network news
a guide to inspiring events in north wales

humankind ~ spring in your step ~ seals in wales ~ life & death economics
insect antennae ~ unicef ~ fruit & vegetables ~ mind the gap ~ hope in hell

“the light at the end of the tunnel needs to shine for all”
January 2021

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Welcome to the January Network News. A few days ago, Henrietta Fore, director of the UN Children’s Emergency Fund made a remarkable statement: “COVID-19 is the first truly global crisis we have seen in our lifetimes. No matter where we live, the pandemic affects every one of us”. Climate change - the polite term for “planetary systems breakdown” - is a far greater crisis, but still too big for humanity to grasp. So this is what we got: a spiky microbe.

Henrietta is one of those determined souls who has learnt to live outside comfort bubbles. Through UNICEF, she looks on reality, that is: countless struggling, hurting and deprived children. Wales, the UK, Europe… these are largely delusionary bubbles, which we reinforce every time we tune into “news”. In truth, there is just a small circle of souls with whom we have a special bond; then there is the Earth on which we all grow, and there is Life. And it is Life that has sent us all to our rooms to think about what we have done to each other and the planet. Not in punishment, but as a loving family would stage an “intervention” to save one of their own.

For most, being confined is deeply uncomfortable. It is like early meditation practice. Unhelpful thoughts and desires constantly arise, and we struggle to keep our mind on the mantra or simply the flow of our breath. Some of our readers have even taken a 10-day Vipassana workshop, where you “simply” attempt to sit still for many hours each day. Give a moment to imagine what that really means for a restless body and mind… total torture. Few stay the course. All we can do is breathe in, breathe out, breathe in again...

Henrietta concluded about Covid-19: “our guiding principle must be that the light at the end of the tunnel needs to shine for all”.

Blessings to all Beings
Far from being a flat, grey and depressing month, January holds an importance all of its own. The emptiness many of us feel after all the festive decorations have been packed away actually provides us with the time and emotional/mental space to assimilate all the frenzied activity of the previous year, draw breath, and dream into being what we might like to do with the coming new cycle of seasons.

Take this time to rest, to re-energise but also take notice of all that is happening in the natural world, for despite the rigours of the inclement winter weather, spring is surely on its way, even in the dark days of January, unless there is severe frost and snow – and even then – the brave and hardy snowdrops, crocus, and daffodils will still appear to cheer us. Take time to get out for regular walks, despite the weather, and spend a few minutes each day identifying and acknowledging the gradual change in the season. Look for signs of spring – tree bark changing colour, the early flowering of lamb’s tail catkins, buds swelling, flowers blooming; listen to the change in birdsong, scent the smell of springtime on the air, note the slow but sure lengthening of the days. You might not think that there is much difference to see but on average we get three minutes more daylight each day, which means that at the end of a week that is twenty-one minutes and at the end of just three weeks a whole hour. Spending time out in nature relaxing or working on and with the land has been scientifically proven to banish winter blues and improve mood and sleep patterns. Get out into the garden and begin preparing your land for new growth, or if the weather is too bad, send off for some seed catalogues or look on-line and plan what you will try your hand at growing this year. Completely redesign your garden space… dream creatively. If you don’t have a garden, bring the outside world indoors by re-growing kitchen scraps on your windowsills. Recycle plastic yoghurt pots and milk cans and plant them up with early lettuce and herb seeds which will all thrive indoors on cool windowsills or other light and airy spaces in the house or even sheltered spots by an outside door.

By the time we reach the end of the first month in the year, celebrations to greet...
the spring begin. Historically, this was the time when winter festivities came to an end and the start of very early spring was celebrated with the Gwyl Ffraid (in Wales) or Imbolc (in Ireland). However, a season doesn’t begin promptly on a particular date; the activities of the natural world unfurl and roll out gradually. All around the Northern Hemisphere springtime arrives at hugely differing times and is celebrated from early February in China, to late April with the cherry blossom festival in Japan, and at all stages in between.

Some countries such as Hungary, Slovenia, Poland and Bulgaria symbolically depict the dying winter season as an old woman or man, (or in the case of Switzerland, a snowman), who is ritually appeased or driven out of the local community.

Cast your eyes over some of our old British customs such as Gyro Night, Saint Ia’s Day, Nickannan Night, Valentine’s Day, Shrove Tuesday, Saint David’s Day, Saint Patrick’s Day, Mothering Sunday, the Spring Equinox and Cuckoo Day if you wish to look for indigenous ways of celebrating the turning of the season. Find out about the magical hare and the ancient pre-Christian origins for much that we do at Easter. If you prefer something more contemporary to modern life there are also many other occasions which prompt celebration throughout the spring: World Radio Day, International Mother Language Day, World Book Day, International Women’s Day, International Day of Forests, Earth Day, Earth Hour, International Jazz Day and International Dance Day to name just a few.

Acknowledge the turning of the seasons and the importance of the role of the Mother figure in our lives and celebrate in small ways with a special edible treat or meal, or a specific activity like listening to or making music, engaging in some family craft project, donning fancy dress or going out into the countryside. And if the weather is still too inclement, retreat back to the sort of activities which you enjoyed around Christmas time – the games, shared meals, the fun, the quizzes, cosy films, creamy hot chocolates and snuggled up evenings reading a book or watching a film do not have to all come to an end just because the calendar has rolled over to January 1st! Try your hand at writing poetry; a new hobby or craft; begin researching your family history; have a go at writing that book you have always dreamed of penning.

You might also wish to maintain other actions which are all a part of the Christmas ethos, but which make life so much nicer at any time of the year, like being kind, hospitable, more understanding, taking time out, devoting quality time to loved ones.

One of my key philosophies of life is to make much of little. For at the end of the day, it isn’t how much money we spend, where we go or what activity we enter into, it is our outlook which can make all the difference. We decide whether we are going to have a happy day or a miserable one. We choose to perceive what is happening around us and react to it in a certain way. Live in conjunction with the natural world and base some simple, uncomplicated yet joyful personal celebrations on what is going on around you in the natural world at the springtime of the year.

I wish you very happy days throughout the whole of a wonderful springtime!

Gillian Monks is a druid, Quaker, teacher & author who lives in Nantlle Vale. More details of Gillian’s books can be found at:
gillianmonks.com
It was an unlikely setting for a revolution. The municipality in western Venezuela had a population of less than two hundred thousand, and a small elite had been calling the shots for hundreds of years. Yet it was here in Torres that ordinary citizens found an answer to some of the most urgent questions of our times.

How can we restore trust in politics? How can we stem the tide of cynicism in society? And how can we save our democracy? Democracies around the globe are afflicted by at least seven plagues. Parties eroding. Citizens who no longer trust one another. Minorities being excluded. Voters losing interest. Politicians who turn out to be corrupt. The rich getting out of paying taxes. And the growing realisation that our modern democracy is steeped in inequality.

Torres found a remedy for all these problems. Tried and tested now for twenty-five years, the Torres solution is mind-bogglingly simple. It’s being adopted around the world, yet rarely makes the news. Perhaps because, like Buurtzorg and Agora, it’s a realistic initiative premised on a fundamentally different view of human nature. One that doesn’t see people as complacent or reduce them to angry voters, but instead asks, what if there’s a constructive and conscientious citizen inside each of us?

Put differently: what if real democracy’s possible?

The story of Torres began on 31 October 2004. Election Day. Two opposing candidates were running for mayor of the Venezuelan municipality: The incumbent Javier Oropeza, a wealthy landowner backed by the commercial media, and Walter Cattivelli, who was endorsed by reigning President Hugo Chávez’s powerful party. It wasn’t much of a choice. Oropeza or Cattivelli – either way, the corrupt establishment would continue to run the show.

Certainly there was nothing to hint that Torres was about to reinvent the future of democracy.

Actually, there was another candidate, albeit one hardly worth mentioning. Julio Chávez (no relation) was a marginal agitator whose supporters consisted of a handful of students, cooperatives and union activists. His platform, which could be summed up in a single sentence, was downright laughable. If he was elected mayor, Julio would hand over power to the citizens of Torres.

His opponents didn’t bother to take him seriously. Nobody thought he stood a chance. But sometimes the biggest revolutions begin where you least expect them. That Sunday in October, with just 35.6 per cent of the vote in this three-way race, Julio Chávez was narrowly elected mayor of Torres.
And he kept his word. The local revolution began with hundreds of gatherings. All residents were welcome – not only to debate issues, but to make real decisions. One hundred per cent of the municipal investment budget, roughly seven million dollars, was theirs to spend.

It was time, announced the new mayor, for a true democracy. Time for government not by public servants and career politicians, but by the citizens of Torres.

The old elite looked on in horror as their corrupt system was taken apart. ‘[They] said that this was anarchy,’ recalled Julio (everybody calls this mayor by his first name) in an interview with an American sociologist. ‘They said that I was crazy to give up my power.’

The governor of the state of Lara, of which Torres was a part, was furious that Oropeza, his puppet, had been bested by this upstart. He decided to cut off the municipality’s funding and appoint a new council. But he hadn’t reckoned on the groundswell of support for the freshly elected mayor. Hundreds of residents marched on city hall, refusing to go home until their budget was adopted.

In the end, the people won. Within ten years of Julio Chávez’s election, Torres had pulled off several decades’ worth of progress. Corruption and clientelism were way down, demonstrated a University of California study, and the population was participating in politics like never before. New houses and schools were going up, new roads were being built and old districts were getting spruced up.

To this day Torres has one of the largest participatory budgets in the world. Some fifteen thousand people provide input, and assemblies are held early each year in 560 locations across the municipality. Everyone is welcome to submit proposals and elect representatives. Together, the people of Torres decide where to allocate their millions in tax revenue.

‘In the past, government officials would stay in their air-conditioned offices all day and make decisions there,’ one resident said. ‘They never even set foot in our communities. So who do you think can make a better decision about what we need, an official in his office who has never come to our community, or someone who is from the community?’

Now, you may be thinking to yourself: nice anecdote, but one swallow doesn’t make a democratic summer. So some obscure place ventured off the beaten track, why is that a revolution?

The thing is, what happened in Torres is just one instance among many. The bigger story started years earlier, when a metropolis in Brazil took the unprecedented step of entrusting a quarter of its budget to the populace. That city was Porto Alegre and the year was 1989. A decade later, the idea had been copied by more than a hundred cities across Brazil, and from there it began to spread around the world. By 2016, more than fifteen hundred cities, from New York City to Seville and from Hamburg to Mexico City, had enacted some form of participatory budgeting.

What we’re talking about here is in fact one of the biggest movements of the twenty-first century – but the chances are you’ve never heard of it. It’s just not juicy enough for the news.

Rutger Bregman is the author of Utopia for Realists (2017) and Humankind (2020) rutgerbregman.com
Grey seals, *Halichoerus grypus*, are the larger of the two UK seal species, with the males weighing up to 300kg and females 200kg. Grey seal pups are usually weaned between 17 and 21 days, after gaining as much as 10kg a week feeding on their mothers’ milk, which contains around 50% fat and 12% protein. The weaned pups will live off this fat reserve while they learn to feed themselves, as unlike many other mammal species, their parents don’t teach them what to do! By this time, the pup will also have moulted its white pup fur to reveal its first-year pelage (the name for an animal’s coat of fur).

Grey seals are generally opportunistic feeders. Their diet varies geographically and seasonally, but sand eels and gadids such as cod, whiting and herring are the most important food sources for the UK population. There are three distinct populations of grey seals: in addition to the east Atlantic population, which includes the seals currently pupping around Skomer, the grey seal can also be found off the east coast of North America, from Labrador down to New England, and in another distinct population in the Baltic Sea. There are an estimated 300,000 grey seals globally; the UK population dropped to only 500 in the early 20th century, predominantly due to persecution, but there are now an estimated 120,000 grey seals in the UK – 40% of the global population!

Pupping on Skomer takes place between early August and late November, with the odd pup being born before or after this period. These are some of the earliest born grey seal pups in the UK; in Norfolk for comparison, most pups are born between November and January. As with grey seals in the rest of the UK, the population on Skomer is recovering from persecution. A detailed and systematic monitoring of the Skomer seal population began in 1983, which is also when the last annual cull of grey seals occurred, and since then the number of pups born on Skomer has increased from 65 to 238 pups in 2019. A further 170 were also born elsewhere within the Skomer Marine Conservation Zone on the nearby mainland coast last year. The survival rate of pups has been fairly stable since the end of the cull in 1983; 77% of the pups born on Skomer survived to weaning in 2019, which is only 1% less than the average.

Female grey seals can live as long as 35 years and males 25 years, so this results in lots of photos to check in the identification catalogues. It is very rewarding when you do match one and can learn about this
individual’s history, for example, the oldest cow (adult female seal) that was identified in 2019 was first seen in 2002 and has been seen in all but three years since: interestingly 2019 was the first year she has been known to pup on Skomer. The identification of adult seals also reveals that, on average, 59% of females known to have pupped on Skomer since 2014 have pupped at the same location the following year, and 43% have used the same location for three years in a row.

In addition to being identified by their markings or scars (often from fishing gear), seals can also be identified via a tag placed on their hind flipper, such as red tag 80256 – an adult female also known as “Wombat”, who was seen around Skomer in 2019 and was released from North Devon after being rehabilitated by the RSPCA.

To gain even more information about seal movements, GPS units can be used. In 2019, monitoring by the Sea Mammal Research Unit for St Andrews University revealed that a bull (adult male seal), tagged on 15th April on Skomer, travelled as far north as the Skerries, off Anglesey. Seals that are part of Skomer’s identification catalogues are also sometimes identified elsewhere, such as Cornwall or the Isle of Man.

On Skomer, the pups are also identified via a unique combination of colours sprayed onto their lower back, which enables us to follow them as individuals until they lose the colours after completing their first moult at around three weeks old. From our distant monitoring points we are privileged to see some amazing sights, such as the birth of pups, two pups suckling from one female seal or a pup swimming. It is often thought that unmoulted grey seal pups do not, or rarely, swim, however it’s not uncommon for pups on Skomer. This is in part due to the beaches being fully submerged, particularly at spring high tides, forcing them into the water, however some are seen practicing swimming even when the beaches are not submerged.

The 2020 seal pupping season is starting to wind down now on Skomer, with 231 pups born so far and a few more weeks remaining. We’re delighted to report that it’s been another good year for this fantastic species!

Nathan Wilkie is the Wildlife Trust Warden of South and West Wales’ Skomer Island. 

northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk
In many ways, 2020 was the year the world fully recognized how important our health workers are. Acknowledgment and praise was everywhere.

Essential workers were recognized in Time magazine’s Person of the Year issue. World leaders tweeted their praise. In spring, citizens in cities around the world took to their windows at dusk to applaud their sacrifice.

And yet, 2020 was the year the world also recognized how far we have to go to fully protect our health care professionals.

As Covid-19 swept across the world, protecting those on the front lines became front of mind. Governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF and other partners mobilized masks and gowns from every corner of the world even as the cost of those items skyrocketed. The phrase "personal protective equipment," or PPE, entered the public lexicon.

But for health workers across the world, water is also PPE -- and in too many places, access to it in hospitals and clinics is sorely lacking. Many doctors and nurses don’t have the means to wash their hands when treating patients, and disease and death are the result.

A modest investment would change that.

The data is stark: New figures show that an estimated 1.8 billion people use or work in clinics or hospitals without basic water services, meaning no access to running water, as detailed in a recent WHO report. Worldwide, nearly 1 in 4 health facilities lacks basic water services, 1 in 3 lacks adequate means to wash hands where patients are treated, 1 in 10 has no sanitation services, and 1 in 3 do not segregate waste safely. In the world’s 46 least developed countries, half of all health facilities have no clean water on site.

In a health care setting, providing doctors, nurses and patients with somewhere to clean their hands is one of the most effective ways to halt the spread of disease. And yet, health workers and people in need of treatment are being sent into facilities without clean water, decent toilets or even soap on a vast scale.

Ensuring health workers have what they need to keep themselves, their coworkers, their patients, their families and their children safe is imperative. These are people putting themselves at risk to help others -- and we have been failing too many of them.

The consequences of this are dire. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, infections among health workers have been far greater than those in the general population: Health care workers represent less than 3% of the population yet account for 14% of reported Covid-19 cases worldwide. But this can be fixed.

Preliminary estimates show that making sure all health facilities in all these countries have basic water, sanitation, hygiene, waste management and cleaning services will cost an additional $3.6 billion between 2021 and 2030.

That’s around 22 pence a year to cover...
both the initial investment and the ongoing costs of providing these basic services to each person in the least-developed countries where such basic water services are lacking.

It would be a worthwhile investment to protect our health workers, our families, our children. It's a small fraction of what's been spent on personal protective equipment this year alone, and it would ensure hospitals and health centers in poor countries have clean water for a decade.

In the world's 46 least developed countries, governments spent around $10 per person in 2018 on health services. But where budgets are spread so thinly, even this hugely cost-effective investment becomes a challenge.

In the context of a global community, however, these sums are manageable. To cite just one example of health spending in the developed world, the UK government alone budgeted £15 billion for personal protective equipment during 2020-21.

That's about five and a half times the total amount needed to ensure health workers in the world's poorest countries are offered the basic protection which water, sanitation and hygiene services would afford them.

And this investment would have significant returns. Both financially, and in real terms.

Improving hygiene in health care facilities would mean health workers and patients can focus on giving and receiving quality care they need.

It could save a million pregnant mothers and newborn babies from dying of preventable diseases: Each year, that's how many mothers and babies are estimated to die from infections soon after birth, a tragedy that is easily preventable with better conditions.

And it would even help to tackle the surge of antibiotic resistant infections we are seeing emerge, as better hygiene would reduce infections, and the need for antibiotic use.

It is so simple as to be obvious: Health workers need a clean environment with proper water, sanitation and hygiene facilities so they can safely provide the care people need.

The cost of inaction is great while addressing this solvable injustice is cost effective. What are we waiting for?

Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus is the director general of the World Health Organization. Henrietta Fore is the executive director of UNICEF. The opinions expressed in this are their own. To support the work, visit: unicef.org.uk/donate/coronavirus or call 0300 330 5699

Want to fundraise?
Want to run a half marathon, or raise money for charity through your wedding? Whether you’re doing it on your own, with friends and family, or as part of a school, work, university or faith group, Unicef can help. Once you’ve chosen your event, check out our fundraising ideas and tool kit for more inspiration. Remember – every pound you raise helps make a lasting difference to children around the world. Visit: unicef.org.uk/fundraise/
I was sitting in my house with a friend who had come round, chatting about how what "wealth" and "richness" is and I had a revelation. Real wealth is health, and one of the best investments of our time, money and energy that we could be making in these times is to have food sustainability on the local level, ie to produce organically grown vegetables near to our homes. This really hit home for myself and many people on the run on the supermarkets that we saw in April this year. We are reliant on supermarkets to feed us and they only have enough food on the shelves for 3 days.

So I had this idea/inspiration/vision, right there on the spot, to take my savings out of stocks and shares, which are just numbers in someone's computer anyway, and to buy some land near to where I live, which happens to be Menai Bridge, and have people grow vegetables there, so that we are, to some small degree, self-sufficient for food. It would be great if this was in every town, village and city in the world, and I'm starting here where I live.

I have a vision of a plot of land where people who live within walking or cycling distance can nurture wildlife and grow vegetables.

How wonderful. Can you imagine? If you know of any such land in the Menai Bridge area let me know, and if you're interested in getting on board in whatever capacity, give me a call for a quick chat on 07751 017 157.

“I did a small ceremony on the beach last week where I collected stones. I sat with them in my hands and asked that the land which wants to be used for a community vegetable growing project to reach towards me, as I am reaching towards it. Here are the stones on my altar in my home.”

Helen is a dance and fitness instructor in Menai Bridge dance-classes-north-wales.co.uk
In the Olde Days - that is, before March 2020 - NN would publish a monthly “calendar of events” - a thousand reasons to go out and about! Many of these events were truly inspiring - but Covid-19 has revealed that it is easy to confuse restlessness with “freedom”. The happiest souls in this new year are those who have rediscovered and reinvented HOME. It is not the size of our living space that matters, but how many layers and dimensions we endow it with...

Our HOME is our GALLERY: time to renew the pictures on the wall, and the objects on the shelf, even choose a weekly or monthly theme? Our HOME is our GYM: and the body requires little or no extra equipment to work out very fully - though a yoga mat is handy. Our HOME is our OFFICE: and it is now only our state of mind rather than our colleagues that interrupt! No commute, no bad lighting or unhealthy air-conditioning. Our HOME is our LIBRARY: time to reorganise the books and magazines and printed articles; let go the unwanted, and dive in to the unread. Our HOME is our UNIVERSITY: we can choose the dream subject for our own doctoral thesis! Each one of us holds a fragment of the whole... Our HOME is our TEMPLE, SANCTUARY and ALTAR: let the same little spot become daily magnetised with our finest prayers or songs or meditations ~ our radio to other dimensions. Our HOME is our CINEMA: so let’s treat our bigger screens as though they have the magic and rarity of a visit to the Odeon in the 1930s! Our HOME is our THEATRE: our little “world’s a stage” and anyone in our bubble can be an actor, experimenting with new roles and stretching the boundaries of expression. Our HOME is our GARDEN, our ALLOTMENT & FARM: whether its beansprouts or herbs in the kitchen, flowers in the window, or fruit and veg in the soil - and all with zero food miles. Our HOME can be our SCHOOL: institutional schooling was designed as a crèche for the industrial revolution - which, thank goddess, is nearly over. The best education is personalised, and autonomous home education is the most personalised of all… check out the alumni!

“There’s No Place Like Home!”
Full Moon
28 January
7:16pm
::
New Moon
13 January
5:00am

Walks in January with North Wales Wildlife Trust:
24th - Discover Minera Quarry, 11am - 12.30pm & 1.30 - 3pm.
31st - Discover Gwaith Powdwr 11am - 12.30pm & 1.30 - 3pm.
More info: northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk

The Privilege Cafe
“I set up The Privilege Café as soon as we got into Lockdown as I was frustrated with the lack of diversity and couldn’t express myself as a woman of colour in spaces filled with privilege. To date, I’ve facilitated 10 sessions on Zoom covering various themes including mental health, ‘unconscious’ bias and privilege in the recruitment process. The level of engagement has been incredible and the speaker’s insight knowledge and expertise have brought nothing but positivity to all those who have attended the sessions. I’m truly greatful to everyone who has been part of this learning and growing journey with me; Diolch o galon. The Café is open to all, it’s a safe space for all to engage, learn and to use their privilege for good. “
Contact Mymuna Soleman at askamuslimwales@gmail.com
Info: racecouncilcymru.org.uk

Submit Your Work!
Rheidol Prize for Prose with a Welsh Theme or Setting / New Welsh Writing Awards 2021. Calling all writers! New Welsh Review editor Gwen Davies is seeking the very best new prose with a Welsh theme or setting in the New Welsh Writing Awards 2021, a writing competition now entering its seventh successful year. The prize is open until 23:59 on 16 March 2021. More info/application from: tynewydd.wales

Reflection on Lockdown Storytelling Project – 31 January
At this historic moment, we believe it’s vitally important to capture and celebrate the experiences of older people, who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic; how their lives have shaped them, and how they have found ways to cope with the isolation of lockdown. Whether you write yourself, or whether your friends or family help you to capture your experiences, we’d love to hear your story. You can post or email your stories before the 31 January 2021. More from: literaturewales.org or gwanwyn.org.uk

VEGANUARY 2021
“Let’s make 2021 the year of positive change! There’s never been a more important time to try a plant-based diet for the planet, for the animals for yourself.”
Visit: veganuary.com
For books & recipes & info
FB: Veganuary

Brexit: Seven things changing in January and others that remain unresolved
bbc.co.uk/news/explainers-54195827

Keeping flexible and fit during these days remember:
Do a warm-up first; set reasonable goals; no need to spend any money on equipment; use the stairs if you have some, lift flour/sugar bags/tins instead of weights; mix up your exercise - a bit of yoga with simple stretching and cardio. Learn how to do the exercises properly, this will help not to cause injury or unnecessary stress.
COMMUNITY ACTIVISM

ACT NOW!
Friends of the Earth
“Tell the UK government to scrap plans for Heathrow expansion”
Sign up!
FoE: “We believe there’s a strong chance that these plans wouldn’t be compatible with climate policy if made today – the government must reconsider Heathrow expansion in this light.”
act.friendsoftheearth.uk

Join the Community Food Network Cymru on Facebook and keep up with all our different projects and to discuss issues.

IS there any interest for a Llanystumdwy allotment?
“I’m planning to make an application to the Council for allotments on a parcel of land in Llanystumdwy, if I can get a number of gardeners interested in having a plot.”
If interested please write to: Ray Jones, 1 Trem Eryri, Menai Bridge, Ynys Mon LL59 5LB

Join FB Page:
North Wales Activist Coalition / Clymblaid Gweithredwyr Gogledd Cymru Share, find and co-ordinate ways to support your local community and wider activism. “We are apolitical”.

Help us stop the Red Route in Flintshire. Help Save Leadbrook Woods and Meadows
The proposed ‘Red Route’ highway project is a 13km dual carriageway in Flintshire that will link to the A55 corridor in North Wales. This development would damage or destroy wildlife habitats such as ancient woodland, wildflower-rich meadows, old hedgerows and threaten species including bats, owls, badgers and great crested newts.
Sign the petition: action.wildlifetrusts.org/page/66151/

Find your MP/AS member through visiting: business.senedd.wales/ mgFindMember.aspx or theyworkforyou.com

The People’s Agenda for Food Democracy with renown environmental activist Vandana Shiva & others talking about why it’s time for people to rise up for food democracy to protect ourselves. You can watch the 1hr webinar on FB: Organic Consumers Association

Educate Yourself; Find like-minded people; Have Fun; Never Give Up!

North Wales Smallholders and Permaculture
FB page for discussions on “growing your own, some kind of self-reliance and sustainable living”.

Join FB Page:
North Wales Wildlife Trust have a guide to helping hedgehogs - northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk
Hedgehuggles Rescue 07736 280787

Hedgehog Help Prestatyn 01745 856181, hedgehoghelpprestatyn.org.uk

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FB page for discussions on “growing your own, some kind of self-reliance and sustainable living”.

Join FB Page:
North Wales Activist Coalition / Clymblaid Gweithredwyr Gogledd Cymru Share, find and co-ordinate ways to support your local community and wider activism. “We are apolitical”.

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January events, courses & workshops

**Online**

**iRest Yoga Nidra Meditation for Women**  
Thurs 7 January, 6 - 7pm,  
(Every first Thurs/month)  
A yoga therapy practice that involves being guided into the hypnagogic state (the healing state between sleep and wakefulness) and through the stages of the practice.  
**Register: eventbrite.co.uk**

**Origami for Wellbeing: New Year Fold**  
Saturday 2 January  
11am - 12pm, free  
Make something beautiful in your hands with Origami. No experience needed - just bring paper! There will be similar sessions on the 1st Saturday of every month during this time.  
**Register: eventbrite.co.uk**

**Wildlife Gardening with the National Trust Association**  
Thurs 7 January  
8 - 9.30pm, free  
An informative and inspiring lecture with Rob Hopkins on ‘Wildlife Gardening’. Rob is very keen on creating gardens which are great for wildlife and look beautiful.  
**Book: eventbrite.co.uk**

**Gustav Klimt: A Viennese Gilt Trip**  
Friday 8 January  
11am - 12pm, £9.21  
Why does this artist continue to fascinate us? A talk with Stella Grace Lyons.  
**Register: eventbrite.co.uk**

**Luxor (12A) 3rd January.**  
Film; Hana seeks mental peace and physical respite after working in a clinic on the Jordanian-Syrian border. English/Arabic. £9.99 with Chester Storyhouse  
**Book: storyhouse.com**

**Kundalini Yoga and Gong Bath with Hayley Shoesmith**  
January 4, 11,18 & 25  
A free ONLINE evening yoga class designed to inspire and give you the tools to transform your life and those around you. Open to all levels  
**Book: eventbrite.co.uk**

**Make Sense of Motherhood**  
A reading group for new Mums. Through reading and discussion, find companions, inspiration and humour to shape your approach to motherhood. Thursdays January 7/14/21 & 28  
10am - 11am via Zoom | £12 for 4 sessions. All materials provided at the time.  
Limited places.  
Rebecca: 07871 193909, mumsreading@gmail.com  
FB: mumsreading

**William Morris & The Arts and Crafts Home**  
January 12, £8.68, 6 - 7pm  
His radical socialist beliefs, and his wonderful natural designs continue to exert a powerful influence today.  
**Register: eventbrite.co.uk**

**A Feminist’s Guide to Botany**  
Thursday 7 January  
6.30 - 8.30pm, pay as you can.  
Drawing from women botanical explorers; there will be a lecture followed by a painting tutorial.  
**Book: eventbrite.co.uk**

**Climate Change Seminar**  
Wednesday 13 January  
7.30 - 8.10pm  
Learn about the causes & impact of climate change and what you can do to help lessen the effects and heal the earth. More: climatechangecrewcompany.weebly.com

**Trees and Fungi by David Humphries**  
Thursday 7 January  
Exploring the perennial and annual fungi found on and around trees whilst undertaking tree inspections.  
6.30 - 7.30pm, free  
**Book: eventbrite.co.uk**

**A Webinar - Dealing with Plastic Waste Sustainably**  
Tues 12 January  
6.30 - 8.30pm, free  
Over the past few years the issue of ‘plastic waste’ has become a dominating concern in the UK  
**Book: eventbrite.co.uk**

**Oxford Real Farming Conference (ORFC)**  
7 - 13 January | £20 - £50  
Voices from the real food and farming movement across six continents; ideas/exchanges  
**Book: orfc.org.uk**

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**Circular Economy Innovation Communities Programme – Insight Event**  
Friday 8 January  
10 - 11am, free  
Developing circular economy knowledge of public service organisations, to meet the goals of the Welsh Government ‘Future Generations Act’

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**Gathering**
with Naomi Lewis & Deborah Willmott
January 6, 13, 20 & 27
Wednesdays 6 - 7.15pm | £15
A shamanic practice including a moving meditation, a seated meditation, a movement session. To book: deborahwillimott.com/gathering

**Improving Soil Health**
Wednesday 13 January, 6.30 - 9.30pm, £25 - £90.
A 4 part online course on the principles of soil health, using problem-based learning.
Learn what the soil health principles are, where they are gleaned from and how their application improves and creates soil crumb structure.
Register: eventbrite.co.uk

**Get Drawing Butterflies: Art for Wellbeing Workshop**
Weds 13 January | 3 - 4pm,
It’s an uncertain time for all of us so we invite you to stop, look, breathe and do some drawing for an hour free
Book: eventbrite.co.uk

**World Indigenous Forum**
Weds 13 - Thurs 14 January
World Indigenous Forum 2021 is a vital event linking indigenous leaders and business owners with conscientious investors to create partnerships that promote, protect and/or preserve indigenous prosperity. Free
Register: eventbrite.co.uk

**Psychoanalysis for the People**
by Freud Museum London
16 & 17 January, £20-£45
A conference exploring socially minded psychoanalytic practices from across the world.
Register: eventbrite.co.uk

**The Peculiar Language of Birds & Animals**
Fri 15 January, 7.30 - 9.30pm.
Artist and author Steve Palin presents the collective nouns, folk names and idioms of UK wildlife.
northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk

**Peace and Justice Project Launch with Jeremy Corbyn**
17 January | 3 - 4.30pm
Bringing people together for social and economic justice, peace and human rights in Britain and across the world.
Join the launch for the Project for Peace and Justice with Jeremy Corbyn, Zarah Sultana, Ronnie Kasrils, Yannis Varoufakis, Scarlett Westbrook and more
More: FB Peace and Justice Project or sign up: eventbrite.co.uk

**An Evening with Michael Palin plus Q&A**
Monday 18 January
Presenter, ex-Monty Python, storyteller and author, Michael is a national treasure.
7.30 - 9pm, £5-£8
Tickets: rsgs.org or Book: eventbrite.co.uk

**North Wales Ospreys**
Thurs 21 January
The history of Blue 24 and HR7 and their amazing heritage. 7 - 8pm.
Mark Roberts 07908 728484 northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk

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**The Birds of a Brecon Beacons Garden**
Thursday 21 January
7.30 - 8.30pm | free
Learn what birds are likely to visit your garden, how to encourage them and how to identify what you see.
Register: eventbrite.co.uk

**Inspirational Women**
Inspiring STEM: with Dr Emma Saunders
Thursday 21 January,
12.30 - 1.30pm, free
Emma shares her scientific journey and some of the challenges she had to overcome, juggling academic advancement, motherhood and a seat at the top table of a successful Welsh STEM Business which promotes equality and personal development.
Register: eventbrite.co.uk

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Register: eventbrite.co.uk
Geology of Britain
This is a series of six lectures by Alison Tymon.
Tues 21 & Thurs 28 Jan | 4pm
Talks on ancient rocks, includes Wales/Cambrian coast. Tickets £18.
[Eventbrite link]

The Wild Beast of Art History - Henri Matisse
Friday 22 January
11am - 12pm, £9.21
This talk will focus on his most celebrated paintings, with a particular emphasis on his Fauvist period.
[Eventbrite link]

Knee Pain Corrective Exercise Workshop
This is an interactive workshop where you will perform the exercises while sitting at your computer.
Sunday 24th January
11.30am - 12.45pm, free
[Eventbrite link]

Llanfairfechan Gong Bath
25 January 7 - 8.15pm,
Split Willow, Penmaenmawr Rd, Llanfairfechan LL33 0PA
Limited spaces.
Led by Steph Healy
[Book link] [Videos on YT: Pure Sound]

Resurgence Talks: 27 January 7.30pm, £5. Inspiring conversation about planet/people.
[Book link]

Ieuan Rees in conversation with the Heritage Crafts Association
Wednesday 27 January, 7 - 8pm, free
The first of a monthly series focusing on ‘Lettering Luminaries’.
[Eventbrite link]

Charles Rennie Mackintosh - more than just a tea room!
A lecture with Stella Grace Lyons who will talk about Charles’ life, work and legacy.
26 January, 6pm, £9.21
[Eventbrite link]

Euro-Arabian North Pole Expedition
Wednesday 27 January
Free | 7-8pm
Chill out with these brave women! Hear about their time walking to the North Pole; there’s a film ‘Exposure’ due out later in 2021.
Led by CULT Cymru
[Eventbrite link]

Meditation Classes with Kalpa Bhadra Kadampa Buddhist Centre, Llandudno
Weds 11.30am - 12.45pm
Weds 7 - 8.15pm
In Depth Study
Thurs 7 - 9pm
£6 for the classes; all sessions with Kelsang Lhasang
[Book link]

Beyond Frazzled with Ruby Wax
Weds 31 January
7 - 8pm, free
Join us for a special event with entertainer and mental health advocate Ruby Wax on how we can find possibility and positivity in 2021.
[Eventbrite link]

Embodied Social Justice Summit - Free & Online
27 - 31 January
Empowering a Sustainable Global Transformation
[Eventbrite link]
Please check with the Galleries about opening times.

RUTHIN CRAFT CENTRE
Park Road LL15 1BB,
01824 704774
Beverley Bell-Hughes
Until 9 January 2021.
Other Exhibitions, films and talks in Ruthin Craft Centre are available to see online from their website.
ruthincraftcentre.org.uk

ORIEL YNYS MON
Llangefni,
Ynys Mon LL77 7TQ.
01248 724444, orielmon.org
Charles Tunnicliffe’s Early Years Until April 2021.
Aimee Louise Jones Until 21 February
George Cockram Until 7 March

ORIEL TY MEIRION
Y Brief Heol, Dyffryn Arudwy
LL44 2DH
mima@tymeirion.co.uk
01341 247541
The Garden Project is based on gardens and growing together in 2020 and beyond.
Mixed Arts Show Arts & Crafts to buy; plus a local photo documentary
tymeirion.co.uk

FFIN Y PARC GALLERY
Betws Road, Llanrwst, Conwy.
LL26 0PT, 01492 642070
20th - 27th January
Winter Mixed Exhibition (Plus Malcolm Edwards preview)
31st January - 24th February
Malcolm Edwards with Book Launch
welsh.art

PLAS GLYN Y WEDDW,
Llanelogl, Llanbedrog LL57 7TT
01758 740763,
Online exhibition and sale of artwork until 30th January 2021.

RCA CONWY
Arddangosfa Gaeaf Aelodau AGF 2020 RCA Members Winter Exhibition Until 30th January 2021
The annual winter exhibition of works by members. We have a wide range of unique paintings, prints and photographs on display at the gallery in Conwy and here online.
rcaconwy.org

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mima@tymeirion.co.uk
01341 247541
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tymeirion.co.uk

Please check with the Galleries about opening times.

MOSTYN
Llandudno LL30 1AB,
01492 879201
Reveal - An exhibition of works by Reveal Printmakers Until 31 January 2021, including etch, aquatint, screen print, linocut and mono print, and demonstrate how texture, colour and line can be used to create dramatically different effects and provide an insight into the art-form of printmaking.
Nick Hornby: Zygotes and Confessions Until 18 April 2021. The sculptures are produced using digital and industrial processes, but retain the artist’s touch through their final process whereby a liquified image is applied to each work.
Hannah Quinlan and Rosie Hastings: In My Room Until 18 April 2021. As a new body of work, In My Room develops the artists’ inquiry into the politics, histories and aesthetics of queer spaces and culture.
Richard Wathen: New Eyes Every Time Until 18 April 2021. Wathen’s work focuses largely on portraiture, depicting figures in states of hesitation and contemplation.
Open 11am - 4pm.
mostyn.org

George Cockram
Parc Cybi: A Landscape Through Time Until 13 June 2021

George Cockram

Penelope Timms

Jan Gardner

Please check with the Galleries about opening times.
**RUSTIC RAINBOW**
Facebook group for LGBT people who love the natural beauty of North Wales. Rustic Rainbow provides a relaxing environment so LGBT people can make friends and enjoy activities together such as walking, the cinema, parties and days out. Group members are encouraged to share events and activities that may be of interest to others.
**FB:** Rustic Rainbow

**Mary Beatrice Davidson Kenner**
1912 – 2006, born in North Carolina, was a self-taught inventor who created the sanitary belt and filed five patents in her lifetime. Racial discrimination prevented its adoption for thirty years. Mary Beatrice was also a florist, business woman and foster parent. More from: vice.com

**Birds in January to Look Out For**

_Garden birds_ need regular feeding during the coldest times; separate feeding stations so birds don’t waste energy fighting for food. Nuts and fat balls attract Nuthatches and Tits and flat tables are best for Blackbirds and Robins, Dunnocks and Hedge Sparrow. Place them near prickly bush to keep Sparrowhawks and other winged predators away. Shallow containers are best for water, maybe with a stone in the middle. Clean out old nest boxes ready for the next generation.

_Woodland birds_ include the woodpecker family - old dead wood plays an important role as it contains the larvae of beetles on which they feed, along with Nuthatches. Keep a listen out for Tawny Owls on a moonlit night.

**Stonewall Cymru Work Placement Programme**
We’re looking for LGBT candidates aged 18 - 25 to undertake a week of volunteer work experience with one of our Diversity Champions in Wales. Through the Work Placements Programme you will receive support from a mentor to gain valuable experience of working with an LGBT-friendly employer. Whatever your experience we’d love to hear from you! Placements will start on a date that suits you and appropriate work place.

You can apply through website:
**stonewallcymru.org.uk ~ TW & FB: Stonewall Cymru #RoleModelsMatter**

**Yoga Nidra with Anna**
A short Yoga Nidra practice to aid in relaxation and bring you back into your body and the present moment.
**YT:** Yoga Nidra with Anna
**wildwalesretreat.com**

**How do you help a grieving friend: A soulful animated short film about depression**

**YT:** Refuge in Grief
4 mins

**Celtic Connections**
19 days of exclusive performances from Europe’s premier folk and roots festival / £30 a ticket
15 January - 2 February
**celticconnections.com**

**Free Online Nature Sessions**
- **Mon** 10.30 - 11.30am : Nature Watch
- **Tues** 10.30 - 11.30am : Foraging & Nutrition
- **Fri** 10.30 - 11.30am : Mindfulness

**YT:** Coed Lleol - Small Woods Wales
**coedlleol.org.uk / FB: Coed Lleol**

**FB:** Beicio Gogledd Cymru - Ride North Wales
Information about routes, events and facilities for mountain biking and road cycling trips in North Wales. Mae gywymbaeth am Iwybrau, digwyddiadau a chhyfleusterau ar gyfer teithiau beicio mynydd a beicio fforodd yng Ngogledd Cymru

**FB = Facebook  YT = YouTube**
The difference between Newts and Lizards

**Lizards** have scaly skin, scurry away very quickly when disturbed, lizards have five toes.

**Newts** possess smooth skin, will make slower 'lumbering' movements (generally speaking - if you can catch it, it's a newt!), newts have four toes.

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No technology required!

This requires two people, some lining paper (wallpaper backing) or similar and a felt pen, pencil or chalk. Lie on the lining paper, the other person draws around you so that you have your shape on the paper. You can lie in any form or shape - straight out, foetal position, angel shape. When you get up fill your shape with all sorts of media - collage, bric a brac, write your story or what you would like the person you are doing this with to know about you! You can colour, add textile, or anything you can find to make up a picture of yourself. Hang the paper up where you can see your full self.

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We are delighted to share that we’ll be launching #SlowWays from the 23rd - 31st Jan. Our mission is ambitious. We’re establishing a new people-powered country-wide walking network, from Shetland to Cornwall and Anglesey to East Anglia, connecting hundreds of cities, towns and villages in between. To achieve this goal we need all the help we can get! A new Slow Ways website will host over 7,000 walking routes and enable people to search, browse, download, walk, enjoy, share, rate and review them. It will explain, step by step, how to Select, Walk, and Share a Slow Ways route. Help spread the word. The more people who get involved with Slow Ways the stronger the initiative will be. Please do share what we’re doing with your networks through social media, forums and in the media. Conditions allowing, we hope that over 10,000 volunteers will walk 100,000km of routes during that week and we’d love you to be one of them.

Please add our launch week to your diary! How many Slow Ways might you be able to walk during that week?

slowways.uk

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**DailyOM**

Meditative Painting to Heal Your Life
An 8 week empowering course with Whitney Freya, guiding you into meditation practice, painting and infinite abundance
£12, £35 or £40 for all 8 lessons
Sign up at: dailyom.com

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Slow Ways Zoom Briefings: 12th & 14th Jan; 1.30-2pm & 7-8pm / eventbrite.co.uk

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More from: arc-trust.org
**5 Minute Winter Tree Lanterns**

**Supplies**
- 1 sheet of white vellum or plastic paper or parchment paper
- 1 LED tea light; 2 for larger trees
- Scissors
- Double sided tape or tape runner

**Instructions**
First roll your paper into a cone shape and make note of what edge of the paper will need adhesive.
Apply double sided tape or use a tape runner along that edge then roll into a cone and press edge to secure in place.
Use scissors to trim the excess paper at the bottom of your cone tree so that it stands evenly.
Place each cone tree over the top of an LED tea light and enjoy the beautiful glow!

—

**Stenciled Botanicals on Canvas**

Add some pretty botanicals to your wall with this easy stenciled botanicals on canvas project. Use whichever colours you'd like to fit your decor.

**Supplies**
- Stencil brush
- 4 4x5-inch Canvases
- Reusable Stick-on Stencils
- Acrylic sealer spray matte finish
- Craft Smart Paint : Green, Blue, Yellow, Brown and Vanilla

**Instructions**
Paint the canvases, one for each colour, except Vanilla.
Position stencil onto canvas, use Vanilla to paint onto stencil.
Repeat for all canvases, using one botanical stencil per canvas.
Allow them to dry completely, then add the acrylic sealer spray.
Leave to dry and voila!

—

“there is no right and wrong when it comes to making art; making sure that you are having fun is the most important part: splash a little paint ~ draw a little line ~ get messy”
**Investigative Journalism and Independent Media**

**Byline Times** - “Show us what is happening”. Fact, Argument, Reportage & Culture. More: bylinetimes.com

**Democracy Now!** An independent news programme led by Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez. democracynow.com

**Glenn Greenwald**
Independent, unencumbered analysis and investigative reporting, captive to no dogma or faction.
greenwald.substack.com

**The Canary** - Campaigning journalism that informs and empowers people to change their world. thecanary.co

**The Intercept** - Fearless, adversarial journalism that holds the powerful accountable. theintercept.com

**Jonathan Cook** - Journalist based in Palestinian section of Israel. More: jonathan-cook.net

**Declassified UK** in-depth analysis and exclusive news on British foreign policy, investigating the UK military, intelligence agencies and its most powerful corporations.
dailymaverick.co.za

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**Eagle Reintroduction Wales Project**
A talk by Jim Langley, from Nature’s Work with Sophie Lee Williams / 1hr
YT: Eagles in Wales?

**Resurgence Festival of Wellbeing**
This online event in October brought together some of the world’s leading experts to focus on different aspects of wellbeing. Free to watch: vimeo.com/showcase/7742039

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**LISTEN**

**Oi Musica** A new piece of work with Karine Polwart and the Soundhouse Choir - “if the Earth could sing!”
FB: Oi Musica / oimusica.co.uk/cop26

**New Welsh Films**:
Film Cymru funded films are available to stream (may cost) or download and watch from home:
‘Eternal Beauty’ / ‘Nuclear’ / ‘One Way to Denmark’ and more ffilmcymruwales.com

‘Beacons: Short Films from Wales’ (watch free on BBC iPlayer)

“Wales - Land of the Wild - After Dark” about the Welsh Beaver Project available BBC iPlayer

Film: “Rise - From One Island to Another” An expedition between two Islanders, one from the Marshall Islands and one from Greenland. | Free
Watch: 350.org

**WATCH**

**So, you’re starting a CSA or Box Scheme in a Pandemic**
Free to watch video organised to offer advice and tips for those setting up a food box scheme. landworkersalliance.org.uk

**Artist Savinder Bual** in conversation with Amanprit Sandhu
Weds 13 January 6 - 7pm, free. Savinder talks about her art
Register: eventbrite.co.uk

**Rock Art For All**
The Final Passage - A journey to the 36,000 year old Chauvet painted caves / 30 mins missingmatter.info

**A video to celebrate Bangor, video clips from many business, organisations, communities and institutions in Bangor; with singer Elise Jones.**
YT: Un Seren | Bangor

**Postmodern Jukebox**
Find on FB of same name. A vintage filter on today’s hits performed by the most original cover band

**CEG TV**
Regular live streamed musical sessions, interviews and other interesting content from the heart of Snowdonia during this isolation period and beyond. FB: CEG TV

**BBC World Service Podcasts**
The Food Chain, Work Life in India, Music Life, Climate Change, The Cultural Frontline and The Big Idea and so much more : bb.co.uk/worldservice

**Nature of the Carneddau & Revisiting Rewilding**
John Harold’s lectures are now available online. Access via website: snowdonia-society.org.uk

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**Farmerama Radio**:
The voices behind regenerative farming farmerama.com
Healthy Body ~ Healthy Mind ~ Healthy Soul
Regular Local Weekly Sessions, Groups and Classes
always check first!

DANCE / MOVEMENT

**Continuum Movement Practice Group** Monthly
9.30 - 11am, FB: Lucy Parry / North Wales Continuum
Movement (online)

**Farrah’s Dance Workout - Bollywood Fit at Home!**
Several dates; 6pm, Mondays. £5/session. More from
FB: farrahsdanceworkout/live and on YT.

**Chakradance with Roz** Connect with Roz Daws for
some freeform, spontaneous dance in response to
music designed to balance the chakra system. FB:
Chakradance with Roz

**Polynesian Dancing** Thursdays 8 - 8.50pm. Led by
Rachel. FB: Under The Dancing Tree

**Dance Classes** With Louise Online; Tues, 7 - 8pm,
Hatha Flow 8.15 - 9.15pm. For more see FB: Harmony
of the Heart or harmonyoftheheart.co.uk

GARDENING

**Blodeuwedd Botanics**
'Wellbeing Through Gardening' Thursdays;
tea, cake, company, gardening 1.30 - 3.30pm.
Croeso Pawb ~ Everyone Welcome. Y Plot, Pandy

Farm, LL57 4RA. FB: Blodeuwedd Botanics or 07799
224636. Garden re-opens 28/1/21

GONG

**Pure Sound ~ Steph Healy** Free online relaxation
and sound meditations! Feel free to pop over and
subscribe or share. 20-25 mins. YT: Pure Sound /
puresound.org

KUNG FU

**Wing Chun** Mondays, 7.30 - 9pm, active now! Held in
Llandulas Village Hall, LL22 8FH. We will be social
distancing and using track & trace with limited
numbers. Dave McQuillan northwaleswingchun.co.uk
~ dave@northwaleswingchun.co.uk

LGBTQ+

A group for those in the North Wales community. FB:
LGBT+ Gwynedd, Conwy & Mon

Rustic Rainbows See page 7

MEDITATION

**Meditation** Regular classes online and offline,
mornings & evenings, with Kalpa Bhadra Kadampa
Buddhist Centre, 34 Mostyn St., Llandudno LL13 1YY.
01492 878778, meditatenorthwales.com

**Meditation Session** Every
Monday, 7pm. Join a small
group of practitioners for 30
mins on Zoom. Contact:
newmindfulness.net / Alan
07816 988124.

Liberation From Sorrow Meditation Online. Every
8th of the month, all welcome. tharpa.com

MINDFULNESS

**Monthly Mindfulness** for anxiety & letting go; Full
Moon sound healing; upcoming workshops. FB:
Inspire - Rewire | inspire-rewire.com

**MUM & BABY ONLINE GROUP**
Find out about mother and baby groups, parenting
and birthing stories from Laura Knott.
birthmamas.co.uk or FB group: Laura Birthing
Mamas Doula, Pregnancy and Postnatal Yoga

NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION (NVC)
Learning to communicate with empathy
and observation. Connect through Skype with Lisa
Mundle, email: busybees@phonecoop.coop

TAI CHI & QI GONG

**Internal Arts Academy in Daoist and Buddhist
Studies, Martial Arts & Medicine** lotusneigong.com

**Tai Chi North Wales** - taiji-online.co.uk

**Qi Gong Classes** via Zoom; contact
taichiphil@outlook.com

**Self Connection Qigong** with Rik Midgley,
The mind-body interaction from the body’s
perspective of tangible sensations. Mondays 6 - 7pm
online. More details from choosecompassion.uk/qigong

WOMEN’S GROUPS

**Red Tent Gwynedd Pabell Goch** FB: Red Tent
Gwynedd Pabell Goch

**Online Sister Circles** Free Weekly Meditations; a
community for all women: sistercircletemple.com /
FB: Sisters Circle Under the Dancing Tree

**Circle of the Feminine** Women’s spaces and
activities in North Wales. FB: Circle of the Feminine

**NetworkShe** For women in business. FB: The
Mothership / networkshe.co.uk

YOGA

**Emily Kyle Yoga** Contact: 07775 798536. FB: Emily
Kyle Yoga

**Rosslyn Falconer Yoga Friends** Online & Offline; FB:
Love Yoga Live Yoga

**Tru Dru Yoga** Cat Stuijt 07816 103064,
trudruyoga.co.uk

**Claire Mace** Online and offline classes; videos on YT,
inspiratrix.co.uk and FB: Inspiratrix Yoga

**OM Yoga North Wales**
Serenity Evenings once a month. FB: OM Yoga North
Wales

**Dru Yoga North Wales** dru yogao nline.com FB: Dru
Yoga Online Studio

always check first!
Go outside into the night, take a moment to look up and find connection in the dark. Jupiter and Saturn are still visible, with Mercury close by on 10th January around sunset time. Saturn is above Jupiter. They'll gradually disappear from view in the latter part of the month.

**FB pages:** NWAS North Wales Astronomy Society & Where are the planets today?

**Yoga Shala Classes** FB: Yoga Shala North Wales

**Source Yoga Nutrition & Health** Classes open again at 294 Conwy Rd., Mochdre: sourceyoga.org.uk Info and links to yoga sessions available on FB: Source Yoga, Nutrition and Health

**Derwen Hatha Yoga** FB: Derwen Yoga (North Wales)

**Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga** FB: Yoga North Wales

**Yma Yoga** Online & Outdoors! Weekly sessions based in Llanberis. Find out more: FB: Yma Yoga

**Online Chair Yoga** Weds, 1.30 - 2.30pm. Book with Lisa 07878 113599, lisa.martindale@newmind.org.uk

**Gentle Yoga & Relaxation** For those feeling isolated, 10am, contact 01352 974430, jillblandford@yahoo.co.uk

**Hatha Yoga with Nalini Yoga** Weds 7.45pm & Thurs 6pm. More on FB: Nalini Yoga

**Teresa’s Yoga Class Online** Weekly Dru Yoga classes in the peace of your own home, either live or via the recording any time. Includes full health and safety screening and guidelines. Contact Teresa, email: teresa@teresa4yoga.co.uk / or visit website teresa4yoga.co.uk/yoga-online

**Yoga Class** with Laura Bell, Mon 11am - 12pm & Wed 6.30-7.30pm, Trefnant Village Hall, Denbigh. thezestlife.co.uk

**Tracey Yoga** Online classes as well as occasional sessions in person. Contact Tracey 07809 485323, traceyjoselyn@gmail.com.

**ZUMBA**

**Zumba Dance Fitness** Every Monday and Wednesday, 5.30 - 6.30 pm, £6 per class all welcome at the Telford Centre opposite Waitrose, Menai Bridge. Helen McGreary, www.dance-classes-north-wales.co.uk, 07751 017157. (See Helen’s article on page 12)

**LLYN YR AFANC, BETWS-Y-COED ~ Walk … and Swim!**

**Grid Ref : SH 79816 54736**

This pretty pool in the River Conwy was once terrorised by the water demon Afanc; sometimes referred to as the Welsh Loch Ness Monster. The Afanc is said to have taken the form of a crocodile, giant beaver or dwarf and was said to attack and eat anyone who entered its waters. The thrashings of the Afanc was said to have flooded and drowned all the people of Britain except for two: Dwyfan and Dwyfach. In another myth, the locals moved the Afanc to Llyn Glaslyn by ox after luring it to the foreshore using a singing girl as bait. The ensuing struggle caused the ox’s eyes to pop out, and its tears formed the Pwll Llygad yr Ych (‘Pool of the Ox’s Eye’). Assuming you’re confident the demon has left, Llyn yr Afanc is a great place for a spot of wild swimming and is in Snowdonia National Park.

landoflegends.wales
FEBRUARY

Space To Be 4th - 7th. Trigonos, Nantlle info@trigonos.org ~ tritongos.org

Yoga Retreat 12th - 14th. Led by Tracey Jocelyn / Tracey Yoga, held at Trigonos, Nantlle. info@trigonos.org ~ tritongos.org

Yoga Immersion Weekends 5th - 7th & 26th - 28th. Plas Cadnant, Menai Bridge. Info / Bookings: Laura Bell 07989 512859, info@thezestlife.co.uk

Celebrate the Tibetan New Year of Losar 12th. Awakened Heart Hermitage, Criccieth. Book: ahs.org.uk

Managing a Small Woodland 6th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Exploing Snowdonia 12th - 14th. Field Studies Council, Rhyd-y-Creuan, Betws y Coed. More: field-studies-council.org

Compost Toilets 27th. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Practical Woodland Tasks 7th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

North Wales Residential End of Life Doula Course 14th - 19th. To register interest and an application form email: redteneteol@gmail.com

Prunung & Grafting Fruit Trees 13th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Bowl Turning on a Pole-Lathe 13th & 14th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Lichens & Bryophytes of the Atlantic woodland 27th, 11am. Info/book: Claire - claire@snowdonia-society.co.uk

Dru Yoga Therapy Diploma Course 20th. Snowdonia, Bethesda. Book: dru yoga.com Online & local

Rush Hats 27th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Hedgelaying 27th & 28th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Rush Baskets 28th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Cwrs 8 Wythnos i Leihau Strain Dryw Ffedyllgarwch (Mindfulness) 2nd Feb - 23rd March. More info: gwyneddsmindfulness.co.uk / Gwenan Roberts: gwenanmair@hotmail.com

MARCH


Yoga & Detox Weekends 12th - 15th & 19th - 21st. Plas Cadnant, Menai Bridge. Info / Bookings: Laura Bell 07989 512859, info@thezestlife.co.uk

Home Chainsaw 6th & 7th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Willow Plant Support 13th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Edge Tool Sharpening 13th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Rake Making 14th. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Bushcraft through the seasons & Three-Legged Stool 20th & 21st. Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Glass Painting 28th. £120. Held in Wernog Woods, Ruthin LL15 1YE. 07765 251531, courses@wernogwood.co.uk ~ Bookings: wernogwood.co.uk

Spring Yoga Weekend 27th - 29th, Anglesey. Book: info@wildwalesretreats.com ~ wildwalesretreats.com


Spoon Carving 13th. Learn the ancient art of spoon carving. 10am - 4pm, £65. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk


Grey Squirrel Control 27th, Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

Introduction to Basket Making 27th & 28th March, Woodland Skills Centre, Bodfari 01745 710626, woodlandskillscentre.uk

APRIL

Rewilding the Mind 8th - 11th April. Trigonos, Nantlle info@trigonos.org ~ tritongos.org


Yoga & Hiking Snowdon Weekends 23rd - 25th & 30th April - 2nd May. Plas Cadnant, Menai Bridge. Info / Bookings: thezestlife.co.uk

Blacksmithing: Door Knocker & Door Pull 24th & 25th. Held in Wernog Woods, Ruthin LL15 1YE. 07765 251531, courses@wernogwood.co.uk Bookings: wernogwood.co.uk

Energy Generation from Solar 12th - 16th. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950 Book: cat.org.uk

Circular Design Principles in Architecture 12th - 16th. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk
Yoga Rocks | Yoga & Hiking Snowdon Weekend
More: thezestlife.co.uk

Build A Tiny Garden
17th & 18th. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Ecosystem Services: Land use and management
19th - 23rd. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

MAY

Pause & Reconnect SUP & Sound Retreat 7th - 9th. Trigonos, Nantlle. Bookings: psychedpaddleboarding.com/sup-wellbeing-retreat

Weaving Colours
19th - 23rd. Trigonos, Nantlle info@trigonos.org ~ trignonos.org

Dive into Yoga | Yoga & Wild Swimming 3rd - 7th & 17th - 21st. Plas Cadnant, Menai Bridge. Info / Bookings: Laura Bell 07989 512859, info@thetzestlife.co.uk

Photography
20th May, £195. Held in Wernog Woods, Ruthin LL15 1YE. Bookings: 07765 251531, wernogwood.co.uk

Compost Toilets 1st. Get a foundational understanding of the principles, benefits and limitations of compost toilets. 10am - 4.30pm, £70. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Self-build Project Management 1st & 2nd. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Spring Vision Quest 23rd May - 3rd June. Snowdonia area, with Pippa Bondy, ancientthealingways.co.uk

Yoga & SUP Weekend 14th - 16th & 21st - 23rd. Plas Cadnant, Menai Bridge. Info / Bookings: Laura Bell 07989 512859, info@thetzestlife.co.uk

Introduction to Renewables for Households 1st & 2nd May. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Reedbeds & Waste Water Management 2nd May. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Hydroelectric & Marine Energy Generation 10th - 14th. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Build a Lapsteel Guitar 15th. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Renewables for Households: Solar PV 22nd. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

Build a Wildlife Garden 28th & 29th. CAT, Machynlleth 01654 705950, cat.org.uk

ONLINE WORKSHOPS

January

Emptiness and the Heart Sutra
Vajraloka Retreats, Corwen. Book: vajraloka.org

The Dynamic Mandala
Vajraloka Retreats, Corwen. Book: vajraloka.org

February

The Brahmaviharas: a complete path.
Vajraloka Retreats, Corwen. Book: vajraloka.org

Embodifying Love
Vajraloka Retreats, Corwen. Book: vajraloka.org

March

Simply Being
Vajraloka Retreats, Corwen. Book: vajraloka.org

April

Ayurvedic Detox Retreat@Home
Book: janey@druworldwide.com | druyoga.com

Are you feeling stuck in your life?
Can’t make or sustain positive change? Want to change but don’t know how?
Whether emotional, physical or life style issues, Josephine Airns facilitates powerful personal and spiritual growth processes.

Resonance Repatterning*
01691 773806
Llangollen Natural Health Clinic resonancerepatterninguk.net

Tecstiliau Cymru
We have launched our YouTube Channel with free access to videos based on a growing number of themes. You will find 5 minute ‘slow’ craft videos that are made to just take time to yourself and admire the working habits of others.
In addition, you will find short outline of processes that are frequently discussed or requested such as our ‘Bundle Dyeing’ video.
As the months pass, more and more videos will appear and will connect up to our ‘challenges’.
YT: Tecstiliau Cymru - includes one called Spinning - Creating Handspun

Positive Psychology in a Time of Pandemic
13th January | free
A free webinar introducing practical strategies from Positive Psychology to help us move on from a year of pandemic and build foundations for a better year ahead.

Book: eventbrite.co.uk
PLANTING BY THE MOON ~ A Short Guide

New Moon
At the new moon, the lunar gravity pulls water up, and causes the seeds to swell and burst. This factor, coupled with the increasing moonlight creates balanced root and leaf growth. The first quarter is the best time for planting above ground bearing annual crops that produce their seeds outside the fruit. Examples are lettuce, spinach, celery, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and grain crops.

2nd Quarter Moon
In the second quarter the gravitational pull is less, but the moonlight is strong, creating healthy leaf growth. It is generally a good time for planting, especially two days before the full moon. The types of crops that prefer the second quarter are annuals that produce above ground, but their seeds form inside the fruit, such as beans, melons, peas, peppers, squash, and tomatoes. Plant just before the full moon to get the benefits of peak moisture.

Full Moon
The third and fourth quarters are after the full moon when the light is waning or decreasing, and the energy is drawing down. The gravitation pull is high, creating more moisture in the soil, but the moonlight is decreasing, putting energy into the roots. This is a favorable time for planting root time for crops, such as beets and carrots. It is also good for perennials, bulbs and transplanting because of the active root growth.

4th Quarter Moon
In the fourth quarter there is decreased gravitational pull and moonlight, and this is considered a resting period. This is also the best time to cultivate, harvest, transplant, fertilize and prune. Mow lawns in the third or fourth quarter to retard growth. Do deep watering of shrubs and trees.

More from: gardeningbythemoon.com

How to Make a Town/Village Guide

Some Ideas to Include in Your Guide: A top 5-10 facts about your town/city/village – this could include a brief history, what its main industry is, if any famous people grew up there etc.

Draw a map. Depending on how big your town is this might just focus on a specific area of interest. Older students might well attempt several maps of different areas that fold out of the book.

Include photographs. You could research some online but it would be more fun to take photos and print your own. You could include some nature spotting - local wildlife, native trees, plantlife; reviews of the local library or museum, exhibition spaces, local markets.

Create an eye catching cover for your guide!

The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse Written and read by Charlie Mackesy. A story of 3 animals and a boy sharing their greatest fears and biggest discoveries about vulnerability, kindness, hope, friendship and love. bbc.co.uk/sounds | 50 mins
The United Nations is marking 2021 as the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, spotlighting their vital role in human nutrition and food security, as well as urging efforts to improve sustainable production and reduce waste.

In a message launching the campaign, Secretary-General António Guterres said that despite tremendous benefits of fruits and vegetables, “we do not consume enough of them.”

“Fruits and vegetables are the cornerstone of a healthy and varied diet. They provide the human body with an abundance of nutrients, strengthen immune systems and help lower risks for a number of diseases,” he said.

“As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the health and livelihoods of people across the world, we must come together to ensure that nutritious food, including fruits and vegetables, reaches the most vulnerable, leaving no one behind,” the UN chief added.

Mr. Guterres also drew attention to the strong links between food systems and sustainable development. He called on all stakeholders to make food systems more inclusive, resilient and sustainable, including through adopting a more holistic approach to production and consumption that benefits human and environmental health.

“It is abundantly clear that a more sustainable, nutritious, and secure food system is both an opportunity and a necessity in our ongoing efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” Mr. Guterres added.

The International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021 was proclaimed by the General Assembly in December 2019 to raise awareness on the important role of fruits and vegetables in human nutrition, food security and health, as well as in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It will promote diversified, balanced, and healthy diets and lifestyles through fruits and vegetables consumption, reducing losses and waste in fruits and vegetables food systems, and share best practices.

The International Year complements several other key initiatives including the Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025), the Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028), and the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.
Many of us in the wealthy countries - and the prosperous citizens of poorer ones - insulate ourselves from the desperate people who make up more than half the world’s population. We exploit cheap labour and comandeer resources. We have created a global economic system that is a “death economy”, consuming itself into extinction.

The coronavirus pandemic has had the positive effect of forcing us to understand that we simply must change; we must become more adaptable; and we must focus our economies and our actions on things that bring us together - people of all nationalities, cultures and races - to foster a more sustainable and egalitarian human presence on the planet.

Following is a comparison of the key characteristics of death and life economies and our responsibilities to make the transition.

**Identifying a Death Economy:**

- Its goal is to maximise short-term profits for a relative few.
- It uses fear and debt to gain market share and political control.
- It promotes the idea that for someone to win, another must lose.
- It is predatory, encouraging businesses to prey on each other, people and the environment.
- It destroys resources needed for its on long-term survival.
- It values extracted and materialistic goods and services above those that enhance quality of life.
- It is heavily influenced by nonproductive financial deals (stock manipulation and financialisation / “gambling”).

**Identifying a LIFE Economy:**

- It ignores externalities in measuring profits, gross domestic product, and other yardsticks.
- It invests heavily in militarisation, in killing, or threatening to kill, people and other life-forms and destroying infrastructure.
- It causes pollution, environmental collapse, income and social inequality, and may lead to political instability.
- It vilifies taxes, rather than defining them as investments in infrastructure, social services, healthcare, and so on.
- It is undemocratic, encouraging the growth of large corporations controlled by a few individuals whose money has a strong influence on politics (monopolies that lead to oligarchies).
- Business and government organisations are based on top-down, authoritarian chains of command that support autocratic management styles.
- It places higher values on jobs that promote competition (venture capitalists, lawyers) than on those that enrich life (teachers, musicians).
- It keeps billions of people in poverty.
- It classifies plants, animals, and the entire natural world as resources to be used for human benefit, while failing to respect and protect nature, thereby causing massive extinctions and other irreversible problems.
- It has become the predominant form of capitalism around the world.

From A **Death Economy** To A **Life Economy**

John Perkins
It embraces a sense of cooperation, the idea that we all can win when we set our goals on long-term benefits for all.

It values quality-of-life goods, services, and activities above materialism and extraction.

It is based on beneficially productive activities (for example, education, healthcare, the arts versus stock manipulation and financialization / "gambling").

It cleans up pollution and regenerates devastated environments.

It is driven by compassion, fair resource allocation, and debt-avoidance.

It helps hungry people feed themselves, those without shelter to secure it, those who are sick to access treatment, and those without resources to find some - or even to create their own.

It includes externalities in its financial and economic measurements.

It innovates - develops and embraces new, regenerative, sustainable technologies.

It recycles.

It regards taxes as investments in a mutually beneficial infrastructure, social services, healthcare, and so on.

It is democratic, encouraging locally based commerce and employee - or community-owned businesses (for example, cooperatives, benefit corporations, etc.).

In business and government, it reinforces democratic decision-making processes and management styles.

It rewards investors who support these characteristics.

It is based on a foundational knowledge that humans are in a symbiotic relationship with our planet, that we must respect, honor, and protect the natural world.

It places a high value on jobs that enrich life (for example, artists, volunteers).

It was the predominant form of economic evolution for much of human history.

The last point - that the life economy is part of an age-old human tradition - offers both perspective and hope. We all come from ancestors who understood the importance of long-term sustainability, a life economy. Our heritage as human beings includes a belief that we have a responsibility to pass on to future generations a world that is as resource-rich as - or richer than - the one we inherited. The traditional lifestyles of indigenous people are examples of life economies that have been successful for millennia. It is up to each of us to facilitate the transition. Even relatively small groups of consumers, employees, and investors accepting the values of a life economy, taking actions to support businesses that promote these values, and pressuring governments to codify them into laws will eventually transform our obsolete economic system into a successful one.

As a young man, John Perkins was recruited by the NSA to further American interests around the world using “any means possible” as recounted in his book “Confessions Of An Economic Hitman”. He is now dedicated to transforming the world into a sustainable, just, and peaceful home where all beings can thrive.

[johnperkins.org]

John has a chapter in the essential new book “Our Moment Of Choice” See back cover...
My book *Tuning in to Nature* was written in 1975 as a direct result of an experience I had shortly after World War II ended, when I was still attached to the RAF Coastal Command in northern Ireland.

During July 1945, I took a Jeep from Belleek to Castle Archdale in Fermanagh County, northern Ireland. The RAF Coastal Command had its western Ireland headquarters on Lough Erne not far from our American Radio Range Station near Belleek.

When I picked up a technical report by the RAF on the XAF (10 cm radar) the researcher pointed out that most boat hulls were in sharp focus since 10 cm is a short wavelength in comparison to a boat. Diesel launches under way, however, were “blurred with indistinct edges over the stern.” It did not take long to deduce that the XAF radar was “seeing” the diesel exhaust — in short, the radar was smelling exhaust by electronics. This rather simple observation led to my irreversible belief that insect spines (sensilla) are indeed real antennae.

It was a few years later, after corresponding with Dr. Ernst Okress of American Standard Corp., that I knew for certain that insect antenna sensilla were dielectric, or plastic-like, antennae. That is the subject of Tuning in to Nature. In other words, insects utilize frequencies, not scents, to find their way around in nature.

When radar picks up a ship or aircraft, as we all know, the beam bounces off the aircraft and reflects back to a receiver that plots time and space. The transmitter and receiver are usually a few feet apart so that the return path is separated by a small angle from the “out” path.

In phase conjugation, the opposite is true, as the return is by the same path as the emission path. In other words, it is like an ant trail; the photon “ants” come and go along the same pathway. A conjugate system adds up energy until it is many times stronger than a conventional beam. It is thus the radar gun that incinerates an aircraft.

I soon realized from these experiences that the components of a successful trap must be close together in order to obtain enough power to attract insects. That is exactly why small insects work so well, as do the small solid-state, man-made transistors — the components are close together and take advantage of phase conjugation.

Working for 30 years alone, with little help from other scientists, I have now developed a phase-conjugated insect trap (Patent No. 5,424,551 — Frequency Emitter for Control of Insects) that attracts by infrared wavelengths alone. A patent on the more efficient solid-state version, for use on stored grain insects, has recently been filed. It attracted, by infrared frequencies alone, 100% of released male Indian Meal Moths. Indian Meal Moths are said to destroy up to one-fifth of the world’s stored grain!

This solid-state trap is based on a knowledge of modern technology — radar. In particular on the concepts of phase conjugation. It is just as importantly based on the ancient knowledge of nature attained by the agriculturally-orientated farming pueblo Indians, in particular by...
the ancient Anasazi and the 19th-century Hopi Indians. Most of their astute knowledge of how nature works, as it was with myself, was based on observing the behavior of ants and ant communities in the desert. Lastly, it is based on the physics of the scent behavior of the ants in the hill.

None of these approaches are tolerated by modern entomologists. Computer guesswork and arrogance about how God designed things have been substituted for natural observations and for physical experimentation. Low physical energies and the connection of those electromagnetic energies to the atmosphere are rarely if ever considered.

Modern entomology fosters deadly poisons in place of observation of nature, and of experimentation utilizing the science of physics in the control of damaging insects.

The main ingredients of my work have been natural observation, respect for the Ancients, and prayer, all of which are unacceptable as methods of scientific research with our now sacred universities!

Early in my career, I studied pesticides, as did all entomologists. But the findings I released in this book, Tuning in to Nature, taught me that attempting to poison insects was at cross purposes to nature and would, in the end, prove futile.

Now, 25 years later, worldwide pesticide use is at an all-time high; crops lost to insect damage are also at an all-time high. As I witness our cancer epidemic, I take no joy in having been “right.”

A sick plant actually sends forth a beacon, carried in the infrared, attracting insects. It is then the insect’s role to dispose of this plant deemed unfit for life by nature. By learning how to “tune in to nature,” may you learn to better understand God’s beautiful design and come to work with nature by enhancing her energies, rather than attempting to overpower and rule over her.

*Philip Callahan was author of more than 100 scientific papers and 12 books, university professor, entomologist, ornithologist, biophysicist, inventor, photographer, artist, falconer, environmentalist, climber and long-distance backpacker, adventurer, member of the Explorers Club, poet, storyteller & philosopher.*
On June 20th this year, temperature hit an astonishing 38C in the Siberian town of Verkhoyansk – 18C above the average temperature over the rest of the month. Not surprisingly, June in the Arctic was the hottest June ever, at least 1C higher than the two previous ‘hottest Junes’, in 2018 and 2019. Arctic scientists have been struggling to find the right words to express their consternation – again, hardly surprising, given that all their models indicated that temperatures in this range wouldn’t be seen until the end of the century.

I was following this story very closely. I started writing my new book, Hope in Hell, in July 2019, at which time the Arctic was on fire. A smoke cloud the size of the whole of the EU was drifting over Siberia. Nearly five million hectares of forest were burned. Then I launched Hope in Hell a few days after those literally unbelievable temperatures were recorded – a controversial moment to be trying to make the case for ‘authentic hope’ in the face of accelerating climate change.

And so it proved. Two days after the launch, I found myself being berated by a colleague on the grounds of ‘offering up blatantly false hope – we’re screwed – and, deep down, you know that’s the truth’.

That hurt, not least as that’s exactly why I wrote Hope in Hell! First, to ‘Tell the Truth’, one of Extinction Rebellion’s 3 demands back in 2019, to capture what the science of climate change is really telling us, however uncomfortable that may be.

Having once heard the truth, some immediately push back, confident that new technology is all we need to get us out of the mess we’re in (it isn’t), and that it can’t possibly be that bad (it is). By contrast, others sink instantly into the deepest despair, perversely comforted at the thought that it’s now too late to do anything about it, so why bother?

I have to admit that these two extremes – shiny, reality-denying optimists on the one hand, and lazy fatalists on the other – irritate the hell out of me, more or less equally. It’s the contested territory in between those two extremes that I’m really interested in – as in what do we really mean by ‘too late’?

Yes, we know it’s ‘too late’ for some things. It’s too late, for instance, to avoid massive climate-induced disruption over the rest of the century through worsening floods, droughts, wildfires, heatwaves, hurricanes and typhoons, melting ice and rising sea levels. And this is the principal reason why young people should be absolutely incensed at the horror story that we have already inflicted on them.

However, the majority of climate scientists believe that we still have a reasonable chance of avoiding what they call ‘runaway climate change’, when natural systems start shifting so fast (in critical parts of the world like the Arctic, for instance) that we suddenly find we can’t do anything to reverse those processes in any realistic timescale. I stand with them: too late to avoid massively damaging, climate-induced disruption. But not too late to avoid the inconceivable horror story of runaway climate change.
Pinning one’s hopes on that frail distinction may seem deluded – not least because it won’t stay ‘not too late’ for very much longer. But that’s where all the reasons to be authentically hopeful kick in. As I said, technology alone cannot possibly rescue us from the Climate Emergency, but it sure as hell can provide some critical breathing space. Today’s renewable energy technologies (particularly solar and wind) are already revolutionising the world of energy, and will go on doing so, month after month, in terms of both efficiency and falling prices. Were governments minded to bring the same sense of purpose and urgency to bear on today’s Climate Emergency as they have on the coronavirus crisis, then 100% of the electricity the world needs could be sourced from renewable, completely emissions-free energy sources by 2030. Not 2040, let alone 2050. But 2030.

All the other solutions (which is what *Hope in Hell* is mostly about) can then build on those revolutionary foundations. Pretty much all the technology we need is already out and about in one way or another (in terms of manufacturing, infrastructure, transport, land use, heating and cooling, food and farming), and there’s no shortage of capital to drive forward those solutions.

It’s easy to condemn the last 30 years of climate activism as a complete failure. But what has happened during that time is that more and more ‘constituencies of concern’ have gradually been won over. Not just the NGOs, activists and academics, but progressive multinational companies, an increasingly influential cohort of investors and asset managers (who can at long last see that the ‘end of fossil fuels’ should be planned for in terms of years not decades), more and more concerned citizens the world over (and not just in the rich North), most faith groups and major religions, and practically every single young person on Planet Earth.

Which just leaves us with today’s ‘political class’ – the vast majority of whom are still stuck in the past, either wilfully ignorant or up to their self-interested eyeballs in today’s fossil fuel incumbency, totally detached from the twin crises of the Climate Emergency and ecosystem collapse. The centre of gravity in democratic politics today (let alone in countries dominated by populism and autocracy) has not yet shifted in any meaningful way.

‘Accelerated incrementalism’ is the best we can hope for from today’s politicians, and is a hopelessly inadequate response to what is already a full-on Emergency. Cut it which way you will, that means the collapse of human civilisation before the end of the century.

What I’ve tried to do in *Hope in Hell* is to be completely logical about this. We have all the technological and financial resources we need to avert such catastrophe. The principal problem is the politicians standing in the way of this happening. So we simply have to shift those politicians – and that means much more radical climate politics, including non-violent direct action and mass civil disobedience.

That’s our harsh and uncomfortable reality – if and when we start to emerge from the coronavirus crisis. But we are beginning to see real glimmers of hope on that front too, as governments think of ways of reviving their economies that simultaneously address the Climate Emergency. We’re going to need a lot more of that over the next few months. 

*Jonathon Porritt is a lifelong environmental activist and founder of Forum for the Future.*

jonathonporritt.com
How often do you feel too small in such a big world? Too little to cope with Life?

Coping - how do we do it? When I’m under the duvet, hiding from what I need to do and who I think I should be, my mind is full with dread, loss, overwhelm, anxiety, expectation, uncertainty and fear. I’m struggling to think of a way to get up and go - well, just to get up. I can feel very small in the wide, demanding space of Life. I am under siege by my thoughts and feelings and can’t function. And walking around for too many days not coping is not ideal. I know somewhere inside there is a way out of this but can’t access the paths. After a few days thinking around this, a thought occurs to me (or an angel takes pity). The difference between what I could cope with in life and where I would like to be, reminded me of an exercise I did years ago based on Edward de Bono’s system of Life Space and Self Space (from his book The Happiness Purpose), and it looks like this:

The first circle - the outer circle - represents your Life Space, it contains what is actually happening in your life, family, how you work, responsibilities, attachments - and can also be called the Operating Space. This is not only a physical operating space but also contains your attitudes, beliefs, your world view, any conditioning, etc. It can be a very demanding space.

The second inner circle represents ‘where you are now’ and is the Self Space, or Cope Space. Here the self operates freely and easily, with little struggle; you can handle it - it’s in your control. Here you experience self-determination, dignity, happiness even. In a nutshell, Life Space is everything we feel responsible for. Cope Space is everything we do easily, automatically or playfully with minimum stress. Depending on where you put yourself and how big you are reveals the difference between these two Spaces and therefore the difference between where you are and where you could be. De Bono calls this the Gap. Understanding what’s in the Gap is critical to working out how to draw your Life Space and Cope Space closer.

At the time of doing the exercise, the difference between my Life Space and Cope Space was full of hurt, negativity and confusion. In order to try and conjoin the circles I had to sort out my Gap! It looked a bit like this:

Being stuck in one’s head is not helpful, so doing this exercise of getting it out on paper to look at did feel like a relief. Actively drawing and writing frees us up, keeps us from stagnating. The issues may
not go away completely but their hold over you will diminish enough to make room for more effective thoughts. Have a go. Draw an outer circle. Draw another circle somewhere inside the first circle. Once you have your circles, what’s in the Gap? Write the words that come to mind, draw faces; note some debilitating thoughts are bigger than others. (Indeed, you could draw a different set of circles for different aspects of your life - family, work, community - where you are in relation to that particular Life Space).

If you are having problems naming issues try this: Close your eyes and as you breathe in and out visualise the Gap in your mind and breathe into it, keep doing this and imagine the circles expanding and contracting like your lungs. Place an image of something bright and pleasing in your mind. Instantly a dahlia comes to mine - yellow, in full bloom - like sunshine. Ok, this is feeling a bit calmer. Keep breathing in and out, relax your bones and muscles, lie still and let your breath do the work. Once the focus is on spaciousness the words come easier. Breathing slowly and deeply is, I find more and more these days, the only way to relax and let the space amidst our minds, evolve. When you return your focus to the circles have they changed?

All self-help exercises, like this one, don’t necessarily mean the situations disappear but we are trying to ‘up’ our coping strategies in order to respond with more ease to challenges. We can reduce the Gap by letting go or learning new skills. This is what de Bono explains this as “turning the pressure from the demanding space into an opportunity”. When life space and cope space are at their closest we are coping, experiencing dignity and self-worth. Yay!

The next step (nothing too demanding!) is how to put the knowledge gained to use and then maintain this equilibrium. Once you have some more information of what’s causing the Gap you have a clearer understanding of any changes that may need attending to. Deciding which and how is part of our emotional and spiritual growth. The expanding and contracting of the circle spaces - much like breathing - comes naturally. The full picture may not necessarily arrive in the time zone we wish for but in one which maybe holds more wisdom and opportunity. Nowadays, I spend more time with my dahlias - real and imagined - and that picture looks more like this:

Sue Andrew is part of the NN team

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“ The human soul doesn’t want to be advised or fixed or saved. It simply wants to be witnessed, exactly as it is”.

Author and activist, Parker Palmer
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