

BRIDGING SOCIAL ISOLATION



Photo by Ed Baron

Welcome to edition number 90 of Bridging Social Isolation.

In this edition you will find dates for your diary including the Bridgend Christmas party and our first ever late night shopping event. If you would like to attend our Christmas Party at the Civic Hall, please do let us know.

If you would rather stay cosy at home, we have some suggested books to read as well as photographs of the local area that you can enjoy without getting chilly toes!

If you have any articles or requests for things that you would like to see included in the newsletter, please get in touch via email on info@bridgendcentre.org.uk or pop in and see us at the centre, we will have the kettle on as usual.

Reminiscence Room gets a make over

The Bridgend Reminiscence room, known as the library, has long been used as a cosy group space that sparks conversation and triggers memory.

In recent years, the room had been decorated in post WW2 style to trigger memories for our service users of their youth. As time moves on, so the era that our visitors grew up in changes and as such we decided it was time to 'update' the room to a more 1960's/1970's feel. We are very proud of the new wallpaper that was kindly put up for us last week and feel it really helps to bring the look of the age.

Reminiscence rooms can be an extremely beneficial tool, particularly for people experiencing dementia. It is amazing how the look and feel of a room can take you back in time and help to recreate memories. Its not just decoration that can help to stir peoples memories, food and music help too.

Reminiscence is a great way of sharing experiences, and an opportunity to learn about your friends and families history, making sure that those special moments live on, we can all learn so much from each other, so take the time to talk and remember the kettle is always on at the Bridgend Centre and we are always happy to listen, there is always a friendly face in our fabulous Community Café ready to have a chat.



THE BRIDGEND CENTRE PRESENTS

Christmas

LATE NIGHT SHOPPING
EVENT



GET IN THE FESTIVE SPIRIT WITH
SHOPPING & FESTIVE NIBBLES

THURSDAY 15TH DECEMBER 2022
5PM - 8PM

BRIDGEND CENTRE, 104 PALMERSTON
STREET, BOLLINGTON, SK10 5PW

Mentell provides circles for men aged 18+ to talk in a safe and confidential space, free from advice and judgement.

Circles are completely free of charge. All you have to do is turn up with a desire to make progress, whatever that means to you.

How to find your circle

- 1 Go to www.mentell.org.uk
- 2 Click [Find A Circle](#)
- 3 Choose a location and date
- 4 Fill in the [Sign Up](#) form
- 5 Wait for a confirmation email

Questions? talkto@mentell.org.uk



Mentell is run exclusively by volunteer members, does not give any form of advice, and is not a substitute for professional medical help.

Registered Charity No. 1187547

Shopping smart, saving waste

With the festive season fast approaching and people's purse strings already stretched, what can we do to prevent waste and save money? How do we strike the balance between treating those we love and spending money for the sake of it? Here are some handy hints and tips to help.

- Meal plan! It is lovely to have treats but every year at Christmas in the UK, 5 million Christmas puddings, 2 million turkeys, and 74 million mince pies go to food waste despite being perfectly edible. That doesn't even take into account all the vegetables, cheeses, nuts and party food! If you can food shop online, it will prevent you being tempted into impulse buys that are cleverly marketed to catch your eye.
- Before you make any purchases, stop and asking yourself whether yourself or the person you are buying for actually needs the item. Are we buying for the sake of it? Alternative Christmas gifts of experiences or support with day to day things (such as helping to pay an electricity bill) that will enrich life beyond Christmas could be a good alternative.
- Support your local charities. Charity shops such as ours are filled with items that make fantastic gifts at a fraction of the price of buying new. You are supporting local charity, preventing items going into landfill and saving you money in the process. Everyone wins!
- Craft and repurpose your decorations? Do you really need a new colour scheme for your Christmas decorations? Could you make do with the ones you have and adapt with simple changes such as tying new ribbons or adding embellishments.
- Put yourself first. The people that you love would rather go without a novelty soap set than see you struggle with cost of living.



Make a Christmas wreath for birds



You will need:

- Pines cones
- Long twigs
- Garden wire
- Soft lard
- Mixing bowl
- Holly and other leaves
- Bird seed, breadcrumbs and grated cheese
- Dried fruits or unsalted nuts

1 Twist together bundles of long twigs and fasten with wire into a ring.

2 Squish lard into a soft paste in a bowl. Mix in bird seed, breadcrumbs or grated cheese.

3 Smear over pine cones and decorate with dried fruits and nuts.



Somewhere to hang your wreath

4 Attach the cones to the ring with twisted wire.

5 Decorate with festive greenery and hang up your wreath.

Can news be good news?

It can feel like we are living in uncertain times at the moment, with lots of momentous events having happened in the last few years. A pandemic, war in Europe, a cost of living crisis, global warming, recession, and three prime ministers in a two month period, it can all seem a bit much to take in.

But that is the point really, maybe it is all too much for us to take in.

Humans aren't designed to take on the weight of the world every day

but that is what we do if we are incessantly consuming news, whether it is on the TV, radio or social media. I for one do have a tendency to over-consume news and while I think it is good to be informed about the world, I also do realise that if I start looking at the news too much, it has a negative effect on my mood and outlook on the world.

A new study suggests that doing so can worsen mental and physical health. The study of 1,100 US adults said that 16.5% of survey respondents had a "severely problematic" habit of consuming bad news. The results, published in the Health Communication journal, further suggested that people who consumed more bad news had "greater mental and physical ill-being" compared to people who didn't consume as much bad news. Examples of "ill-being" in the study are anxiety, stress, and depression.

There is even a term for it, 'doom-scrolling', which is where someone endlessly scrolls through the news web pages and social media feeds, checking for bad news or the prospect of good news, for example the end of a recession or a war, which sends our mood up and down on an endless rollercoaster based on external events that we have absolutely no control over or any power to change. The feelings of drama can be exacerbated by the sensational headlines used by media outlets, which are written to get us hooked and click on that certain article, whether or not it is reflecting the truth of the situation. This kind of behaviour can give us an unrealistically pessimistic outlook in real life, if we get sucked into the 'news cycle' mentality.

So if you think that perhaps you are consuming too much news and media, how do you reduce it? The first step is, like anything in life, to be aware of it. Be aware of how much time you spend on your phone on news sites and social media and keep a log so you can recognise a pattern (e.g. what time of day or night you do this or is it triggered by things happening in your life at that time). There are apps that record for you how long you are spending on different things on your phone, you may find the results surprising and decide it is something you want to reduce. Try to spend the time doing something else, like going to a yoga class, taking a walk or reading a book. Another good tip is to turn your phone off after a certain of time of night. This could also has great positive impact your sleep patterns.

One great anecdote to negative news is the magazine and website positive.news, which does exactly what it says on the tin. Positive News provides independent journalism on things that are going right in the world. It sometimes easy to forget that there is an awful lot of good going on and this publication focusses on that.



Positive news is published daily online and quarterly in a printed magazine and features articles on society, the environment, economics plus much more.

Like everything in life, balance is key and being informed about the world and what is going on is important. However it is useful to be aware of how much news you are consuming, how healthy it is for you and whether you want to change it slightly to feel happier and more in control of your daily life. We like the phrase 'informed not immersed'.



The mist rolls in over Bollington

It was a misty start over Bollington last weekend, which gave the area a mysterious November feel.



Helen Sheldon



Tim Boddington



Jane Wilson



Jan Slinn



Brian McGuigan at Bollington Wharf

Musical fun for Talk and Games Group

The Biddulph Strummers' and Singers' Group came along to our weekly Talk and Games group last week and thoroughly entertained everyone with their cheerful, uplifting tunes. There was lots of audience participation, with many people singing along and using shakers to join in. Music has long be proven to lift mood and improve wellbeing. This was the latest fantastic group activity organised by Maxine for the group which is continuing to go from strength-to-strength. She organises regular trips out with the use of the Rainow Community Bus to a variety of locations including garden centres, farms and antique fairs, always carefully researched to make sure it is suitable for the needs and abilities of the group.

On weeks where the group isn't out and about, Maxine organises a wide range of activities from armchair dancing to board game marathons. Guest speakers have included authors, photographers, spiritualists, local historians and even someone to talk about how to read feet! It truly is a fantastic group and provides real benefit to it's members.



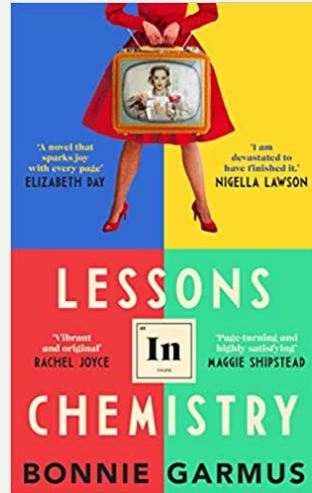
Books, books and more books

The Bridgend book section always a wealth of fiction and non-fiction books to choose from at bargain prices. From literature and poetry to more modern tomes, you can rely on finding a good read when you visit us. Below are some descriptions of a few books that I have read recently that might inspire a visit to our shop.

Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus

This is an absolutely fabulous book about a woman living in the 60s who wants to be a scientist. Unfortunately she faces the rampant sexism of society of that era and is forced by a series of tragic events to become a TV chef.

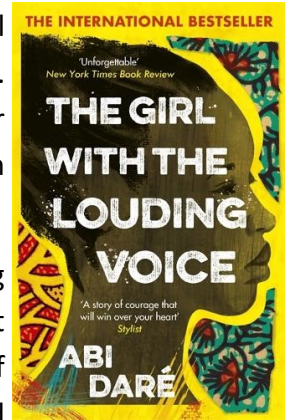
Funny and sad in equal measures, this is an easy read that will make you shed a tear (if you are that way inclined).



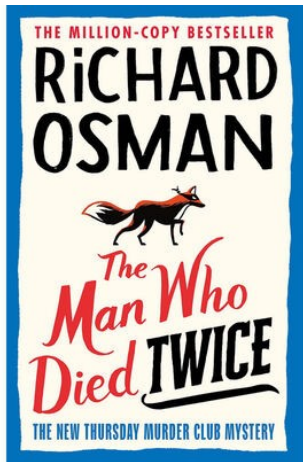
The Girl with the Louding Voice by Abi Daré

Adunni is a fourteen year old girl who lives in present-day Nigeria. Her Mother is dead and her Father has sold her to an older man to be his bride.

In many ways this is a shocking book in that it reminds us that even today, there are millions of people trapped in slavery around the world, some by their own family. It is also a story of hope of Adunni remains focussed throughout on getting an education and gaining freedom.



The Man who Died Twice by Richard Osman



You will undoubtedly know Richard Osman through his TV appearances on the game show 'Pointless'. He has recently branched out into writing novels and they are just as entertaining as his on-screen persona. This is the second book of the 'Thursday murder club' series, which follows a group of older people who are comfortably living in a retirement village as they branch off into solving murders and getting themselves into danger.

I have read the first two now and have the third book (The Bullet that Missed) in my to-read pile (also bought in the Bridgend bookshop). They are entertaining, easy to read and funny books that also have insightful comments on today's society and how we see older people. I would highly recommend if you would like an easy feel-good read or two.

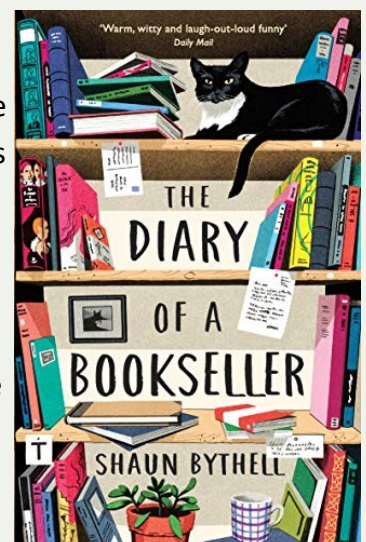
The Diary of a Bookseller by Shaun Bythell

I first came across this author when I inadvertently visited his shop in Wigtown on the way home from a walking holiday in Galloway.

Wigtown is reminiscent of Hay-on-Wye with lots and lots of bookshops in one small town and Shaun claims his is the biggest in Scotland.

The book describes many of his customers, staff and friends and can be quite acidic at times, initially the author didn't really strike me as someone who likes people. However as time went on, his affection for the people around him became more apparent and one would hope his descriptions are a result of a sardonic sense of humour more than anything else!

The book does also make the case for using independent booksellers and describes the challenges the author faces running such a business. There were also many inspiring descriptions of the books he has read and sold, some of which I added to my always growing 'to-read' pile!



Recipes— Pear crumble, and Creamy sprout and leek pasta



Ingredients

4 ripe pears, peeled, cored and quartered lengthways
100g dark brown soft sugar
½ lemon, juiced
1tsp vanilla extract

FOR THE CRUMBLE TOPPING

250g plain flour
150g cold butter, cut into chunks
75g dark brown soft sugar
50g chopped hazelnuts

custard, to serve

Method

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 4. Lay the pears out in a medium ovenproof dish that fits them snugly. You don't want large gaps between the pears or you won't have enough topping to cover them. Scatter over the sugar and pour over the lemon juice and vanilla. Mix using your hands to coat the fruit well.

Tip the flour into a large bowl and rub in the butter using your fingertips until you achieve a coarse bread-crumb texture. Stir in the sugar and hazelnuts, then scatter this over the pears. Try not to pack it down too tightly, so that it remains crumbly when cooked. If you have any crumble topping left over, cook this next to the crumble in a small ovenproof dish (you can scatter it over the bowls of crumble later). Bake for 40-50 mins until golden and the pears are cooked through. Serve with custard.

You are cordially invited to the Bridgend Centre

Christmas Party

Thursday 22nd December 2022 @ 1pm
@ Bollington Civic Hall

RSVP to the Bridgend Centre
(01625 576311, info@bridgendcentre.org.uk
or in person)

A cash donation towards the buffet would be most welcome. Thank you.

Creamy Sprout and Leek Pasta

Ingredients






½ tbsp rapeseed oil
3 leeks, halved and sliced
200g Brussels sprouts, ½ chopped and ½ quartered
2 garlic cloves, rushed
50ml low-salt vegetable stock
3 tbsp low-fat crème fraîche
350g short pasta
1 tbsp grated parmesan or veggie alternative
1 lemon, zested
½ small bunch of parsley, finely chopped
1 tbsp chopped hazelnuts, toasted



Method

Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a low heat. Add the leeks and sprouts and cook for 10-15 mins or until softened. Add the garlic and cook for 1 min. Stir through the hot stock and crème fraîche. Cook the pasta following pack instructions. Drain and toss with the leeks and sprouts, parmesan, lemon, parsley and hazelnuts, adding a ladleful of the pasta cooking water if needed to loosen. Season to taste and spoon into four bowls.

Brain teaser—What's the phrase?

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| 1 Get it Get it Get it Get it | 2 Jack | 3 Somewhere  | 4 R00R |
| 5 <u>READ</u> | 6 Blood Water | 7 Beeeee | 8 CANCELLLED |
| 9 once  | 10 Egg Egg HAM | 11 Try $\frac{\text{Stand}}{2}$ | 12 TOWN |
| 13 N bump GHT | 14 Aid ← Aid Aid | 15 Mill1on | 16  3.14 |
| 17 ice ³ | 18 R O G O N C I K  | 19 Think  | 20 GROUND feet feet feet feet feet feet |
| 21 1 KNOWS | 22 Big Big ignore ignore | 23 RAKEN | 24 KNEE light light |

Thank you to our sponsors and supporters

The John & Margaret Wootton Trust Fund have funded this newsletter for twelve months—THANK YOU

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