# Llais Llandyrnog Voice

## Ilandyrnognews@gmail.com

January 2024 - Volume 9 - Issue 4

## A New Year's message

Happy New Year to all our readers and thank you for your support throughout the year. We are grateful to all those who contribute to the Llais, which all helps to make it a good read. Most of all we are sincerely thankful to the few who deliver, co-ordinate and translate, and put the pages together for the printer every month. We would appreciate extra hands! If you think you have the skills, please do come and join the committee which meets once a month. Llandyrnog is a very special community and the Llais helps to draw us together. We look forward to more excitement in 2024.

> Ruth Griffith Chair Llais Llandyrnog Voice committee



When you pick up your copy, please contribute via the collection box, or give a contribution to your distributor. Thank you! Up it goes!





A very big thank you to Carol and Glyn Davies for funding the Christmas tree once again. Also thanks to Phil Rose, Arwyn Evans, David Weyman, Hazel Wright, Emyr Morris and Bryn Davies for erecting it.

## Around the village

Our sincerest condolences to the families of Brenda Williams, Nant Glyd; Gwynfor Jones, Nant Glyd, and Ed Chaloner, Ty'n y Caeau.

Congratulations to Penny and Tom Hughes, The White Horse, on the birth of their daughter, Hollie Grace – sister of Thomas, Rhys, Lydia, Dylan, Darcie, Scarlett, Michael and Eddie.

Best wishes to Bernard Thomas, Trefnant and Rhian Pierce, Plas Dolben, following their accidents, and to Dei Owen following hospital treatment. Also to Earle and Elaine Wright, Parc Tŷ'n Llan, on their move to Hawarden.

The History Society coffee morning raised £280 – thanks to all for the support.

The Hub was busy at Cae Nant Pavilion in the November opening, and many came for a hot drink, cake, and soup. Unfortunately, due to illness, the December opening had to be cancelled. However, £200 was contributed to the Vale of Clwyd Food Bank in Denbigh, along with food items.

Bryn Williams, the chef, recently featured in an S4C programme from his restaurant in Switzerland. It can be watched with subtitles on https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/ p0gz0pvc/sgwrs-dan-y-lloer-sgwrs-dan-y-lloerbryn-williams.

The defibrillator at the pavilion in Cae Nant was used on request from North Wales Ambulance Service. It has been checked and is again emergency-ready. A huge thanks to everyone who helped to get this defibrillator for the village.

## Village Hall Events

Sat 6 <sup>th</sup>	Craft Group	10am–4pm
Mon 8 <sup>th</sup>	Brownies Choir	5.30–7pm 7.30–9.30pm
Sat 13 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee morning – Dementia UK	10–11.30am
Mon 15 <sup>th</sup>	Brownies Choir	5.30–7pm 7.30–9.30pm
Weds 17 <sup>th</sup>	History Society – Vale of Clwyd Railways (Fiona Gale)	7.30–9.30pm
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup>	Private booking – birthday party	2.45pm–5pm
Mon 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Brownies Choir	5.30–7pm 7.30–9.30pm
Sat 27 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee morning – Dyffryn Chapel	10–11.30am
Mon 29 <sup>th</sup>	Brownies Choir	5.30–7pm 7.30–9.30pm

To book the Village Hall, contact Ivan Butler: ivanbutler897@btinternet.com or 07799 570549.

## Cocoa Rooms Events

Monday	1 <sup>st</sup>	Trefoil Guild, 2pm
Tuesday,	2 <sup>nd</sup>	WI, 7pm
Tuesday	9 <sup>th</sup>	Book club 10–11am
Wednesday	$10^{th}$	Llais Llandyrnog Voice
		committee meeting, 7pm
Tuesday	$16^{th}$	Community Council,
		7pm
Wednesday	17 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday Club, 2pm
Monday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Craft, knitting and
		crochet group, 10am
Tuesday	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Book club 10–11am
Monday	29 <sup>th</sup>	Craft, knitting and
		crochet group, 10am

To book the Cocoa Rooms, e-mail Mrs Emily Williams: emilylloyd1@tiscali.co.uk **Coffee Morning** Village Hall Saturday 13 January, 10.00 - 11.30 Proceeds to



Contributions gratefully received towards the home produce stall

All welcome

### **Coffee Morning**

Village Hall, Saturday 27 January 10.00 – 11.30 Proceeds to Dyffryn Chapel Contributions gratefully received towards the local produce stalls *All welcome* 



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### **Post Office Opening Hours**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am–12pm, 2pm–5pm Wednesday & Saturday 9am–12.30pm 01824 790310

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## Ysgol Bryn Clwyd



Above is a photo from our panto visit to Llandudno to watch Peter Pan. The bus and ice lollies were kindly paid for by friends of the school.



The charity Keep Wales Tidy visited us this month to help us plant up our new raised beds with herbs and fruits.





To end their chocolate topic, the Juniors are currently designing a chocolate for local restaurant Nant y Felin.



Darcie Hughes was the school winner in the competition to design a Christmas card for James Davies, MP.

(More pictures of school activities in the Welsh version)

## Ysgol Bryn Clwyd: ctd



At our community Christmas lunch we presented Mr Gwilym Evans with a token of our appreciation for over 40 years of service on our governing body. He has been an excellent role model for all our children and a constant support for many different members of staff over the years.



Thanks to Mrs Tynan for a very tasty Christmas lunch, from the pupils and residents who accepted the invitation to join them.





We were overwhelmed with the support for our Christmas fair from the community, it was a really magical night featuring Santa, Elsa from Frozen and two donkeys called Ant & Dec. The children sang some Christmas carols to start the market off putting everyone in the festive spirit.

### **Denbighshire County Council**

**Merfyn Parry** 

Contact details

Mobile: 07836 208446

E-mail: merfyn.parry@denbighshire.gov.uk

Or leave a message on Facebook

## Llandyrnog United FC - a re-cap of 2023

2023 has been a year of change for Llandyrnog United. Jimmy McNally stood down as the team manager in February, and Sion Morris and David Lawson-Cooke offered to be joint caretaker managers. Llandyrnog United finished the 2022/2023 season in 14th place, in what was a disappointing season.

In March, Clive Jones the then Chairperson decided to step down in the role, and Jimmy McNally offered to become the new Chairperson.

In July, Sion Morris accepted the offer to become the permanent manager. He produced a heavy pre-season friendly and training schedule and brought in some fresh faces. One of these was Jack Cooledge, who came in as club physio and coach, he also registered as a player. He was keen to get the fitness levels of the team up.

The start of the season saw a few injury blows. Club captain Dave Lawson-Cooke suffered a bad ankle injury and new signing Ben Green broke his arm in a 5 a-side match.

The season started well with an emphatic 3-0 win in the Welsh Cup 1st Qualifying round, Sean James getting all three goals. Then Sean was the next one on the injury list, suffering a serious shoulder injury against CPD Llansannan.

The team then suffered further injury blows, again to Dave Lawson-Cooke with

another ankle injury, Rob Lawson with a knee injury, and Joel Rowlands who suffered a broken kneecap. Osian Audley suffered a nasty cut to his knee.

In December, Jimmy McNally decided to step down as chairperson. Nick Hailes said he would take over till the end of the season.

The club thanks Top Mark Teamwear for the two new kits; Cooke Milking Equipment Ltd for sponsoring the home kit; MHC UK Ltd for sponsoring our warmup kit; NW Parcels for sponsoring our warmup kit; Clwyd Garden & Landscape for sponsoring the players' polo shirts; The Golden Lion, Llandyrnog and The White Horse Restaurant Hendrerwydd for providing the venues for post-match hospitality; Townsend Takeaway for providing the post-match hospitality pizza and chips, and Macron Sports Hub Wrexham for producing all the new club merchandise. Thanks also to all the local companies who provide board sponsorships and match ball sponsors.

Finally, we thank our followers and supporters who turn out in all weather, week in week out to support the team. You do not know how much that support is appreciated by the team.

The club would like the wish everyone a prosperous New Year. We will see you all on the 13th January when the season resumes with an away game at CPD Cerrigydrudion.



## Dyffryn Chapel

**Y Gymdeithas** On Monday 4 December, Rhys Davies, President, welcomed Llŷr Jones, Derwydd, an entrepreneur, who gave a vivid account of the recent developments on the farm. He also gave an account of his humanitarian help by transporting building materials and food to Ukraine and many African countries. A very interesting evening.



Lt–rt.: Rhys Davies, Llŷr Jones, and Richard Davies, who gave the vote of thanks.

On Sunday morning 17 December the Children's Christmas service was held – carefully prepared by Gwenno, Dafydd and Lona. The traditional Nativity Story was interwoven with a modern take by the children in their colourful costumes, and they were supported by the young people in song and readings. Then Rev. Andras Iago gave a Christmas message. A wonderful service.



On Monday 18 December, the annual Christmas Party was held to a packed Vestry, and the supper was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Then we had a visit from Father Christmas, before the evening ended with games and dancing!



Services in January07/0110.00Circuit Service – Dyffryn14/0110.00Prayer Meeting21/0111.00Rev. Andras Iago28/019.45Rev. Gareth Parry

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## The Moel y Parc Scots pines

Drovers of old used to carry pine cones in their pockets and plant them as markers to help other drovers find a collection point, inn or shelter for the evening. They would grow quickly and eventually stand tall and higher than the indigenous deciduous trees which would shed their leaves.

According to legend, the more trees (there were three or five usually), the better the welcome or quality of accommodation. As we have five-star hotels today, the drovers had their own way of letting their fellow drovers know whether it was worth the bother or not.

This would have happened in the 1600s, right through to the early 1800s, when the droving by road ceased virtually overnight with the advent of the train and railway branches to the more rural areas. But there are umpteen books written on the subject, so I will let you do your own homework. Our dear friend, the late Idris 'Steptoe' Evans, had any audience in the palm of his hands with his tales of drovers along the Vale.

The drovers were also entrusted with carrying important documents from eminent local families to their London lawyers and were subject to the perils of highway men. These knew that the drovers always carried cash. In fact, if it was not for drovers, we would probably not have banking as we know today – in Wales, at least.

A certain David Jones established his first bank in Llandovery in 1799 – The Black Ox bank, which was later absorbed by Lloyds Bank. It meant that the drovers did not have to carry much cash with them, and so reduce the risk of being held up by highwaymen. They would probably pick up cash from a more local branch to pay the vendors – the smallholders and farmers who entrusted the drovers with their stock. The whole droving system was based on trust and until this day, many farmers and country folk rely heavily on trust. But once you break that trust, that's it.

Anyway, where was I going with this?

There are tall Scots pines dotted around the vale at strategic points – usually alehouses, churches or near crossroads. Think of Hendrerwydd – the trees directly in front of the pub have been felled. However if you look behind it, you will see a very tall Scots pine at Buarth Mawr. This was where the stock would have been held overnight – buarth meaning 'yard' – next door to Buarth Bach.



In Fforddwr, Llandyrnog – a cottage that dates back to 1623 – there are half a dozen Scots pines strategically placed, facing each other. It's quite possible that these are some of the oldest in the area. More interestingly, while digging, Phil came across an 1879 Macclesfield Halfpenny – a coin with Macclesfield, Liverpool and Congleton written around its rim. If the drovers were to be set upon by highwaymen, they would have to go a long way to spend their halfpenny!

There are tall Scots pines in Plas Bennett, which indicates it may well be a place where

## The Moel y Parc Scots pines: ctd

the dealers did business. There is of course the well-documented history of the Plas Bennett chair on which the wealthy Major Bennett sat whilst his house being ransacked by highwaymen. Little did they know he was actually sitting on the family treasures. You will be glad to know that the chair is actually back in Plas Bennett now. Maybe someone would like to tell the story of how the chair left but then eventually purchased and brought back to its rightful home – that in itself would be fascinating!

Anyway, to sum up the reason I have written this was that many a time I have stood at the crossroads just below Moel y Parc mast and studied the Scots pine trees there and wondered whether these were drovers' markers. The latest book published by the AONB – *Trees in our landscape* – confirms my suspicions that these indeed were drovers' marker trees. It makes sense



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because they're on a crossroads – a track from Aberwheeler, one from Afonwen, and one from the Ddôl area and the drovers would then head along the drovers' track – which for some reason we call the Roman Road – through Nant Simon to London Bridge to pick up more stock. But it is rumoured that at one time, there was a copse of Scots pine trees – not two or three – at Moel y Parc, so I guess there must have been a very warm 'welcome in the hillside' for the drovers at that particular overnight stop.

Following the London Bridge stop they would head for Llandegla – a focal point for the drovers, which at one time had sixteen ale houses to cater for their needs. They would buy and sell at a market near to what we now know as The Crown – everything apart from the beef cattle would be sold before heading to Wrexham. They would then follow a very well-defined bunded route with stopping points overnight, before they reached the outskirts of London. Here the beef would be rested in a lairage to put some weight back on after the three to four week journey.

I hope that next time you are out walking keep an eye out for these tall evergreen Scots pine – they are part of our past and try work out where the tracks came from and where are they heading!

Bryn Davies

## Trefoil Guild

Members of the Trefoil Guild enjoyed an excellent Christmas lunch at Denbigh Golf Club. Annual subscriptions were paid and everyone received a Secret Santa present. A programme will be drawn up in January and the next meeting will be in February.

### James Davies, MP for Vale of Clwyd james.davies.mp@parliament.uk Constituency office: 01745 888920 Westminster office: 0207 2194606



Another festive season is over, it's now a good time to hit the refresh button with a new year. What about a new year's resolution? Many fail after a few days or weeks, but try and think of a doable one for yourself which hopefully will continue at least until Easter. For me it's maybe keeping the car clean. I constantly have dog-nose marks on the back window. At this time of year the lanes are so muddy, it can become quite a chore, but your car and mechanic will thank you. If you're not a gardener, why not consider becoming one and grow some vegetables, or for us seasoned gardeners, try a new variety instead of the old favourites.

The days are starting to lengthen and if you are up at the crack of dawn you may be fortunate to hear some of our more common birds like sparrows, robins and tits trying out their voices and getting some practice in. Those spring flowering bulbs planted on the roundabout will soon appear and certainly the naturalised snowdrops in our lanes and verges will be the first to show their heads in 2024 poking through the snow, if we have any.

We are much more likely to see snow in January and February. One of the snowiest winters was 1947, a bit before my time, but some of you may remember it or have parents who told you about it. It was 1963 which was the coldest for more than 200 years and was known as the 'big freeze'. I certainly have memories of the winters in the early 80s when we seemed to be snowed in for days. My mother didn't have a freezer then and so my father and I 'volunteered' or were we 'cajoled' by my mother to walk down to the village shop for supplies. We waded through the deep snow, climbing over the hedges so we could walk through the fields which were blown clear of snow. The easterly wind had picked up the snow and deposited it in the lane sculpting it into mounds protruding from the hedges. It was such a relief to reach the

shop, but then there was the long trudge back up to the farm.



Storms weren't named then, but during one such blizzard my neighbour's lad got the farm's Land Rover stuck in the lane. The snow can be notoriously bad on the brow of the hill after my place before you go down to Pentre Farm and he had been out for the evening and was driving home and hit the deep snow. He tried to drive the 'landy' through the drifts, but failed and was forced to abandon the vehicle. By the morning all you could see was a small section of the roof peeping out above the deep snow. It was dug out later by a JCB and, typically for a 'landy', a few days buried in snow didn't stop the engine roaring into life and it continued its journey home. More recently when we had the 'beast from the east' there was a high-tech snow blower coming up the brow of the hill. It blew all the snow over the hedges and was quite spectacular to watch. It didn't stop the snow plough coming along later though and pushing snow into my freshly cleared gateway so I could get to work – the air was blue that day and not due to the temperature!

## Hazel

## Spotlight on ... Sion Williams

Sion is one of the directors of Gamlins Law, the head of the dispute resolution team and specialises in commercial litigation matters.



### What is your first memory?

What a difficult question! I remember hugging Ben, the sheepdog from the farm next door to my home when I was very young, and not much taller than him then. Ben was a very gentle dog and visited us regularly (daily!), sitting in front of the kitchen window until one of us fed him.

### How did you choose your career?

The case of O J Simpson in the USA in 1994/1995 was a great influence. I really enjoyed all the drama of the court case and followed it eagerly, since a television programme on Sunday night recapped all the previous week's events. At the same time, I started to read John Grisham's books about lawyers and legal companies in the USA and I loved that world. That was the first lead, and although the UK's legal world is totally different to O J Simpson's situation and John Grisham's imaginary characters, I have no regrets at all.

## When did you come to Llandyrnog to live, and why?

In April 2014, when Mati Nel was 10 months old. I worked in the Ruthin office then, and Gwenan taught in Mold, and both of us travelled in the same direction from Conway to go to work. So we decided to look for somewhere closer to reduce the commute, and both of us were familiar with Llandyrnog. We were keen to be part of a close-knit Welsh community and therefore it was perfect for us.

### What do you enjoy in your spare time?

I run a very successful taxi business for my two faithful customers, Mati Nel and Leusa Jên, who often require sending somewhere and picking up! But seriously, apart from spending time with the girls, I enjoy reading novels, historical books or biographies, especially those of stars from the world of sport. Any drama series about an investigation into a murder, or about spies or a court case always goes down well. I'm also a faithful supporter of Everton FC, although that hasn't been very pleasing recently!

### If you were exiled to a desert island, what three things would you take with you, and why?

A phone – to talk to the girls. Plenty of books – to while away the time. Red wine – to quench my thirst.

### Who is your hero?

Anyone willing to challenge the system or the establishment for the good of others, and anyone willing to volunteer their time to help those less fortunate than them.

### What angers you and what makes you happy?

Wars and the inevitable subsequent suffering angers and saddens me. Also, cruelty to animals. I'm very happy when Everton win.

### Llais Llandyrnog Voice Committee

Ruth Griffith (Chair), Ivan Butler (treasurer & compositor), Anwen Davies (compositor & translator), Gwen Butler, Bryn Davies, Ann and Iestyn Jones-Evans, Rhian Jones, Rod and Margaret Williams, Jane Borthwick. Send all news contributions and articles to Ilandyrnognews@gmail.com.

## **Tuesday Club**





Members had a wonderful Christmas lunch at the Drovers Arms, Rhewl and we thank Sam and Sion for looking after us so well.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Gwynfor Jones, extreme left in the above photo – taken only a week before he passed away suddenly. Our sincere condolences to Non and Alun and all the family.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, 17 January, and all are welcome.

## Spring is sprung?



A daffodil in bloom at Maes y Wern, 17 December, the earliest ever. Has anyone else a flower that has bloomed this early?

## **Messy Church**

Christmas came a little early to Llandyrnog when we celebrated the nativity in Messy Church. The children reported to the Roman soldier (thank you Mrs Tynan!). We made a lovely night scene decorated with angels and sheep, we built the manger, and made crowns, angels, shepherds, lanterns for the stable, a wooden spoon Mary and a jelly baby Baby Jesus!



We ended up at the stable where we heard once again the wonderful story of the birth of Jesus and then all enjoyed a party afterwards.

There will be no Messy Church in January but we will be back on 11<sup>th</sup> February and all are welcome to join us.

### January services at St Tyrnog's

- 7<sup>th</sup> 11.15am Holy Communion
- 14<sup>th</sup> 11.15am Morning Prayer
- 21<sup>st</sup> 11.15am Morning Prayer
- 28<sup>th</sup> 11.15am Holy Communion

The Rev. Martin Pritchard wishes a happy and healthy New Year to the readers of *Llais Llandyrnog Voice*.



## Recipe

### **Beef cobbler**

2 lbs stewing steak
2 medium onions, peeled and chopped
3 tomatoes, skinned and sliced
1 carrot, peeled and sliced
1 parsnip, peeled and sliced
1 oz fat
1 oz flour
1 beef stock cube
Salt and pepper to taste

Scone topping: ½ lb. self-raising flour ½ teaspoon mixed herbs 2 oz margarine ¼ pint milk

Melt the fat and fry the onions, carrot, parsnip and meat until lightly browned. Put with the tomatoes in layers in a casserole dish. Make up the stock cube with ¾ pint boiling water. Add the flour to the melted fat and cook for a few minutes; add the stock and seasonings, bring to the boil, and pour over the meat. Cover Cook in a moderate oven, 180 °C, gas mark 4 for 1½ hours. Meanwhile make the scone topping.

Mix all the dry ingredients together and rub in the fat. Just before the meat is cooked, add the milk to the dry ingredients and mix to a soft dough. Roll out and cut into scones. Place on top of the meat and cook in a hot oven, 200 °C, gas mark 6, for a further 20 minutes, uncovered.

Serves 4.

Margaret Williams



## Llandyrnog W.I.

The group met on 7 November and took part in a craft workshop, making cards and Christmas decorations. This was thoroughly enjoyed, along with a friendly chat over a cup of tea.

The Drovers Arms in Rhewl was the meeting place for the group's Christmas lunch on 5 December. A Secret Santa brought small gifts for everyone, and we had a fun evening with a Christmas quiz.

We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at the Cocoa Rooms, from 7–9pm. In the new year, guest speakers will be coming to each meeting to share their interests with us.

A warm welcome awaits new members. For more information, contact the secretary, Jane Borthwick on <u>Janeborthwick56@gmail.com</u>.



## Penbigh Probus Club 🕡

Members and their guests enjoyed a wonderful Christmas lunch at the Oriel Hotel, St Asaph. The speaker after lunch was Gareth Foulkes, Pentrefelin, and spoke about soils and regenerative farming. Members agreed that they would like to visit Gareth's farm in the future to explore the topic further.

The next meeting will be on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 when Celia Drew will speak about Canadians at Kinmel Bay Camp.

New members are always warmly welcomed. For further information, visit the web site, <u>denbighprobus.com</u>, or contact membership officer, Andrew Faulkner, <u>Afaulkner@btinternet.com</u>, 07542 022 391.

## Llandyrnog Community Council

The following matters were discussed at the December meeting:

The community policeman was not present due to other commitments, but he had provided a comprehensive report. Although there had been no reported incidents in the village, he reported the following:

- Winter burglaries/crime prevention:
  - Secure garages and outbuildings. Install video doorbells/lights or CCTV if possible.
  - Report any suspicious persons or vehicles, giving as much information is possible (i.e. the vehicle registration).
  - Timer lights and closing curtains once dark is advised. If going away, consider asking a neighbour or family member to park their car on your driveway.
- Drink driving:
  - Festive anti drink/drug driving campaign is underway. Numerous persons have been caught leaving pubs and driving under the influence of alcohol (including in the Ruthin/Denbigh area) and a number of people have failed morning drink-driving tests after drinking the night before. Personal single use breathalysers are available and could stop you from driving if you are unsure whether you are safe/legal to drive. Search 'Breathalyser UK' and buy from a trusted source.
- Fraud incidents:
  - A number of these types of incidents have been dealt with by local officers recently. The suspects for such incidents are generally not local and there are often no enquiries for a local police force to carry out (except welfare checks/ referrals and safeguarding advice to minimise the chance of being a repeat victim). We urge anyone who receives a phone call or email out of the blue to speak to friends and family or to visit the Action Fraud website –

Fraud – 0300 123 2040 and consider whether they are being scammed before following any instructions.

- The gullies between Cross Keys and the roundabout have been cleared. However, the gully at Cross Keys junction discharges into Coed y Waen and the landowner's permission is required to enter and clean the ditch. DCC has the work in hand.
- DCC has carried out major works clearing the pavement between the creamery and the village hall and was thanked for this effort at short notice.
- There are some changes to waste collection services. To date nothing is known but there is a workshop for town and community councils at Ruthin, Thursday, 8 February.
- DCC has confirmed that the track leading up to the Maes Llan car park is not an adopted highway and therefore will not maintain it. Cllr Parry had acquired crushed concrete to do a temporary repair. It is a historic situation and ownership is unclear.
- The application for grant funding to provide additional facilities to allow hybrid meetings has been submitted to Brenig Wind Farm.
- It's time to update the community council website and it was decided to place a note in the *Llais* asking for ideas from individuals and what would they like to be included.
- It was disappointing that DCC had not replied to a query about bus timetables – or lack of them.
- It was decided to see if the heating to the Cocoa Rooms could be updated.

The council wishes to update its website, www.llandyrnogcommunitycouncil.co.uk. If you have any ideas for its content, please contact the Clerk, Bryn Davies, on rbrynd1@gmail.com.

www.actionfraud.police.uk, or call Action

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