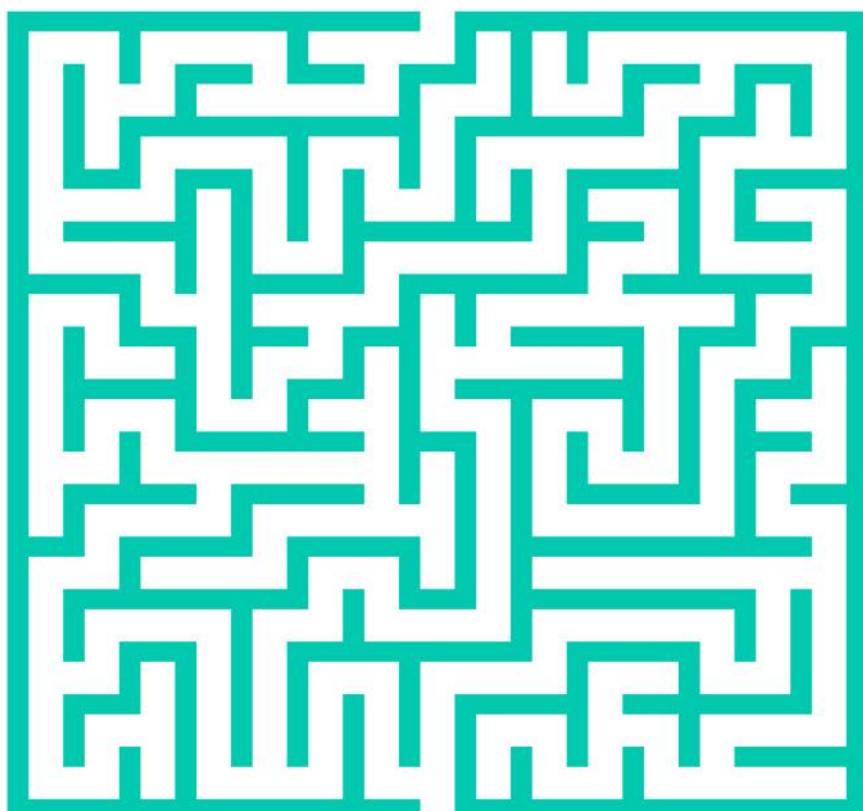
Difficulty: Tough

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Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 thru 9. Use logic and solve the puzzle without guesswork. For puzzle solving tips, and more puzzles, visit Krazydad.com.

Maze

Can you find your way through the maze? Answer on p.40.



New Year, New Hopes, New Beginnings

We always start the New Year with lots of new thoughts, aspirations and resolutions, but by February, many of these have gone by the by (mostly the weight-loss ones!!!).



January is what I term a 'flat' month, when the excitement of Christmas is over, the turkey is finally laid to rest and Easter seems a long way off – despite the Easter eggs already in the shops! The Santa display is back in the woodshed, greenhouse or village hall until next year, and the decorations and trees are all put away.



NB Just as an aside about turkeys! Our turkey crown this year had two legs, which intrigued some of our guests and triggered a discussion about Christmases from days long ago.

In our household, the week before Christmas, our fresh turkey from the local farm was hung on the back of the larder door, head, feathers, the whole thing! Every time anyone opened the larder door, it swung from side to side, leering at us grotesquely at us and I marvel that we children weren't terrified of turkeys for life, but we managed to stay sane! On Christmas Eve, my Nan came around. We all gathered in the scullery, where there was a large tin bath surrounded by chairs. And no, we weren't about to take baths (and neither was the turkey!). Our annual ritual, under instruction from my Nan, was to pluck the turkey and put all the feathers into the bath, to the sound of carols on the radio.



This one is a more modern version of the one we owned; ours had far more knobs and dials and took up a large space!

Nan used to take the feathers away in an old pillowcase, and I know not what happened to them. No doubt there was a use for them, as nothing was wasted!

When the turkey was rendered reasonably featherless, my Nan took out her box of Swan Vestas matches and began to singe any remaining feathers that stubbornly clung to the naked torso. If I close my eyes I can smell it now! UGH!!



I think this may have been the signal for the Sherry bottle to emerge! (I know sherry isn't sparkling but this was the only emoji I could find!)

The turkey was always delicious, took up most of the oven and we had prepared it for ourselves! RESULT! One thing that has intrigued me ever since though, is to how we didn't get food poisoning as the turkey then lived in the oven for at least a week before it ended up in the soup pot!!! We had no fridge or freezer so it was the only place to store its diminishing carcass -- and we are still here to tell the tale!

So, by the time you read this The Hill Walk crew will have probably met for their annual planning meeting and their second year in office will have begun. Any ideas please forward them to the committee (see website) and off we go again!! Another year in Trefonen is in full swing!

It's so great to live here in Trefonen and have things to look forward to in an ever-changing and somewhat scary world.

Keep smiling everyone!

A BELATED HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Ann Hindley

From the Registers

All Saints Trefonen

Baptism

Sunday 30th November 2025, Maudie Margaret Martin, daughter of Samuel and Samantha.

Memorial Service

Held on Wednesday 5th November 2025, for Joan Parry.



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Draw Near in Lent

I feel excited about:

- Opening the curtains each morning and seeing the light which floods the room as God flooding my day with His light of love.



Helen Emery

- Savouring the first sip of coffee I take, thanking God for the flavour and asking to be shown joy in whatever the day has ahead.
- Seeing my shower as a mini-baptism preparing me for the day ahead.
- Using my commute to work or my drive to the supermarket as an opportunity to pray for those I will encounter there.
- Asking God to take away any rubbish which is not helpful in my life as I take the bins out each week.

These are all ways of infusing our everyday habits with deeper, life-giving meaning. It is nothing new – these are all suggestions I have heard over the years from fellow disciples on the faith journey. I am sure you have similar habits which can turn into tiny yet significant rituals.

The challenges for me – as a disciple and in my role as Whole life Discipleship officer for Lichfield Diocese – is to take the big picture of what I believe about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, the mind -blowing, eternal significance of it, the heart-swelling enormity of it – and ensure it makes a different to the tiny detail of my every day, ordinary, here and now life. However you do that – whether it be through actions and re-actions, prayers and/or practicalities – I believe it is the essence of Lent. Self-examination, repentance and sacrifice.

For Lent 2026, resources published from Church House will be under the banner of 'Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent' (www.cofe.io/DrawNear). The booklet and app will focus on six aspects: worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news with others.

So I invite you this Lent to join me in striving to bring our discipleship that little bit more into the 'whole of life' – and seeing the transformation it can bring to our relationship with God, ourselves and each other.

Helen Emery, Whole Life Discipleship Officer,
Lichfield Diocese

helen.emery@lichfield.anglican.org



Thought for the Month

February seems to me to be an in-between month, when hopefully the worst of the winter is over, but spring has not yet got going. I always try to have the earliest flowering bulbs and shrubs in my garden, in an effort to bring in the colours of spring as soon as possible. This month, therefore, is one for looking forward in hope.

How do we continue to be hopeful?

Well, we need something to hope for. Some hopes are simple and short-term, an upcoming holiday, a trip to the cinema, or spending time with friends and family.

But what do we hope for long-term? Peace in place of war? Healing for those we love who are ill? When Llanyblodwel church carried out the 'Advent Experience' with children from Bryn Offa school, they were asked what they were waiting and hoping for, excluding things that could be bought. Their answers were inspiring. They hoped Christmas would be a lovely time, spent with family. They hoped to end wars and poverty. They also hoped for good exam results and to have good times with their friends. In Paul's letter to the Christians in Galatia, he lists the 'Fruit of the Spirit' which Christians should aspire to develop within themselves and demonstrate to the world. There are two 'fruits of the Spirit' linked to hope: Patience and Faithfulness. Patience is certainly needed if we are going to live hopeful lives; it reduces our frustration and despair. Being faithful is also a help: holding on to what we believe is true is very sustaining and, for Christians, our faith in a forgiving, redeeming and loving God carries us through difficult times, for as Paul says in his letter to the Roman Christians:

If God is for us, who can be against us?

And 'For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Romans 8:38–39)



Let us look to the coming year with hope, faith and patience.

Blessings to all,

Rebeca Colpus



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Prayer Chain

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

Betty Steele 652170

Carol Pickering 238561

Rita Mathias 657934

Chris Kirk 688595

Jill Ferguson 656456

Linda Gladman 07582 808588

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

Offa Community Support

The Offa Community Support Group (OCS), composed of local residents, is incredibly grateful to all those who supported us during various events in 2025, culminating with our very popular biannual quiz.

This year, we have continued providing the 4 "Planters" in Trefonen and Treflach with flower displays plus the ongoing maintenance of these. We also provided help for the 'Lime Tree' project.

OCS is also very grateful for the financial support provided by the Hillwalk Committee, which has enabled us to work on the provision of a new noticeboard outside the village shop. This is still being worked on, but hopefully will come to fruition by Spring.

At our last meeting, Chairman John Davies expressed thanks to his hard-working committee, which enabled us to have another successful year.

On a closing note, please do let us know if you become aware of any small projects we can lend a helping hand with, or local residents who might be having a hard time for whatever reason. Sometimes, just a simple gift of flowers and chocolates can cheer someone up. We can also consider more specific support.

Harry Roberts



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Music at All Saints Trefonen

Trefonen Church needs a talented musician to lead our music – age is not a barrier.

Can you play an electronic piano? (plus an organ, if desired, but that's not a requirement). We have an ad hoc group of three or four musicians – two guitar-players, a flautist, and someone who plays the violin and accordion amongst other instruments. The flautist plays at most services and the others during specific services.



The congregation meets weekly, normally at 10.00am on a Sunday for about an hour and we sing four or five hymns at each service. Could you accompany the congregation at least on two of the Sundays each month? – if you could do more, that would be very welcome.

If you are unfamiliar with Church of England services or do not attend church, don't worry; we can provide the support and help to guide you through the services. In time you could help those leading the services with the selection of hymns and other music.

So do you think you can help us and take the congregation forward in its celebration of music and lead the other musicians in time? If so, we would love to hear from you and to help entice you, we will even offer a small honorarium.

We would like to meet you, at a time to suit you, and discuss this opportunity, so please contact Christine Kirk on either kirk.garden@btopenworld.com or 01691 688595.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Planning a children's party or a family celebration?

Why not book Trefonen Village Hall?

Lots of space and excellent facilities.

Contact:

Val Smout

Bookings Secretary

01691 657011



BARLEY MOW INN



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- Parking

We look forward to seeing you soon

OPENING TIMES:

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

FOOD SERVED:

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

NB Please check The Barley Mow's Facebook page or phone them for opening times and facilities, etc. as some details may have changed. - Ed.

A Season of Song: Porthywaen Silver Band's Busy Christmas



It has been a whirlwind of festive music for the Porthywaen Silver Band this year! From the first notes of December to the final carols of the season, our players have been dedicated to bringing holiday cheer to the local community. Across our three ensembles—the Beginner, Training, and Senior bands—we successfully completed a staggering 17 performances. In total, our musicians provided over 35 hours of live music, ensuring that the festive spirit reached every corner of the district.

Community Highlights

- *The Main Stage:* Our flagship Christmas Concert was held at Hope Church in Oswestry, where all our hard work culminated in a night of classic carols and contemporary favourites.
- *On the Move:* We were delighted to take part in the vibrant Oswestry Christmas Parade, a highlight for our younger players in the Youth and Training band.



- **Festive Fun:** The band also braved the winter air to support the annual Santa Run, providing the rhythmic backdrop for hundreds of running Santas! Whether we were performing in full concert dress or wearing festive knitwear on a street corner, the warmth and generosity of the public made every hour of practice worthwhile.



(Continued on p.22)

Join the Band!

Following our busy festive season, we are looking ahead to a year of new music and are recruiting new players. Whether you are a complete beginner looking to pick up an instrument for the first time or an experienced player who has been away from the stand for a few years and would like to return to playing, we would love to see you.

- When: Every Friday night
- Time: 7:30 pm
- Where: Porthywaen Band Hall

More information: Facebook or <https://www.porthywaensilverband.co.uk/>

Come along and join a friendly, vibrant group of musicians. We look forward to welcoming some new faces to the Porthywaen family!



Mel and Alan Oakley

Would like to thank everyone who attended the Penybontfawr male voice choir in Trefonen church on 7th December. Many thanks to everyone who turned up to help on the day. We couldn't do it without you, especially this year.

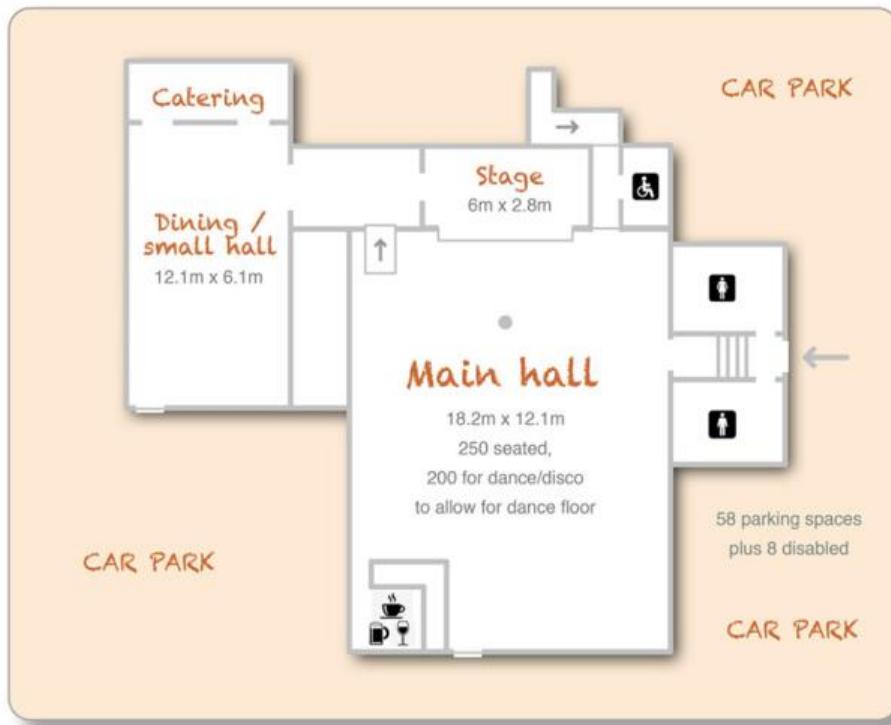
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St Michael's Llanyblodwel

The bible study prayer group which meets at Rebecca's home is starting up again this month. Meeting 2:00–3:30 pm on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month (see below). All welcome.

Llanyblodwel prayer meeting and bible study



We meet on second and fourth Wednesday afternoons each month, 2.00–3:30pm at Sharneyford, Coopers Lane, Porth-y-Waen, SY10 8 LY.

All are invited whether you attend church or not.

Rebecca Colpus

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Flicks in the Sticks

January 21st: The Ballad of Wallis Island

12A



The Ballad was released in 2025, and was directed by James Griffiths. Tom Basden and Carey Mulligan star as a folk duo who reunite to perform for a wealthy lottery-winning fan (Tim Key) on a remote Welsh island. The film began life as a short film, *The One and Only Herb McGwyer Plays Wallis Island*, which was made by Key and Basden with James Griffiths, which won best short film at The Edinburgh International Film Festival and was nominated for the 2008 BAFTA Award for Best Short Film. Rotten Tomatoes gave it 96%, and reviewed it in the following terms: '*The Ballad of Wallis Island* hums along a sweet melody without lapsing into outright sentimentality, mining a great deal of warmth from its humble premise.'

(I haven't seen it yet, but it sounds fascinating! - Ed)

February 28th: Black Bag

15

The American spy thriller ***Black Bag*** (2025) is directed by Steven Soderbergh. Its host of stars includes Cate Blanchett, Michael Fassbender, Marisa Abela, Tom Burke, Naomie Harris, Regé-Jean Page, and Pierce Brosnan. George Woodhouse (Fassbender), a British intelligence officer, is given a list of suspected traitors to investigate – but one of them turns out to be his wife, Kathryn (Blanchett).



For both films:

Venue – Trefonen Village Hall, 7.30pm (doors open at 7.00pm).
Entrance: £5

The Community Café

Trefonen Village Hall

Tuesday mornings, 10.00-11.30am

A place to meet with friends and enjoy a cup of tea or freshly brewed coffee and homemade cakes.



If you have never been before or are new to the area we would love to see you.

Regular Events at Trefonen Village Hall

NB *There is an entry charge for some of these events.*

The Community Café is open every Tuesday morning from 10.00 to 11.30am (see above).

Trefonen Football Club run a bingo session in the village hall every Monday evening except bank holidays starting at 7.30pm.

Trefonen & District Garden Club meets 3rd Thursday most months - this month 16th October, starting at 7.30pm (see advertisement p.37).

Whist Drives take place every 4th Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm.



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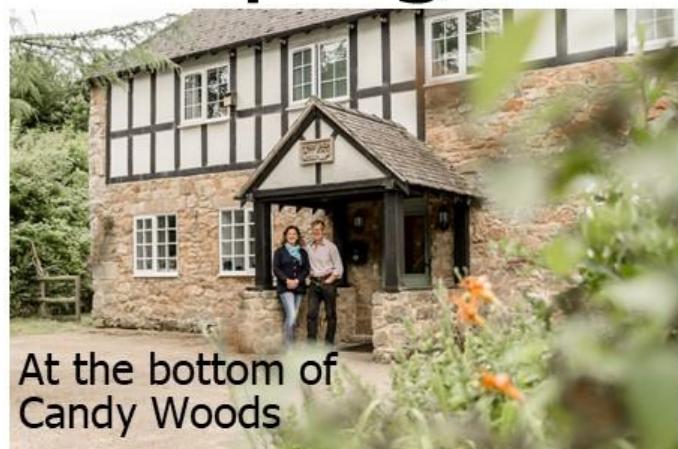
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Spring Messenger

As winter starts to draw to a close and the days are getting noticeably longer we all start to search for signs of spring. One of the first spring flowers is the Lesser Celandine. This little plant, often viewed as a garden weed, lights up our churchyards with bright, shiny, yellow stars set off beautifully by the surrounding dark green heart-shaped leaves. An old name for Lesser Celandine was 'Spring Messenger' and, like the Snowdrop, it can lift the spirits with the message that spring is coming. Another old name is Pilewort, suggesting that this plant was used to treat haemorrhoids. Richard Maybey, in his *Flora Britannica*, considers this prescription to have been due to the Doctrine of Signatures (an age-old concept in herbalism and medicine that suggests plants have distinct traits, shapes, or colours that mirror the ailments they can heal).

In the case of Lesser Celandine, it is the knobbly tubers that were thought to resemble piles! Lesser Celandine is a common plant that can spread fast and likes shady, damp areas. This perennial isn't fussy; it can be found in grassland, at the base of walls or monuments, on banks, verges, and along path edges. It is invariably found within churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries. The cheerful yellow flowers can carpet the ground, offering an important early nectar supply to emerging insects, such as queen bumblebees, beetles, and other pollinators. Although small, the Lesser Celandine has attracted the attention of the famous. Wordsworth wrote three poems about it. Renown naturalist Gilbert White of Selborne in Hampshire kept an annual record of the dates he'd spot his first Lesser Celandine. He observed that the first lesser celandines usually appeared on or around February 21st, a date that, since 1795, has been known as "Celandine Day".

The Lesser Celandine is a spring ephemeral, so enjoy it in February, as its flowers and leaves die back by late spring. If you spot it, do make a record of it using iNaturalist. Due to its short life above ground, anyone looking at plants later in the year may not find any remaining traces of it, so it can often go unrecorded. Although a common plant, it is an important one and one on which our early pollinators rely.



Harriet Carty,
harriet@cfga.org.uk,
Diocesan Churchyard
Environmental Adviser,
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

Ficaria verna (Lesser celandine)

Fire Festival Annual Bonfire, 7th November 2025

The Fire Festival Committee was very pleased with the turnout for the evening and with the generosity of the public. Well over £2000 was raised via bucket collection, etc.; as you may know, there is no entrance fee, so we rely on these donations to fund next year's event. I'm sure those who attended will have been impressed with the quality and professionalism of the firework display. (We were, we were very impressed! - Ed.)



Committee Chairman Paul Woddy expresses his thanks to everyone who contributed and also to the extensive team of volunteers, who prepared the food and drinks, manned various pop-up stalls and sold various goodies. The music, organised by Marc (Raging Mables) and Phil (drummer extraordinaire), was spot on. We are also extremely grateful for the financial support provided by W.E/ PRICE, Funeral Directors, together with YAREAL. We'd also like to thank the Coach & Docks in Selattyn, Stonehouse, and the Barley Mow for their drink donations.

The event improves each year, and it will not be long before planning for 2026 commences!

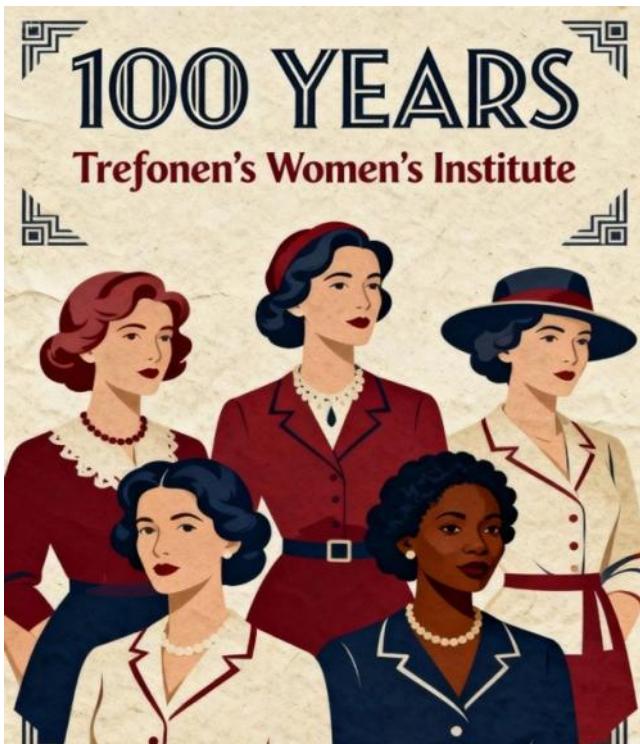
Benefice Toy Service

The churches of Border Parishes benefice have received letters from the Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre thanking us for the toys and other gifts donated at November's Toy Service.

Fleur, the Admin Manager, says 'Sadly, the demand for our services continues to grow each year. Thank you once again for your thoughtfulness and generosity'.

Thanks to everyone who brought gifts to the service. They have obviously been very much appreciated.

Happy 100th Birthday, Trefonen WI!



February 1st, 1926, marked the first gathering of Trefonen WI in the Trefonen School Room, where 60 members witnessed a demonstration of the Singer Sewing Machine. A bit of technology that at the time was seen as one of the 'wonders of the age.' Initially, there were doubts that mere women, the primary target for domestic use of the equipment, could operate the complex and expensive machine. The women of Trefonen's WI gathered to defy that prejudice.

One hundred years on, Trefonen WI is set to meet on February 5th to honour all the organisation's remarkable achievements throughout the years.

Wartime contributions

During both the First and Second World Wars, the WI played a crucial role in national food production and preservation efforts. They produced preserves from leftover fruit, tended to evacuees, and crafted knitted items for soldiers and civilians. The WIs' wartime resource conservation efforts also included the rationing of essential goods such as fuel and materials like rubber and nylon.

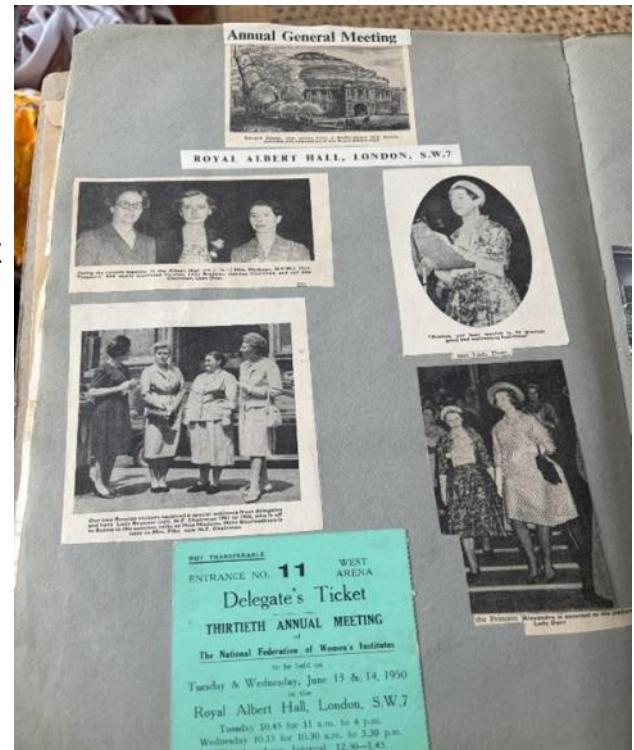
Founding 'Keep Britain Tidy'

It was a 1954 WI resolution campaigning against litter and the "desecration of the countryside" that directly led to the formation of the 'Keep Britain Tidy' charity. You may remember Trees for Trefonen and Go Wild at our local level. The WI and 'Keep Britain Tidy' continue the battle against litter and encourage recycling to this day.

Healthcare campaigns

The WI has influenced healthcare policy through resolutions and campaigns, including:

- Calling for routine cervical cancer smear tests in 1964, when the procedure was underutilised. Today, cervical cancer mortality rates in the UK have decreased by approximately 75% since the early 1970s.
- Following a resolution passed at their 1986 annual general meeting, the WI launched public awareness campaigns about HIV and AIDS, making them one of the first non-governmental organisations in the UK to proactively address the issue and counter the misconception that HIV/AIDS was a women's issue.
- The WI headed the 'More Midwives' campaign, advocating for improved maternal care, which contributed to new safe staffing and brought about government action when the then Health and Social Care Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, announced plans for 3,000 new training places for midwives within a four-year period.
- 'Dental Health Matters' is a WI campaign aimed at tackling the dental health crisis: research has shown the dental health crisis to be a uniquely gendered one. Factors like pregnancy, menopause, and women being primary caregivers often lead them to prioritise the health of their loved ones over their own, resulting in a lack of dental care and access that disproportionately affects women.
- 'Bystanders Can Be Lifesavers' is a WI initiative raising awareness and addressing fears and misinformation surrounding gender equality in cardiac-arrest survival rates. Women are less likely to receive bystander CPR due to public discomfort – particularly from men – with removing women's clothing, leading to lower survival rates. The WI are creating a wave of awareness via social media using hashtags like #BystandersCanBeLifesavers. They are also providing CPR and defibrillator training and education, as well as highlighting the need for gender-inclusive training manikins to build confidence and address men's hesitancy to perform CPR on women.



(Continued on p. 34)

Advocacy for Women's Rights

The WI has long been a voice for women in public life, including campaigning for:

- 'Equal pay for equal work' in 1943, a landmark resolution, decades before the Equal Pay Act of 1970. A prescient demand for fair wages for women, who were increasingly vital to the workforce during the Second World War.
- stronger sentences for men who commit sexual offences against women, during the 1980s.
- Better support for women and children in the Divorce Reform Bill in the 1960s. The WI advocated for provisions to ensure financial security, housing and long-term welfare for wives, particularly those with children, to prevent them from being left destitute post-divorce.

Our birthday party in February is for current members only but in June we will be having a special party for past members, other WIs and guests- watch this space!

Victoria Gemmell, v.gemmell@hotmail.co.uk

(with a little help from George-Carter Cunningham, our assistant editor)





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Garden Club

Resilience. For gardeners the word conjures up the ability of plants to survive in their environment. In a recent article in an RHS magazine I was pleased at long last to see it acknowledged that the country divides roughly east to west, with regard to the resilience of plants to survive the hotter and drier east of the country as opposed to the slightly cooler and much wetter conditions of the west.

Winter wet is the downfall of many a plant with its roots languishing in the cold sodden ground. Plants have increased in price, so choosing the right plant for the right climate conditions is perhaps now more important than ever before. On the other hand there is always the challenge of trying to grow something that may or may not make it through the winter and the delight it brings when it does.

There is a low limestone wall in my garden and on one of the rocks there is a collection of lichens that have appeared quite by chance. They fascinate me, for they may be small, but the various colours and shapes form their own miniature garden. During the dry summer they all went brown and as far as I was concerned dead. Being a somewhat less than tidy gardener I left their remains there, thinking nothing about it until looking the other day – and there they all were back as though nothing had happened. That's what I call resilience and I am wondering how they managed to survive. So if anyone can explain it please let me know.



Already, in the second week of January, there are the first white petals of snowdrops beginning to show and the hellebores are coming into flower. In winter seeing the resilience of those plants that do flower at this time of year whatever the weather is always a pleasure and the knowledge the garden is never really asleep, just waiting for the longer days for Spring to arrive.

We can all help make our gardens more resilient, such as mulching to retain moisture and suppress weeds; choosing plants that slugs and snails won't touch and allowing nature to control pests. Yes, there will always be certain plants we need to take more care and protection over, but a garden rich in biodiversity is a far healthier place.

It's the annual Garden Club Quiz Night this month; please see advert below for details.

Chris Kirk



ANNUAL GARDEN CLUB

FUN QUIZ NIGHT

(General knowledge – not all questions will be garden-focused)

Thursday 12th February

7.30pm

Venue: Trefonen Village Hall, SY10 9DY

Join in a team on the night or make up your own
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(Admission charge includes light refreshments)

There will be a raffle

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The Governing body at Trefonen CE Primary School are seeking to appoint a Minute Taker or New Clerk for the official Governor meetings. The post is flexible, so we will consider appointing a minute taker for the meetings. The ideal would be to appoint a qualified clerk, or someone who is willing to undergo the clerk training provided. The two different job descriptions summaries are given below to indicate how they are different.

Minute Taker

- Need to be available for normally 4 meetings a term between 3.30pm and 6pm normally on a Thursday. There may be some meetings that take place between 1.30 and 3.30pm. The dates for the meetings are agreed at the start of the school year. Future dates can be flexible for the right candidate. Additional time is allowed after the meeting for writing up and distributing minutes.
- Complete accurate minutes for the meeting to a set template.
- Time allocated after the meeting to complete minutes and email out to Chair and Headteacher.

Clerk (summary of role in addition to tasks described in minute taker role)

- Possibly undergo clerking training and provide legal and procedural advice to governing body.
- Assist in the preparation of the agenda to ensure statutory compliance.
- Keep update records of committee membership, attendance at meetings and terms of office.
- Maintain a record of governor training.

A full job description of the clerking role can be forwarded with other details. Training for full clerking role could be provided for the right candidate. In both roles any applicant must be able to work using Microsoft and its various applications.

If you are interested please email the Chair of Governors at - kirk.m@trefonen.shropshire.sch.uk. An interview between the Chair and Head of the School would follow for any suitable candidates.

Trefonen School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment and we follow all safer recruitment processes and checks.

The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references prior to taking up the role.

Puzzle Answers

Sudoku

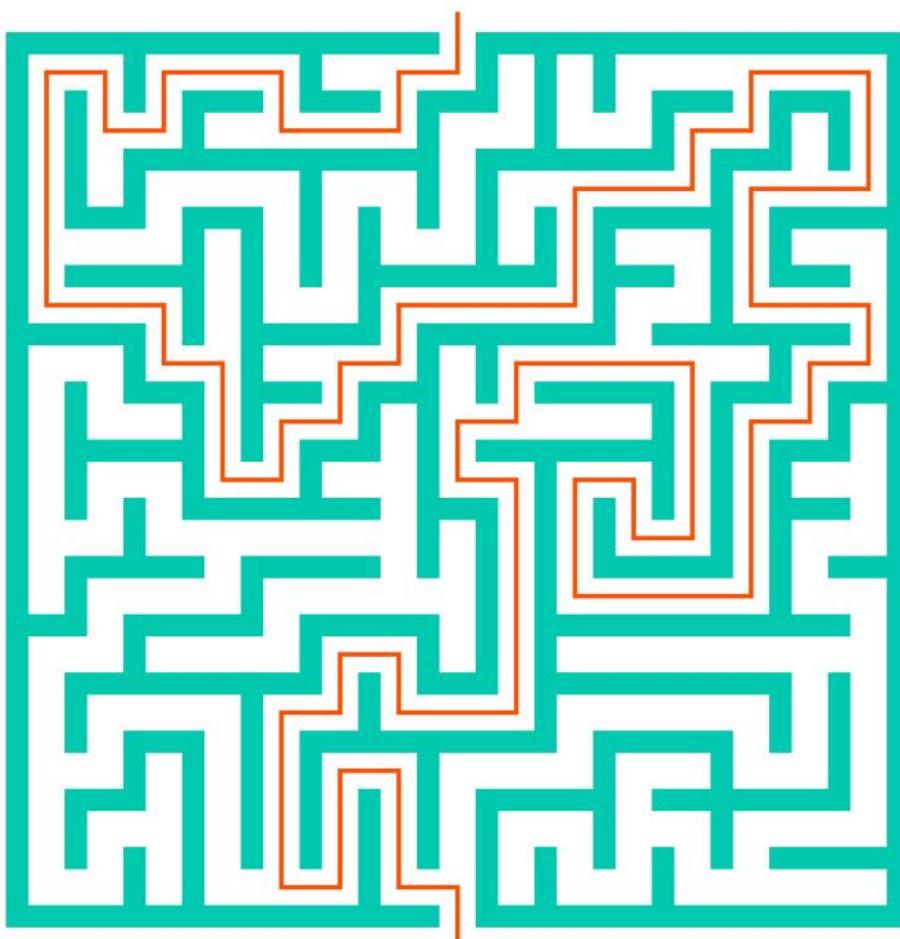
The completed Sudoku
Puzzle should look like this:

SUDOKU Answer

6	4	3	1	2	5	8	7	9
5	7	9	3	6	8	1	4	2
1	2	8	4	9	7	3	5	6
7	6	1	5	3	2	4	9	8
8	3	5	9	4	1	6	2	7
2	9	4	8	7	6	5	1	3
9	1	6	2	5	3	7	8	4
4	8	7	6	1	9	2	3	5
3	5	2	7	8	4	9	6	1

Maze

If you got lost in the maze, this is the correct way through!



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Notes to contributors

NB IMPORTANT! Deadline for copy for the magazine is the 10th of each month

The deadline allows time for the editorial team to compile the contents and the proofreaders to check it, followed by printing in time for publication towards the end of the month.

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

Also, please remember that if you do send photographs showing people for inclusion in the magazine (particularly where faces are visible) **you need to have obtained their permission**. Please also check the copyright for any images you collect from the internet for publication here - the source needs to be acknowledged if necessary.

Lastly, can I ask that you check your facts carefully and if you are quoting from a book or article, make that clear? Plagiarism is not allowed!

Editor

Magazine team:

Content editor & layouts:	Janey Fisher
Assistant editor:	Georgia Cunningham
Proofreading:	Martin Fisher and Isobel Fisher
Facebook page:	Janey Fisher
Advertiser contact:	Barry Evans

For all communications relating to the magazine, use the email address:
trefonenparishmagazine@gmail.com

Distribution:

The magazine usually exists in b/w print, and is available from the Trefonen Village Shop, the Barley Mow Inn, Trefonen Village Hall, and both All Saints Trefonen and St Michael's Llanyblodwel churches. It can also be read online and downloaded as a pdf file (in full colour) at either www.trefonen.org, www.borderparishes.org.uk, www.st-michaels.uk.

Local contacts

Bryn Offa CE Primary School	Celine Keleher (Head Teacher)	830621
Jubilee Club CHANGE]	Alwena Martin	650607 [NOTE
Jubilee Field	K Kimber	679646
Llanyblodwel Parish Clerk	Amy Jones	829571
		llanyblodwelpc@gmail.com
Llanyblodwel & Porth-y-Waen Village Hall (Sec. Bethan Cross)		829368
Oswestry Rural (Trefonen) Parish Clerk	Kathryn Lloyd	07534 687663
	clerk@oswestryrural-pc.gov.uk	
Pre-School: 07817 641528 or Shropshire Council		01743 254452
Shropshire Councillors:		
Andy Davis (Trefonen)	andydavis@shropshire.gov.uk	
Duncan Borrowman (Llanyblodwel)	Duncan.Borrowman@shropshire.gov.uk	
Trefonen Garden Club	Chris Kirk	688595
Trefonen Indoor Bowling Club	Kath Barkley	828587
Trefonen CE Primary School	Cathy Dunleavy (Head Teacher)	65296
Trefonen Village Hall bookings	Val Smout	657011
	valsmout@btinternet.com	
Trefonen Village Hall Caretaker	Clive & Kath Roberts	671360
Trefonen Village website	www.trefonen.org	

Some useful services

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

OUT AND ABOUT



Above: Sunrise over the snow in Trefonen, early January

Right: Ash tree on Trefonen playing fields split in two after Storm Goretti

