

# TENBY CIVIC SOCIETY

Registered with the Charity Commissioners No. 511384

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## Newsletter Spring 2018

*John Tipton*

I am sure that all members are aware of the recent sad passing of John Tipton at the magnificent age of 100, - native of Penally, long-time notable resident of Tenby except for gallant war service in the RAF during World War Two, former Honorary Curator of Tenby Museum and also a life member of the Society. His literary and historical achievements are well illustrated in the small booklet he wrote on "Charles Norris – and his legacy to Tenby", beside me now. Other better eulogies have appeared elsewhere. The following is just from a Tenby Civic Society perspective and a personal memory of a remarkable man. We last had the honour of his company at the unveiling of the plaque to Eric Bradforth last year. He was a little unsteady on his feet and was defeated by the very steep gradient of the road towards the pavement where we were all watching the unveiling. As Val Coates-Rees and I steadied him I heard two things, firstly a "B---er" and then immediately a "Thank you" to us both. An unfailingly down-to-earth and courteous man. As the toast goes, he was "A scholar and a gentleman".

## AGM

The Tenby Civic Society Annual General Meeting will take place at 2.00pm on the 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 at Augustus Place Community Centre

### *Agenda*

1. Election of President.
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Minutes of 2017 A.G.M.
4. Matters Arising from 2017 A.G.M.
5. Financial Report
6. Annual Report

7. Election of Officers
8. Election of Executive Committee  
(Both Officers and Committee Members standing for election listed below)
9. Any Other Business

Close of Business

Refreshments      Raffle      Talk (Speaker to be confirmed)

NAME	POSITION	NOMINATED	SECONDED
Caroline Thomas *	President	Trevor Hallett	D Tudor Thomas
D Tudor Thomas	Chairman	Howard Rawson-Humphries	Richard Wingfield
Trevor Hallett	Vice Chairman	Jacqui Wingfield	Harry Gardiner
Albie Smosarski	Treasurer	Harry Gardiner	Jacqui Wingfield
Jacqui Wingfield	Minutes Secretary	Trevor Hallett	Howard Rawson-Humphries
Harry Gardiner	Committee Member	Trevor Hallett	D Tudor Thomas
Neil Westerman	Committee Member	Harry Gardiner	Jacqui Wingfield
Howard Rawson-Humphries	Committee Member	Neil Westerman	Richard Wingfield
Richard Wingfield	Committee Member	Trevor Hallett	D Tudor Thomas

Chairman, D Tudor Thomas, has put himself forward for re-election as Chairman for the year 2018-19 but is hoping to step down during the year due to pressure of personal commitments.

*Allen's View*

At Allens View last years bulb planting is starting to show through so almost all of the 200 Tenby Daffodils are throwing shoots well; we look forward to the flowers. These were common around Tenby and Saundersfoot in the past but sadly were all dug up and sold to extinction. They have good large flowers, but on shorter stems better suited to a windy coast. Tenby Museum has a booklet for sale about them.



The final two Owls carved by Dan Badham of Church Farm Landscapes have now been “planted” in Allens View by trench-spade-wielding ‘Brambles’ Gardiner. There were four carved from 4 or 5 foot leylandi logs, in addition to the two in situ 8 foot leylandii stumps carved into a Red Kite and a Peregrine. Frankly these leylandii have never looked better !! All four owls are beside the paths through the wood ready for your inspection, but for those of you whose legs wouldn’t make it up there, here are the latest two. Tenby Rotary have recently met the cost of the six tree carvings; many thanks to them for encouraging the project and refunding the cost; our grateful thanks – without this promise we would not have been able to launch this

project. We have sent a formal letter of thanks for their invaluable support and help. It is remarkable how many walkers stop to look at the carvings, but rarely stop to look at any other individual trees ! Every leylandii tree stump except one is now being re-used, a notice and a bench as well as the carvings.

We are still in need of volunteers to do work at Allens View .There is more spring planting and, as always, more general maintenance work to do.

We have recently placed an order with a small local firm for two wrought iron benches to replace the wooden ones burnt by young vandals last year. These will cost between £1600 and £1800 and will be designed to be sturdy enough to withstand the attacks of both the weather and of our less considerate visitors.



Harry Gardiner



**The rather less usual view in Spring of the sweep of Carmarthen Bay North from Allens View**

## *Transport Matters*



Neil Westerman has been very active in looking at transport provision, both rail and road in the Pembrokeshire and wider area as it affects Tenby. On bus services he made detailed suggestions with timings for a number of routes:

1. The 360 Tenby town service should again serve Lady Park and Upper Hill Park.
  2. Retiming the 381 Tenby – Haverfordwest service so that it provided a direct connection to the T5 Traws Cymru Carmarthen – Cardigan service.
  3. Rerouting the 352 service to include Jeffreyston, Creselly and Cresswell Quay rather than serving Saundersfoot, and finally a proposal on
4. Introducing a Concessionary Travel Pass on the Pembroke Dock to Carmarthen Arriva Trains Wales Service

Owen Roberts, Passenger Transport Co-ordinator for PCC complimented Neil on his detailed proposals and sent a comprehensive answer which is worth quoting in detail, as follows:

1. He makes the valid point that more people complain about losing a bus service than actually use it. He says they have reinstated the 361 service through Lady Park and Upper Hill Park but that usage will be carefully monitored to ensure the service is used and viable. Neil subsequently leafleted the two estates with the new bus timetable to encourage people to use the service. So the message is clear : use it or lose it.
2. On the 381 service he says:

“The 381 currently connects with the 430 in Narberth to enable connecting journeys from Tenby to Fishguard and to Aberystwyth via Narberth and Cardigan. This has been in place since April 2017.

We have previously looked at bringing forward the departure times in Tenby to half past the hour so that there is a connection with the T5. However, it is not as straightforward as it appears as there are issues regarding connections with other services, duplicate journeys and insufficient driver break.” But he goes on..

“Also, due to current timing issues with the T5 it is likely that the timetable will be revised sometime in the near future which may result in the Haverfordwest arrival/departure times changing.”

“With regards to the potential of the 381 being included as part of the Welsh Governments Traws Cymru network, this is something that we are already speaking to the Welsh Government about but this is something that is going to take time to implement.”

3. “With regards to the 361 service, you suggest that we could remove the section between Cresselly and Kilgetty on the grounds that they are very lightly used. Whilst there are very few passengers travelling from Cresswell Quay, Cresselly and Jeffreyston, Kilgetty is actually the busiest stop after Tenby and Pembroke Dock. This is based on the ticket machine data from the last 7 months and the week long survey undertaken in November. The 361 provides the only direct service between Kilgetty and Pembroke Dock so it is well used.

You also suggest that the 352 service is re-routed so that it serves Jeffreyston, Cresselly and Cresswell Quay instead of Saundersfoot. The routes between Saundersfoot and Tenby convey a considerable number of passengers and removing the 352 is very likely to result in capacity issues on the 381 and 351. Also, the operator is likely to want additional funding if the route is revised to remove Saundersfoot.

Due to the lack of interest from other bus companies to operate this service, the Council is looking at running it using a smaller vehicles. However, to do this the route will need to be altered so that it can be done with one driver.

Based on the ticket machine data and the survey results we have decided to split the route back into two and provide a reduced service around Cresselly, Cresswell Quay and Jeffreyston.”

### 3. Finally on rail...

“The inability to use the All Wales Concessionary Travel Pass on rail services in Pembrokeshire is something that is often raised by members of the public. I will contact the Welsh Government to ask them to consider whether or not this is possible.”

Neill also wrote off to Ken Skates, Cabinet Secretary for the Economy and transport for the the Welsh Government making some suggestions for the public consultation on the future form of the Wales and Borders rail franchise, planned to be awarded this May. He received a detailed reply from Dr. Simon Tew, Head of Rail Policy.

Extracts from the letter agree with many of the points Neil raised. Besides saying the the new franchise should offer at least as much as the current franchise with the new operator incentivised to enhance services, it goes on to say:

“Following the contract award,...details will be published. In the interim you may find it useful to note the “Rail Services of the Future” document that outlines our aspirations... <http://gov.wales/docs/det/publications/170922-rail-services-of-the-future-brochure-en.pdf>.” (Neil says that this is somewhat vague and lacking in detail but may be worth consulting if interested).

Neil also suggested that services between Wales and London should be included in the franchise. The following seems to suggest that proposal is part of WG plans:

“We have responded to the Great Western Franchise Consultation. We also believe that the most advantageous change would be for all services operating into Wales to be re-mapped to a franchise procured and managed by the Welsh Government. This would enable the WG to have the role it needs to ensure that services are designed and delivered in a way which will take full account of Wales’ interests. We have asked the Department for Transport to work with us to develop this option.”

On local issues the letter finishes by saying:

“We have also requested confirmation of infrastructure investment of services that has been announced to support the further development of services currently operated by the Great Western franchise. This includes journey time improvements along the South Wales main line and clearance to enable direct services from Pembroke Dock to London to continue using the new Intercity Express Trains”



From other sources there is a rumour that the Welsh Government is seeking authorization and funding to re-integrate Network Rail's infrastructure work into the new franchise.

On a personal note the writer has experience of the new Intercity Express trains. Impressions are that it is very Spartan, the seating is extremely hard and uncomfortable and that the air-conditioning would suit an Eskimo. Take a cushion if you are travelling more than a hundred miles, that is from Tenby to Cardiff and beyond.

## *Planning*

Generally, the lack of space in the town area has led to a number of planning proposals by owners to maximize the use of their properties. In the walled town area the trend is to expand into the attic space with dormer windows and raised roofs to create another floor. Recent examples were for the property in Crackwell Street over the Indian restaurant and retrospective approval requested for the house next to Floral Corner in the High Street. While the latter was well-thought out, the Crackwell Street rear elevation overlooking the harbour we felt was visually intrusive with a big band of windows rather than separate dormers. An earlier proposal for Kermindine in Bridge Street for expanded attic floors was combined with that other current fashion for balconies. This raised the general problem of overlooking of properties behind and, thankfully, was withdrawn and no similar further application has come forward for the neighbouring property in the same ownership. However the planners have allowed a similar proposal for a dormer in a property in Clement Terrace.

Outside the walled town area the trend is more to expand into the rear garden areas with large garden rooms or kitchen/ diners. Most are well-designed and offer a better use of space but there is a tendency not to consult neighbours and ignore questions of loss of light and ambience for neighbours' gardens.

Two specific proposals affect the Tudor Square area.

The first was a well-thought scheme showing evidence of prior consultation for the adaptation of the redundant Nat West building with provision of a first-floor flat, space for retail use on the ground floor and a redesigned rear access from Church Street. This application did not include the part of the building to the right of the (Retained) façade. Presumably this will be the subject of a separate application and may be connected with the move of West Wales properties from their first floor offices, though this is pure conjecture.

The second matter was more contentious. The old Medical Hall in Tudor Square had listed fittings, - shelving and display cases lining the walls when it was a chemist shop. These were stored when it became a novelty shop but were not reinstated when it became an ice cream outlet. The owners appealed against a requirement to reinstate the fittings. At the appeal hearing the Planning Inspector rejected the Medical Hall appeal so the lessee has to restore/ replace the fittings..... Good news for Rob Scourfield of PCNPA and our Harry Gardiner who have followed this problem over the whole period. The good news has been passed on to member John Hughes who took a strong interest.

There was an interesting proposal to remodel the toilet block at the The Green car park to provide a retail outlet. This, however, was turned down. Still on car parks, the Five Arches car park applied to change its temporary permission for permanent use. This would have given the opportunity to soften the visual impact with planting.

The Domino's Pizza application has now rumbled to its sad conclusion. As you are no doubt aware the enquiry inspector passed the proposal, ignoring the questions of the limited opening hours of nearby fast food outlets and the problems of parking in South Parade, accepting the results of the traffic survey taken in November (!). Prepare for traffic jams and late night disruption in the area, I fear, though it will no doubt be welcomed by some as a valuable addition to the meal offerings in the area late at night.

## *South East Pembrokeshire Health Area Proposals*

Howard Rawson-Humphries, our ex-secretary and New Hedges Councillor attended the recent South-East

Pembrokeshire Community Health meeting. Present were: Cllr Jon Preston (Chair), Ceri Griffiths (Community and Primary Care Nurse Manager, Pembrokeshire), Yvonne Phillips (Tenby Walk-In Centre Resource Manager), Simon Thomas AM. plus 23 members of the public (including 2 County Councillors and 5 Community/Town Councillors.

- The first section was presented by the two NHS managers:

Tenby Doctors Surgery. Ongoing issues discussed. The serious recruitment problem continues. A member of the public asked how it is acceptable for patients to attend the surgery only to speak to a doctor by telephone.

Tenby Walk-In Centre. In 7 months 2770 patients. Mostly local people, with a minority of tourists during the holiday season. The centre is supporting the surgery. It is now fully staffed (6 staff). The centre will be open over the Easter weekend. An evaluation of services will begin at the end of September. This will determine what will be needed to keep the centre open. Currently there can be no variance from the original business plan created when the centre opened. The service provided last year by St John's Ambulance was officially deemed "not effective". It is likely to return over the summer, but no decision has yet been made. NHS staffing problems over weekends have not been resolved. A new 'Well Persons Clinic' will be opening on Saturdays, to run for the next few months.

Dental practices in Tenby. There are currently no dentists accepting NHS patients. However, NHS patients have been transferred from Carmarthen in a bid to reduce waiting lists there.

- The second section was a general discussion of the NHS situation in West Wales presented by Simon Thomas AM:

A document has been made available to the public 'Transforming Clinical Services: The Journey So Far'. It's dated January 2018. You may wish to search for it online. At the beginning of March, Hywel Dda Health Board held an extraordinary meeting, to be followed by consultations to be confirmed. They currently has a budget deficit of £74million. A policy of "clustering" GP services is being considered.

Hospital services at Withybush, Prince Philip and Glan Gwili (but not Bronglais) are "under consideration". Major changes are being considered, including the creation of a new hospital. This could be formed by a merger of some of the services currently provided by Withybush and Glan Gwili. The existing hospitals would continue as dormitories. Any new hospital construction would require serious capital investment, estimated at £700million. There are 5 possible unspecified locations for a new hospital. Certain criteria are known to exist for the selection of candidate sites, with road and rail links deemed essential.

It's very early days yet. Simon Thomas estimated it could take 7 to 10 years until any hospital actually opens

## *Rates*

Cllr Michael Williams sent Harry Gardiner the attached brief which was forwarded for Tenby Civic Society committee members edification. The source is Pembrokeshire County Council. We feel we should now pass it on to members of the society as the 12.5% increase in rates has now been passed.

Careful reading shows Pembs rates are 24% lower than the average for Wales. 12.5% would not meet that at all. The tricky bit is that the Assembly funds councils assuming the rates charged are the average for Wales, giving a higher amount than if it was a proportion of the rates Pembs charge. Pembs get more proportionately from the Assembly than other authorities and than it provides itself. Under Dyfed the rates were the same across the three county areas.

It appears Pembs is way out of line and depriving itself of funding for services with less cushion for Government cuts, than say Blaenau Gwent. But a matching increase would hit ratepayers as horrific. Clever squeeze from Westminster – councils would be to blame for rates increases.

The second document is a standardised comparison of what different Authorities rates will raise; it is unclear how it was calculated.

Most people are unaware that rates only raise around a sixth of local government income.....

## *Subscriptions*

Recently , talking to our Treasurer, Albie Smosarski, he was commenting on the fact that very few members had renewed their subscriptions for 2018. Perhaps, he suggested members may have been confused by the invitation to put a standing order in place. Surely not. An appeal, therefore: Could members who have not yet paid please make a special effort to send them to or visit Albie at Cofion Books, Bridge Street, Tenby SA70 7BU, or alternatively hand over the subscription at our AGM on the 28<sup>th</sup> April.

## *A Little Light Relief*

This newsletter is somewhat heavy in tone so, to finish, it needs to finish on a lighter note with a quiz. There are no prizes and the editor denies all responsibility for the content, passing the buck to Trevor Hallett who sent it to me. Hope you enjoy it....

Something for seniors to do to keep those "aging" grey cells active! And for you younger ones, to get them growing!!

1. Johnny's mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child's name?
2. There is an assistant at the butcher's shop, he is five feet ten inches tall and he wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh?
3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world?
4. How much dirt is there in a hole... that measures two feet by three feet by four feet?
5. What word in the English Language... is always spelled incorrectly?
6. Billy was born on December 28th, yet his birthday is always in the summer. How is this possible?
7. In California, you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not?
8. What was the President's Name...in 1975?
9. If you were running a race, and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now?
10. Which is correct to say, "The yolk of the egg are white" or "The yolk of the egg is white"?
11. If a farmer has 5 haystacks in one field and 4 haystacks in the other field, how many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in a third field?

Answers are at the end of the Newsletter: (No peeking!)

## *Smart Meters*

Due to lack of space this item was held over from the last Newsletter. Last November a pamphlet was delivered to my house. I assumed others had received it but apparently not. I can only assume the anonymous delivery person wanted me to publicise its contents to members.

I am sure everyone knows that so-called smart meters are being rolled out across the country and are intended to obviate the need for meter readings by sending readings by radio transmission up to three or four times a day. Other advantages are that householders can see at any time how much electricity and gas they are using and suppliers can regulate generating electricity and pumping gas more economically by adjusting supply more closely to demand. Official government information, backed by international investigation, albeit dating from 2004, states there are no harmful effects in having what is in effect a miniature mobile phone mast in your home.

The pamphlet, in contrast claims there are startlingly harmful effects from what they call “Electro-magnetic pollution”. claiming “More than 5,000 studies show that the intensive bursts of non-ionising , microwave radiation (RF EMF) is harmful to humans, plants and animals.

It also says that the ICNIRP safety standards which the UK government and PHA continue to use fail to recognise the non-thermal biological effects of microwave radiation. “These standards were voted OBSOLETE (capitals in the original) by the European Parliament 506 votes to 22”. (Date and reference not stated).

Should you require more information they direct you to the website [www.StopSmartMeters.org.uk](http://www.StopSmartMeters.org.uk).

The author admits to greeting these claims with mild scepticism but also does not see the need for a smart meter when he has been trained to submit meter readings since his first frightening estimated quarterly bill many years ago. However, to have smart meters in your home is voluntary and you have the right to refuse one. Also the completion of the roll-out of smart meters throughout the country has been delayed a number of times so the problem, if it is one, is not urgent.

I pass this on with no other comment, purely for members’ information, and can show anyone interested the original.

## Answers to Quiz

1. Johnny, of course.
2. Meat.
3. Mt. Everest; it just wasn't discovered yet. [You're not very good at this are you?]
- 4 There isn't any dirt in a hole.
5. Incorrectly
6. Billy lives in the Southern Hemisphere.
7. You can't take pictures with a wooden leg. You need a camera to take pictures.
8. Same as is it now – Donald Trump [Oh, come on .]
9. You would be in 2nd. Well, you passed the person in second place, not first.
10. Neither, the yolk of the egg is yellow [Duh]
11. One. If he combines all of his haystacks, they all become one big one.

