

The Back Page

Amba Clear for Main Event

Village pony star Amba Rowley, 15, had her dreams come true at the Royal Welsh Show in August as she won the Junior Ridden Large Breeds Class on Tireinoin Defender - aka Scooby.

And that result landed her a golden ticket to the prestigious Horse of the Year show, the top equine event of the year.

Amba's proud mum, Lucia Rowley, says Scooby is owned by Lauren Baker and her mum Jo Baker and her daughter has been so lucky to be able to ride their special boy.

She said: "We will always be thankful to them. Amba also won The National Welsh Working Hunter Championship on her own pony Swinford Patriot, aka Bertie and bagged herself £100 winnings in the process.

"At the Oswestry show, both Amba and her sister Ebony won their classes. Ebony on her own pony, Queenie, and Amba on Bertie.

"And at the Flint and Denbigh show Amba and Ebony both won their Show Hunter Pony classes on Jake and Ryan and then went on to get



Champion and Reserve Champion – a very proud family moment!"

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Riders Warned Over Excessive Speed

Cyclists are being asked to slow down and to take more responsibility for their actions.

The call comes after some riders, keen to set fast sector times on training social media network Strava, have been exceeding the speed limit as they travel down Gwernymynydd Hill.

According to the website the 1.4km downhill sector, from the former Rainbow Inn to the roundabout at the bottom of Ruthin Road, has a 6% gradient dropping from 245 meters down to 157 meters.

Riders signed up to Strava record their best times for the sector on the website.

The fastest time recorded is from September 2015 when one rider allegedly managed a time of just one minute 12 seconds, which equates to a speed of 71.2 kph (44.2 mph).

However, there are several fast times recorded in recent weeks and the top 40 or so times, if accurate, would all have been over the mostly 40mph speed limit.

Councillor Kevin Hughes says he has e-mailed Strava requesting they remove the sector from their training website.

He said: "I have had reports of cyclists overtaking cars that are driving at, or very near, the speed limit as they drive down the hill.

"Brakes on a cycle are never going to be as efficient as a car or motor cycle and the rider and his bike are really nothing more than a missile. Any collision could be devastating and leave someone seriously injured or worse."

He added: "According to the Strava website there have been more than 15,500 attempts at setting fast times going down the hill by more than 3,330 riders.

"It may be riders are attracted to this section of road as it has featured as part of the Tour of Britain route on more than one occasion. That seems to

have had an effect in attracting riders to tackle the challenge.

"They perhaps forget that the Tour of Britain is a professional road race and run on closed roads. They didn't have to worry about cars or other traffic emerging from junctions or children playing near the road. My message is simple – slow down and stop this madness."

North Wales Police Mold sergeant Katie Newby says riders need to understand that speed limits apply to cyclists too.

She said: "Riders need to take responsibility for their actions. If people are trying to set fast times purely for a fitness or training website then they should stop. It's important people ride at a speed that is appropriate to the road and conditions.

"Road safety is a big issue and something we obviously take very seriously. Anyone caught exceeding the speed limit, whether driving a car or riding a pedal cycle, is likely to face prosecution."

See Page 10 for more Summer Fair pics



Fundraising Team Brew Up for Cancer Charity

A team of village ladies baked cakes and ran an afternoon coffee event to raise a kitchen urn full of cash for Macmillan Cancer Care. Villagers turned out in force to support the event held at the village centre.

Chair of the organising committee June Perrin thanked everyone for supporting the event which raised more than £450 for the charity.

People got to choose from a table laden with a variety of home baked cakes to go with their freshly brewed coffee or tea and a monster raffle helped swell the charity's coffers.

Well done to the organising committee for another wonderful effort and for arranging another great community event in the village.



Tears and Trophies as Louise Bids Farewell

A special assembly was held at the village school ahead of the summer holidays.

It was the final school event for head teacher Louise Edwards as she prepared to take up her new headship at a Wrexham school.

And Louise couldn't hold back the tears as she was presented with a number of gifts from children, staff, parents and governors.

There were also pupil awards for attendance, sporting achievements and George Hurley was presented with the annual Elwyn Owens trophy which is presented to the pupil judged to have given the most to school life.

Diary Date: The school Christmas Fair will take place on Thursday, December 14th between 4:30-6:30pm.



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Summer Fair Helps Raise Funds for School

The school summer fair, the last for out-going head teacher Louise Williams, was a great success with families enjoying a good social event which raised a bucketful of cash for the school's PTA.

Children enjoyed soaking the teacher with both Dafydd Johnson and Louise Williams taking turns to face a barrage of wet sponges.

And with an array of delicious home-made cakes on offer, face painting, stalls and games for children everyone had a great time.

Mr Johnson, once he dried off, said: "We'd like to thank everyone who came along for supporting the event and helping the PTA raise a good sum of money which will be put to good use buying essential equipment for the school."



Ash Clean Up at Awards Event

The company that is filling in Cambrian Quarry have won a major award thanks their work with the village community.

The Ash Group collected the award for Corporate Social Responsibility at the prestigious Cheshire Business Awards at a glittering ceremony held at Chester Cathedral.

Ash managing director, John Dennan, says the award was for their restoration work at Cambrian Quarry in the village.

He said: "Having been acutely aware of the dangers at the disused quarry we obtained planning permission and an environmental permit to restore the quarry back to its natural state.

"That will involve the introduction of inert material to fill the 500,000m3 quarry void and restore the wall instabilities, with the ultimate aim of restoring the landscape to its former glory and returning it to the local community as an area which can be enjoyed safely.

"We have hosted regular liaison meetings with councillors, residents and environmental regulators, and having overcome opposition from these parties initially, we now believe we are seen as a vital part of the community.

"We will continue to work closely with the local school, councils and residents to enable them to see the progress at the site and how we are committed to restoring the quarry for the enjoyment of everyone who works, lives or is associated with the village."

He added: "In order to minimise the disruption and hazards for local residents, we have engaged in a number of improvement works to ensure the work we carry out at the quarry does not affect the local community.

"This has included improvements to the access road into the quarry, introduction of multiple wheel wash systems to ensure minimal deposits of mud, dust and other material on the public highways, and we also undertook a project to extend and improve the War Memorial site at the village centre.

"We continue to actively manage the habitats for local wildlife, including great crested newts,



From left, Ash environmental manager Steve Rymill, managing director John Dennan and Cambrian Quarry site manager Jonathan Duggins with the award.

bats and badgers, and we maintain areas of calcareous grassland to ensure they will be free of invasive species.

"We work regularly to carry out independent noise surveys to monitor impact on local residents, as well as strictly abiding with the Environmental Permit conditions of a site of this size.

"This award is a testament to the ASH Group team based at the Cambrian Quarry, as well as our Environmental, Planning and Operations teams who work tirelessly to ensure the work carried out is for the benefit of the local community.

"We anticipate we will input a further half a million tonnes of inert materials into the site, with the ultimate aim of returning the landscape to its original state."

To view the awards video, and some images from the awards night, please visit the links below or scan the QR Codes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PR7Zt0BezNg&feature=youtu.be>



<https://www.facebook.com/ashgrouppltd/>



New Regulations in Force for Dog Owners

In June 2017 Flintshire County Council undertook a consultation exercise into a Public Space Protection Order around dog control and dog fouling.

On conclusion of the consultation, the results of the online survey and comments were collated and presented to the council's Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for discussion and the Cabinet Committee for final determination.

On Tuesday 26th September, the Cabinet Committee agreed the following conditions to be enforceable from the 20th October 2017.

The Dog Control and Dog Fouling Public Space Protection Order will require dog walkers to:

- Remove dog waste immediately from the ground at all public locations.
- Put their dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer. This only applies to any public land where a dog is considered to be out of control or causing alarm and distress.
- Keep dogs on leads within cemeteries.

- Have a means on their person to collect dog waste from the ground if asked by an authorised officer.

Dogs are also excluded from entering:

- Equipped children's play areas
- The playing area of specific sporting or recreational facilities
- School Grounds
- The playing areas of marked sports pitches

Authorised officers will be visiting the village on a regular basis so please ensure you comply.

Dog owners who haven't got a bag to collect dog waste with them or don't clean up after their pets are liable to a fixed penalty fine.

You have been warned!



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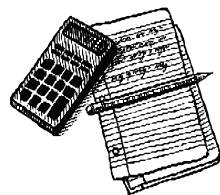
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Our Man in Westminster



Rainbow Inn

The old Rainbow Inn site is still an ongoing issue and I have learnt that the problems caused currently are due to a dispute over the ownership of the verge.

I understand the County Council is still pursuing this matter and the

local Police Community Support Officer has been informed as well.

I have written to the Council and the owner of the site to raise my concerns about the handling of the verge and will keep you all updated on any news as and when I get it.

Pound Coins

Parliament has been working closely with the Bank of England to raise awareness of the changes that have been coming in with our new currency. We have had a good couple of months to get used to the new £5 note, £1 coins and the new £10 note has just been released.

But what many people didn't know is that the old pound coins had to be used by the 15th October 2017 and if they weren't then they are no longer valid tender.

So hunt around behind the sofa and dig out those coins and make sure you get them swapped at the bank for the new 12 sided pound coins as you can't now spend them in your local shops.

Women over 50

Many constituents have contacted me over recent months about their concerns over the State Pension Age changes being brought forward by the Government. Nationally women born in the 1950s are facing a later retirement than they expected and they were given little to no notice.

In Parliament I helped to found the All Party Group for WASPI – the name of the group campaigning for women's State Pension rights – which has so far held a Westminster Hall debate, submitted a petition to the Commons – we submitted 485

signatures from Delyn alone – and now we have produced a Bill calling on a review of the law that has created these changes.

We have only just begun, but I'm determined to get a decent outcome for all the women who are concerned about their future.

More locally, WASPI has just established its first Flintshire branch. It was an excellent initiative of a Gwernymynydd local resident to set up the group, which held its first meeting on the 6th September and if anyone is interested in learning more or getting involved please do get in touch with me and I can pass your details on to the group.

You can get in touch with me by phone (01352) 763159, email at david.hanson.mp@parliament.uk or by post at 4 Trelawny Square, Flint. CH6 5NN.

David Hanson

Diary Date

The village's service of Remembrance will take place, as usual, by the War Memorial in the grounds of the Village Centre on Sunday, November 12th starting at approx 10:15am.

Please make every effort to attend what is always a moving service.

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Nancy Goes Over the Top!

Although I'm no longer a county councillor I am still a Liberal Democrat which means I still go to political meetings.

After this year's General Election a lot of people joined our party and there was lots of discussion.

New members felt politics was too divorced from real life and that they could change things, but how?

They decided everyone matters and they would begin by organising events to raise cash for local charities.

Unfortunately for me one of the first events was abseiling down Devil's Gorge at Loggerheads.

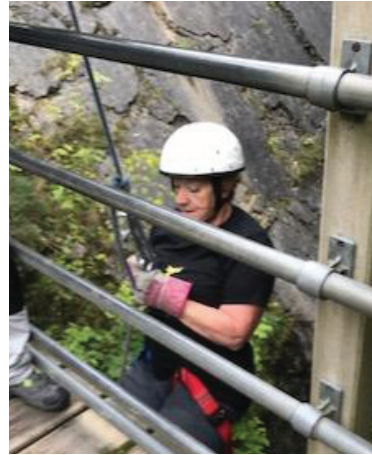
We all sat in a meeting and our colleagues in their 20s, 30s and 40s were very gung ho! We older ones sat there quietly. I was embarrassed to have all this enthusiasm in front of us so perhaps foolishly said: "Yes I'm in"

That was OK in June but as September



approached I began to get butterflies

By September 10th I had a whole flight of butterflies in my stomach particularly when they said you have to climb over the railing at the side of the bridge - despite all the new joints my legs don't bend quite as well as I would like.

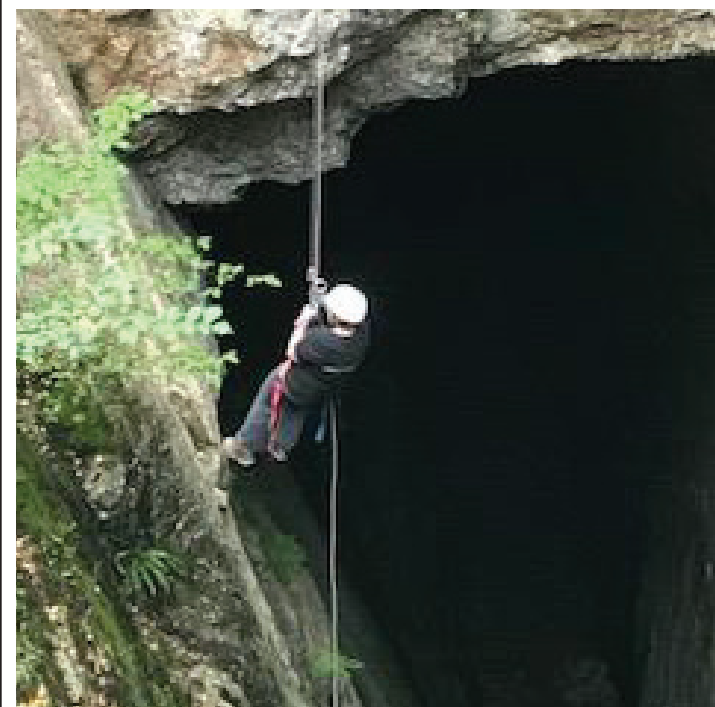


Well, that was just the practice, we had to go round to the top of the vertical cliff at the left hand side of the gorge and was it high!

The instructor said: "Lean back, let the rope take the weight". But my rope didn't hang straight it decided to swing me to the right, my stomach lurching.

The next thing I knew I had made a steady descent to the bottom, where I arrived with my knees knocking. But believe me, I didn't want to do it again!

But friends and neighbours were extremely generous and I collected £445 for the Children's Wales Air Ambulance. A very satisfying morning but maybe I won't volunteer quite so quickly next time.



New Fitness Class Aims to Help People Move It - Not Lose it!

There's no longer any excuse for villagers not getting fit - whatever their age.

A new fitness class, designed specifically for the over sixties, will take place for the first time at the village centre on Wednesday, November 1st between 10:30 and 11:30am.

Village resident and qualified instructor, Jill Blandford, is launching a campaign aimed at helping people stay young by improving strength, balance and overall health as people age gracefully.

And Jill is on a mission to encouraging people to go along to her exercise class with a difference.

Designed by 'Move it or Lose it' founder Julie Robinson as seen on BBC's "How to Stay Young", the class is known as FABS - Flexibility, Aerobics, Balance and Strength.

The FABS programme combines exercises scientifically proven by the Centre for Healthy Ageing Research at the University of Birmingham to turn back the clock.

Jill says her Move it or Lose it class will help older people feel fabulous about life.

She said: "I'm thrilled to be part of the FABS family. I want to make a real difference to the community and to get this age group feeling great about

themselves again.

"There's so many classes and clubs aimed at the under fifties and very little for baby boomers who still want to feel great but don't like going to the gym to keep fit.

"It's a fantastic way to get together with other people in the area, keep fit and have fun whilst doing it!

"The exercises we do in the classes are easy to follow and fun. This isn't about people dressing in lycra ready to hit the gym or do a high intensity session, FABS is for people who want to live longer, happier, healthier lives.

"We ensure there's a warm welcome for everyone who attends and the first session is free. The sessions will then be held weekly and will cost just £4 a session. I'm looking forward to seeing lots of Gwernymynydd residents coming along.

"There has been a lot of interest and I'm excited and looking forward to the first session."

For further information contact at: jill.blandford@moveitorloseit.co.uk or call her on 07449 631836.



Dog Exercise Area

The Village Centre Management Committee is looking into establishing a dog exercise area within the grounds of the centre.

It's hoped to have a good sized area fenced off where responsible dog owners can exercise their pets.

The area would have dog waste bins and hopefully a bench.

The committee is looking at how to fund the scheme, insurance issues and how the area can be maintained.

Village Centre trustee and community councillor, Nancy Matthews said: "We are acutely aware that there is nowhere that dog owners can exercise their pets off a leash in the village.

"And with new regulations meaning dogs are prohibited from going on the village football pitch we want to try and do something that will keep everyone happy. We hope to be able to make an announcement soon."



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Council Matters



The financial situation facing Flintshire and all councils is dire.

We have endured 10 years of annual budgets cuts throughout an era of austerity. Next year will be the toughest yet and we are far away from being able to balance our budgets at this stage especially as we have now seen in detail the Welsh budget plan for 2018/19.

Flintshire County Council has an annual Council Fund Budget - for most services but excluding

Children's Parties

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council housing, housing benefits payments and other special budgets - of around £250m.

Since austerity began, following the world wide economic collapse, we have made nearly £80m of savings to balance the books and protect frontline services.

At the same time we have continued to be a high performer in Wales across all services, and have been ambitious and innovative in building new schools, extra care housing schemes and now council housing as well as working with communities to transfer facilities, such as Holywell Leisure Centre, to community ownership.

However, we could now be stopped in our tracks. We had forecast a budget gap of around £12m for next year. But the situation has worsened knowing we will lose another £1.6m or more of Welsh Government money on top of this come April.

To put this in perspective - as an illustration of the scale of the challenge - we could close all of our leisure centres, libraries, end our subsidy to Theatre Clwyd and raise Council Tax by 5% and we would still have a funding gap to bridge.

This is because over 3/5ths of our budget goes straight into schools and social services to which people are entitled; this means the cuts largely fall on all the other services from leisure and culture, to roads and the environment, to environmental health and trading standards.

People ask me why it is we have to find such large sums if we are facing budget cuts of 'only' £1.6m or 0.9% of our Government grant which, at around 75% of our budget, is topped up by local Council Tax income?

I have to explain we have to absorb the costs of normal inflation such as pay and prices, high cost inflation such as rising energy and fuel prices for buildings and vehicles.

The spiralling costs of extra demands for services such as older people for social services in an aging population, new UK Government taxes on employers, and new Government schemes and initiatives for which we are not properly funded. These all add up.



It's now almost five months since I was elected to the county council and it's certainly been a busy time.

Just coming to terms with the role and finding a way through the inevitable bureaucracy has been quite tough and it's been much harder than I could ever have imagined.

Planning is the biggest issue for me locally. The problem is someone is always going to be

Over the next few months we will be announcing how we plan to cope. We would appreciate you tracking the position and offering your support.

Our hope - across the political groups on the council - is that the UK Government will relent on its policy of austerity and release much needed funding for social services and education in particular.

If it does not, and the Welsh Government has no more money to pass on, we might see the closure of services and facilities which our communities rely on and we have been able to protect until now.

Act now and lobby your MP and AM, irrespective of your political views or beliefs, and talk to councilor Hughes.

As communities of Flintshire we are all in this together.

Colin Everett

pleased when a planning decision is made but quite often someone is left disappointed.

All I can do, in approaching each planning application, is be honest and take advice from the highly qualified team of officers we have available before I speak in favour of or against any application at Planning Committee

However, planning and other issues pale into insignificance when looking at the financial situation facing the whole county in the year ahead.

That's why I invited Flintshire County Council Chief Executive Colin Everett (left) to try and explain the dire situation we find ourselves in.

Please remember I can be contacted at Kevin. Hughes@flintshire.gov.uk or call me on (01352) 758600 or 07711 951909

Kevin Hughes

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