

# DERI



## Rhiwbina Society 2023 Programme

**19 September: *Iron and Steel in South Wales – Bob Jones***

**17 October: *Newport Wetlands: A Hidden Gem - Daniel Suge of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)***

**21 November: *An introduction to the South Wales Metro programme: updates for Rhiwbina, the Coryton and Rhymney line. Jessica Clement***

**12 December: *Christmas quiz by Lyn Owen, with nibbles and drinks.***

For further information, please see our website or Facebook page

All meetings at Canolfan Beulah at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated

or phone 07811 509490.

## Our annual membership subscription is changing.

From 1<sup>st</sup> October a single membership will be £10.00 and a family membership will be £15.00. Enclosed with this Deri is a form for Cash payments only as cheques are no longer acceptable due to high Bank charges. If you have online banking, then you can use Bank Transfer to pay your annual subscription. All our Bank details are on the form.

There is also a form for Standing Orders. If you have a Standing Order already set up, then you will need to cancel the existing Standing Order with your bank and fill in the new form and then send it to your bank well before October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Please do give your bank enough time for them to cancel the old Standing Order and to set up a new Standing Order.

## We had a stall at the Rhiwbina Summer Festival on 1 July in Parc-y-Pentre.

The event was well attended in warm sunshine, so we had a good opportunity to spread the word about the society. We held a competition to attract the attention of passers by, there were books for sale, photos to look at and information available on the society.



A total of 75 people took part in the competition to guess the population of Rhiwbina.

The correct answer was 11,469 or 11,470 depending on which online source you believed! Both were supposedly based on the most recent census. We had one person getting the answer spot on and another one with 11,490. There was a £10 prize for the winner and £5 as a runners-up prize.

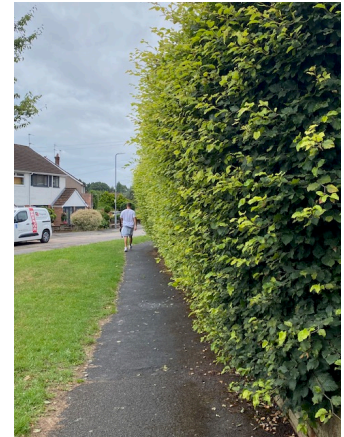
Well done everybody on a successful day! We hope to see some new faces at the next meetings.

### **(Getting) Out and About – or not! by Lyn Owen**

Back in July, the charity Living Streets (previously known as the Pedestrians' Association) ran a campaign to highlight the problems of pavement clutter. The aim of the campaign was to draw attention to the fact that if pavements are not safe and clear, there is less likelihood that people will be encouraged to walk to local destinations. Obstruction of pavements is a particular problem for those with limited visual capacity and anyone with a mobility scooter or pushchair. Your intrepid correspondent has been wandering the streets of Rhiwbina, recording instances of unsafe or obstructed pavements. Below are some examples.

#### **Hedges**

We have previously drawn attention to the problem of overhanging hedges, and how they can restrict the width of the pavement. The important thing is that hedges should be trimmed back to the inner pavement edge, not just at ground level but to a height of at least two metres. The photos show examples of how obstruction can limit the width of the pavement and how a well-trimmed hedge can make all the difference to pedestrians. Apart from anything else, a clear passage past a hedge can eliminate irritating drips down the neck after a shower of rain!



#### **Pavement parking**



The problem of cars parked on pavements continues to frustrate residents in all areas of Rhiwbina. Schools will be going back soon, and that brings an additional level of irritation, as parts of Rhiwbina become grid-locked: parked cars restrict the width of both roads and pavements, and through traffic is held up while drivers try to find a clear way through. How frustrating it must be for bus drivers, who have timetables to keep to! As a fairly slim pedestrian, even I sometimes have difficulty negotiating cars parked wholly on the pavement; how those with pushchairs and prams manage, I don't know.

#### **Pavement conditions**

We are all aware that finances are stretched for local authorities, and that unrepaired potholes are a source of constant irritation for motorists. However, the poor pavement-pounding pedestrian comes off very badly when it comes to repairs. The practice of patching



rather than resurfacing does not really solve the problem, and many of the pavements in the area are in very poor condition. Uneven surfaces can cause trips and falls even for the more able walker, and those with impaired vision are particularly at risk.

#### **Clutter**



In a lighter vein, the photo shows an unusual example of pavement clutter – this bus stop sign on Pantmawr Road finally came to the end of its useful life when a gust of wind downed it. It was neatly laid where it would not cause an obstruction, but a few days later had disappeared. The Cardiff Bus workmen had no idea where it had gone. Have any of your neighbours suddenly acquired an unusual garden ornament...?

## Footpath Beulah Road to Heol Y Bont.

Dear Mr Jones,

I am writing in response to a request from Fran Sykes to explain my decision to close off access to Beulah Road from Heol y Bont to you. I understand that you have kindly agreed to relay the rationale behind my decision to the members of the Rhiwbina Society for which I am grateful.

I would like to begin by saying that this was not an easy decision and that it was not taken lightly. Before explaining the circumstances that led to my decision, I think it is appropriate to lay out the legal context.

As you know I own no 6 Beulah Road. I inherited the property from my mother Valerie Jones who was the daughter of George Lewis who bought the property in the 1920s. There are two points of access. The first is through the shop entrance on Beulah Road. The second is via a footpath from Beulah Road that runs alongside the Canolfan Beulah and doglegs to the left to provide access to number 6. The rear path crosses the land of the adjoining property and is a right of way in perpetuity, granted originally for the delivery of coal and other essential supplies. It is clearly designated as such in the title deeds and the records of the land registry. The path from Beulah Road continues past a garage on the right and a parcel of land that leads through to the double gates to Heol y Bont. That parcel of land was also bought by my grandfather to garage his car and house property associated with his business. Ownership of this land is clearly designated as private property and is shown as such in the title deeds.

My grandparents, my mother, and I have allowed local people to walk over the property on a permissive basis in order to access Beulah Road. We have, however, required all our tenants to lock the gates providing access to the garage during bank holidays on a regular basis, so as to minimise inconvenience to local people and to prevent it becoming a right of way. I have confirmatory records that this has been done regularly as laid down in the tenancy agreement.

In short, the assertion that the route is a public right of way is incorrect. Although I can understand why local people have come to believe otherwise.

I will now come to the background of my decision to exercise my right to stop public access.

There are three main reasons. Firstly, until recently, people simply walked across the land to gain access to Beulah Road. Unfortunately, thieves saw an opportunity to use the route to climb onto the garage roof and rip it open in order to gain access and remove equipment and stock stored there by my tenants. This has been done on two occasions, both of which are a matter of police record. The losses were not insignificant and prompted a decision to seek a more secure solution.

Secondly, there was a time when fewer people owned dogs. As Rhiwbina has grown so has dog ownership. Most dog owners are responsible, sadly, some are not. They allow their animals to defecate on the property including the pathway. My tenants and their staff have to access the garage and the other storage area regularly. When carrying things back to the shop, it is not possible to see little parcels left by dogs whose owners are disinclined to remove the mess. This then gets walked into the food preparation area and poses a health and safety risk.

Finally, there is a personal incident to report. On my first visit to Cardiff following Covid 19, I stood on a plastic chair to inspect the garage roof and brickwork. At one point I placed the chair in the passageway between my garage and the garage at Heol y Bont. A local person in a hurry wanted to pass through and told me in no uncertain terms to get out of the way because I was obstructing a public right of way. I informed the other party that it was not a public right of way and that what I was doing on my own property was entirely reasonable. I was called a liar and told to move. At that moment, it was clear to me that my permissive stance was no longer appropriate and to continue, would be an error of judgement.

After consulting my tenants who had already reported the break-ins, the associated losses, and the dog problems to me, but who nevertheless had no wish to inconvenience local people, many of whom are their customers, I took the view, albeit reluctantly, that times have changed. Rhiwbina has grown, and the friendly affable relationships my grandparents and my mother had established with local people over the course of their lifetimes, have morphed into a more impersonal and self-interested pattern of behaviour. Whilst this is understandable, it is a context that calls for a clear, unambiguous response.

To conclude, I have maintained a permissive stance for the thirteen years since I inherited the property, insisting only that the gate be locked for a day during public holidays in line with the tradition established by my forebears. The decision to which I have come with some regret has been reached after careful thought and consultation. Times change, however, and it is incumbent on us all to change with them.

With all good wishes to you and your membership,  
Yours sincerely,

Nigel Bassett-Jones





## Summary of Recent Meetings by Roger Wright

### May 2023

In May we had a return visit by Debra John who gave us a talk called 'Tales from Wales – Storytelling including Welsh myths and legends'. It was a journey around the country taking in Welsh folk stories – an evening of witches, wizards and magic spells. These included: Pwyll, Prince of Dyfed, the origins of Devil's Bridge near Aberystwyth, the Two Witches of Betws y Coed and Tangwyn.

### June 2023

Our June talk was by Christopher Engel, and was entitled 'Coed Caerdydd – Expanding our Tree Canopy'.

Christopher explained that Coed Caerdydd (Cardiff Forest) is a publicly funded initiative, and an important part of Cardiff Council's One Planet Cardiff response to the climate emergency.

In the first two years of the project, over 50,000 trees have already been planted and this will continue, as council funding has been confirmed for two more years following the expiry of the initial Welsh Government funding this summer.

### July 2023

In July Rosie James, Strategy and Development Manager of Cardiff Council's Park Services gave a presentation called *Parc Cefn Onn – Mr Prosser's Garden*.

The land now known as Cefn Onn was originally acquired by Ernest Prosser, Director of the Rhymney Valley Railway, in 1910. Eventually the land passed to a nephew who lived in London but the gardens continued to be maintained. In 1944 the land was sold to Cardiff Council. A new entrance was constructed from Cherry Orchard Road in 1952 providing access to a section of the park planted with rhododendrons and azaleas. More recently major improvements have been made to the facilities. Well worth a visit!

### August 2023

23 of us visited the magnificent Cardiff City Hall. We arrived to find a huge crowd of about 700 people who were attending a wedding. This was not deliberate – it was just that the bridegroom had turned up two hours late! Despite this, we were skilfully guided around the building by Geoff Cook, the Conference & Events Manager who had volunteered this visit as a member of the Rhiwbina Society. We started off in the



council chamber (where we took refreshments – see the photo) where we were shown a video of Princess Diana looking very nervous in giving her first major public speech, with a bit of Welsh included.

We then went to the Marble Hall which is the setting of the statues 'Heroes of Wales'. We also visited to the various meeting rooms which display 25 fine paintings. One of particular interest was a painting of Wembley Stadium when Cardiff City beat Arsenal in the final of the FA Cup! No mention of rugby to be seen at all.

Thanks, Geoff, for a very interesting afternoon.