

Ruthin Town and Around O Gwmpas y Dre



Local news, comment and features, published quarterly by Ruthin and District Civic Association, Cymdeithas Ddinesig Rhuthun a'r Cylch

September 2015

Open Doors 2015 is full of novelty and surprises! Miles Anderson finds the brochure full of new ideas



For those who say that Open Doors has run its course, that there are only so many old churches and historic buildings that are worth visiting, and they are tired of being 'culture vultures', a glance at the newly published Open Doors Event / Digwyddiad Drysau Agored will prove how wrong they are.

This annual festival of Architecture and Heritage, as it is billed, is constantly reinventing itself. It has moved on from being an occasion for quietly respectful groups, families with bored children and earnest individuals being permitted to inspect dusty interiors. Things have moved on from those days.

Today's Open Doorers, as they might well be called, are expecting and being given walks, talks and interactive workshops. All of these, of course, still occur in buildings and environments that offer cultural and stimulating experiences.

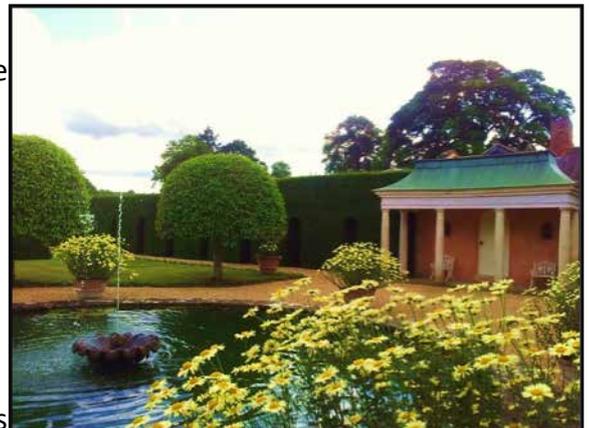
The format this year is different with Ruthin and District Civic Association arranging its own programme and publicity. On this occasion the "and District" part of the Association's title is very well represented with Llanelidan and area having its own weekend of events, 12th and 13th of September, and Llanrhaeadr Y.C. its own programme on the 26th and 27th.

The guide may be less weighty than that of former years since other areas of Denbighshire

are not participating or, as with Denbigh, producing its own programme, nevertheless the content, whilst including old favourites such as Nantclwyd y Dre, Ruthin Castle and the Old Gaol, has much that is new to Open Doors.

Just, for example, to pick out at random a few events that stretch the idea of Open Doors and stimulate the imagination, why not start off with the Christian rock concert by 'Iona' at Llanelidan Church at 7.30 on Saturday the 12th followed by a medieval fair on the Sunday?

You could whilst in the area also visit the three acres of gardens



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and grounds of Nantclwyd Hall with its follies by Clough William-Ellis of Portmeirion fame on the Saturday 12th and this event is enhanced by the service of teas from 2pm at St Elidan's Church.

Outside Ruthin's boundaries once again, this time to the west, there is an opportunity to participate in a talk and tour at Llanrhaeadr's famous St Dyfnog's Church on both the 26th and 27th. And for those of a more adventurous nature, you can talk a short interesting walk and visit the holy well that lies behind the church. As with all the details of the programme you will need to check details in the brochure and booking arrangements where necessary at Ruthin Library.

For those seeking more personal involvement, they should visit the Ruthin Craft Centre on Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th. There the artist in residence, Julie Blyfield, Australian jeweller, is giving a talk at 11am on the Saturday followed by a drop in workshops at 12noon and 4pm by Sian Hughes and Sue King. On the Sunday it is the turn of Julie Blyfield to run a drop in workshop at 1pm and 4pm.

Still at the Craft Centre there is a promise of a trip through the town when Cherry Head Productions and musician Henry Horrell, who are leading a 'Promenade Performance' along the Ruthin Art Trail on the Sunday afternoon.

For details of all these events do pick up a brochure, although Association members will have received on with this edition of Town and Around, and if you have a spare one, then pass it on to a neighbour. They are available from Ruthin library as well as in St Peter's Church.

The launch of Ruthin Open Doors will be performed by the Mayor, Councillor Anne Roberts at 10am by the decorative gates that feature in the Ruthin Art Trail in front of St Peter's Church on Saturday 26th September – all are welcome to attend this start of the Ruthin weekend's open heritage celebration



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RUTHIN HISTORY GROUP

Gareth Evans anticipates the groups re-birth

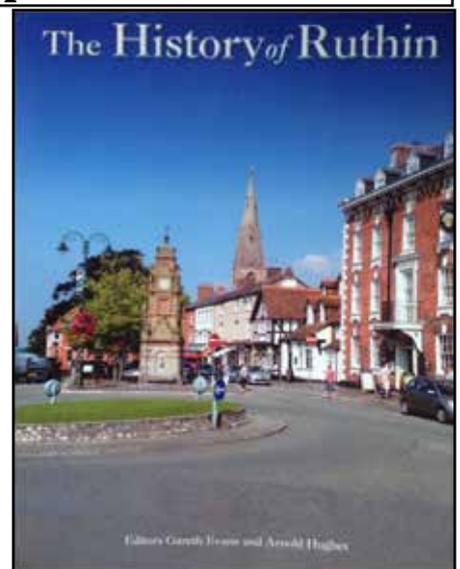
When the popular History of Ruthin was launched a promise was made to revive a Ruthin History Society. Now an attempt is underway to set up a new members based history group in Ruthin and discover what support there may be for such a venture.

A planning group has been established to set up a new membership based group and arrange a first year's programme. Invitations are currently being issued to speakers. It is proposed to hold meetings between October and March in the first year with one meeting during the year being held to place the group on a more permanent footing with elected officers etc. chosen by the membership.

Meetings will be held at the St John's Ambulance Hall on Prior Street at 7.30 pm on the third Wednesday in each month. An evening meeting has been chosen to allow a wide participation by our community. It is likely that the first meeting will be on the 14th October.

There would seem to be a growing interest in Ruthin's history at the moment and this seems an opportune moment to try to get a history society going again. A town with such a colourful history as ours deserves to have more people actively involved in finding more out about its past and how Ruthin became what it is today.

As the programme becomes settled more information will be provided, but in the meantime, anyone interested should contact Gareth Evans on 01824704564 or by e-mail at garethmachno@yahoo.co.uk. He would obviously be very happy to answer any questions and would welcome any ideas to help with organising the programme.



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Graig Wyllt, Graigfechan

Ruth Bacon welcomed a beautiful addition to the North Wales Wildlife Trust

Pressure on land for human usage has contributed to the decline of habitats for many species

Over the last few decades Britain's wildlife has been disappearing at an alarming rate. Pressure on land for human usage has contributed to the decline of habitats for many species of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish. Intensive farming methods, agriculture with its use of pesticides and insecticides, the need for more housing, industrial estates



to provide jobs and new roads to carry the goods needed by communities are just a few of the reasons why our wildlife is decreasing. But across Britain organisations have been formed with conservation their goal providing safe sanctuaries for many species.

The North Wales Wildlife Trust is one of these organisations. It states that it works for better protection for all wildlife and the

The North Wales Wildlife Trust . . . works for better protection for all wildlife and the environment across North Wales

environment across North Wales and its offshore waters through education, advice, campaigns and practical management, which includes caring for designated nature reserves. These reserves serve the dual purpose of providing a safe environment for wildlife and of being places where the public can visit to see and get close to nature.

Not only is the scenery delightful, but the ancient woodland, the limestone escarpment and its grassland are home to many plants, birds and butterflies.

One such area has been open to the public locally for some years. Coed Cilygroeslwyd, is situated near Pwll-glas Golf Course. It is well laid out with information boards informing you what species to look out for as you walk around the well-marked footpaths. A designated walk incorporates the Wildlife Trust's woodland reserve and the nearby Butterfly Conservation SSSI nature reserve at Eyrarth Rocks. The walk which is some 5.6 miles starts near Eyrarth Bridge just off the A494 where limited parking is available. (It is also possible to get there by taking the Corwen bus.) The route is steep in places with stiles, gates and some muddy areas in wet weather. Also a couple of busy roads have to be crossed, but it is well worth these minor inconveniences. Away from the roads all is peaceful and tranquil. Not only is the scenery delightful, but the ancient woodland, the limestone escarpment and its grassland are home to many plants, birds and butterflies. Details of the walk can be found in the Trust's publication, Wildlife Walks - Denbighshire.

Now the Trust has recently acquired land in Graigfechan and a new reserve, Graig Wyllt will be created. It is described in Natur, the Trust's quarterly magazine, as a lovely mixture of deciduous woodland, sheltered scrubby areas, grassland, and natural rock-garden

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The Trust is always looking for new members and for volunteers. They hold a number of events and walks annually and have 35 reserves across North Wales to visit. More information can be found on their website www.northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk

At Clawddnewydd community involvement gives the village new life

Eryl Williams tells Miles Anderson how it all happened

The community projects of Clawddnewydd are an example to us all of how people working together can keep a pub and shop alive in a rural village in these days when all around they are closing in others.

There about 500 people that make up the community they serve. Actually the community comprises two parishes and includes three villages, Derwen, Clocaenog and Clawddnewydd and they all look to the village shop and Glan Llyn, the pub, now a community pub, to serve the local people.

The history of the situation, County Councillor Eryl Williams told me, as we sat in the pub early one morning, was that by the end of 2013, the current life of the Glan Llyn as a landlord managed pub for a commercial company had run its course. As with so many village pubs in recent times making it profitable had been a long struggle. By this time the Community Shop had been in existence for many years and was there enough impetus amongst the locals to look to take over the pub as yet another community venture.

The project to purchase the pub was helped by the existence of the not for profit organisation Antur Cae Cymru. Clawddnewydd Community Hall had a long established reputation as a busy and well used facility and had provided a centre from which to create, in the first place, the Community Shop. Now they needed to gather all their forces and expertise to raise the £180,000 to purchase the freehold of the pub. And they had only ten weeks to get it all in place.

The first financial breakthrough was being able to negotiate a £90,000 twenty five year loan at competitive rates from WCVa. Amongst others supporting the necessary financial provisions, Cadwyn Clwyd were enormously helpful in funding and helping draft the business plan and assisting with all the legal arrangements and necessary fees.

It was a great success that the remaining money was raised in the short time available - many thanks to the ten committee members led by Eryl. In fact the previous landlord moved out on 21st December 2013 and the new organisation was up and running as a community pub from the next day; it never closed!

At first there was a massive clear up to be done and the bar moved back to its original position. Since the take over the pub has been mainly run by volunteers and now there are fifteen people involved. In the first year they achieved a profit of £24,000 which is quite remarkable. And the pub won the Community Pub of the year for 2015.

The new arrangements at Glan Llyn also helped the shop also show a profit for the first time with the pub channelling much of its purchasing through the shop.



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A great deal of the much-needed restoration work has now been done providing a sports room, new kitchen and refurbished dining area. But there is still much to be done.

Soon work will commence on the transfer of the community shop to new premises to be constructed where the old conservatory now stands at the side of the pub. A coffee shop will be established in conjunction with the shop and extension work to the rear of the premises. This is hoped to be completed before winter sets in.

And when all the work on the pub is finished, says Eryl, it will be time to start the big clear up of the pond. It is in a beautiful setting but completely overgrown.

With such enthusiasm and community spirit, the future of the villages of Derwen, Clocaenog and Clwydnewydd must surely be assured.

Ruthin's Monthly Markets are here to stay

Miles Anderson talks to Alex Hughes about their success



What a pleasure it has been to see Ruthin's markets back on St Peter's Square regularly this summer!

It is some years now since they started in the courtyard of the Old Gaol. It was a striking venue and the grey limestone walls of the Old Gaol were a sober backdrop to the brightly colourful striped awnings of the market stall. Their circular arrangement had shoppers walking round the circumference in a way echoing the tramp of prisoners' feet in the exercise yard – though this gaol, built to the Pentonville design, probably did not exercise its inmates by this method.

But eventually the location of the market down the hill from the main shopping areas drew fewer visitors and its future was in doubt.

The move of the market up to St Peter's Square was not without controversy, necessitating, as it did, alterations to the daily traffic flow. After spasmodic

appearances it seemed that even here Ruthin's produce market's future was not assured.

However today with the enthusiasm of Alexandra, 'Alex', Hughes of Bar Laeth and the support of Ruthin's Chamber of Trade, they have become regular features of the third Saturdays of the month.

"It used to be hard work," Alex said, "Bringing the stalls up from the Old Gaol, even with the help of Elwyn Edwards and Rosie Hughes-Mosley, but now that the Vicar of St Peter's allows us to store them in his old orchard it's very much easier." And what of the future of the markets, I asked?

We have people on the waiting list for sites to be available. They ring up all the time wanting to be involved."

The last market of this year, the Christmas Market, will be on Saturday 21st November – don't miss it. And they'll be back next year.



Down Memory Lane part 2

Emrys Wynne continues his travels back in time

The brow on the railway bridge on Well Street, as well as the sharp corner onto Station Road, was deemed to be dangerous and as the bridge no longer served any purpose other than to convey traffic into the town, the old railway cutting beneath the bridge was filled in as was most of the cutting in front of Railway Terrace, and the surface was flattened. As well as J & P Williams, hungry labourers who carried out this work could cross Station Road to go to Leamington Stores, where the butchers and opticians are now. It was Leamington Stores, owned by Trevor and Glenys Jones that supplied Ysgol Brynhyfryd with what was the highlight of the school day for many students. Yes, the hot buns! These were fresh and piping hot and were for sale for two old pre-decimal pennies each! I can still smell and taste them as I am typing. Happy days!



Fruit and vegetables (most of which were supplied by the owners' own Market Garden off Rhos Street), were available from Mr and Mrs Roberts in the Machine, opposite The Feathers. This is now Nature's Treasures and Gwynedd Constabulary's CID were located in the building between The Machine and Railway Terrace. On Station Road corner was Gift Fair, later to become Ruthin Steakhouse and is now W & G Jones' Café. As well as Leamington Stores, Trevor and Glenys also owned the Steakhouse. With the National Eisteddfod coming to Ruthin in 1973, it made good business sense to give The Steakhouse a Welsh name - Golwythdy Rhuthun. Welsh names on town shops were almost non-existent then. I recall that this restaurant was a very busy place for years after the 1973 National Eisteddfod, and booking was wise if not essential!

Opposite Gift Fair/The Steakhouse is Wool-N-Things. I am reliably informed that I could have purchased 'posh' sweets in this shop in the early sixties. Maureen Williams then opened her hairdressers here and I am sure that in my early teen years I occasionally visited Maureen to keep my locks off my shoulders! Next door was Musselles, the shoe shop. I had my first winkle pickers (pointed shoes) from here and, purely in the name of fashion, I squeezed my wide feet into these most unrelenting apparels, crushing the numerous bones in my feet in the process. Ironically, today, people with musculoskeletal issues can use the same premises and seek the help of Well Street Clinic to ease their pains. Prior to opening up as Healds iron mongers fifty years ago, today's Kings was a private house and prior to being part of the ironmongers, Taylors the watch makers from Corwen, was in the unit with small windows. Reg Jones opened a new electrical store in the next property on the left. Colour TV was introduced to Britain in the late sixties and early seventies and between them, Reg Jones and Butlands, on Castle Street, cornered the TV Sales and Rental market of Ruthin. Reg Jones and Butlands eventually became one - Lewis Electricals. Today, this property is a ladies' fashion store called Diva.

On the opposite side, where Ruthin Décor is now located, was Ruthin Motors. Brynle would serve fuel from pumps that were located in front of the garage.

Well Street Chemist has been a pharmacy for as long as I can remember. The first pharmacist that I can remember on this location was John Williams, Galltegefa. David Williams followed, and after his retirement, the business was acquired by the current pharmacist, Miriam.

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Next door is the newly opened Hesketh's Blinds. This was David Williams' Celtic Craft Shop before becoming a 'Pole Dancing Academy'. Peter Collins has Vale Carpets in what used to be the only bank on this side of the town – the TSB. Peter Collins' office is in what used to be the bank's safe. TSB's closure in the 1990s meant that all mainstream banking in Ruthin was now concentrated on St. Peter's Square

Reports on recent events



The evening of Peter Daniels images showing the changes to the urban landscape of Ruthin over the last ten years was excellently done.

The members' evening at the Llanfwrog Community Centre for the presentation of the Quayle Award and Peter Daniels was a great success. The venue, although necessitating steps for the less able, was excellent, looking out, as it does, on a summers evening on to the tennis courts, all of them being well occupied. The Centre also has installed all the technical facilities for projection presentations.

The evening of Peter Daniels images showing the changes to the urban landscape of Ruthin over the last ten years was excellently done. It is amazing, and we are very lucky to have someone who is so engaged with recording all the developments that happen in the town. Space does not permit, and it would be impossible to remember them all to record here, but there was not any period in the hour-long presentation that we were not fascinated. We even had a visual record of the notorious yellow road markings farrago! And there were all the stages of the destruction and redevelopment of the Craft Centre as well as that of the Tesco site – we even saw the short lived Tesco sign put up in contravention of the planning agreement.

In a final rundown we were treated to the extraordinary many changes of fascia boards that that have graced the fronts of our shops. It was a fascinating evening and in particular congratulations to Peter Daniels for the enlightening and witty commentary that accompanied the show – Many thanks!

The evening concluded with the presentation of the Quayle Award to the executive of the North Wales Housing Association for the redevelopment of the properties on Mwrog Street.



On Thursday 27th August, unfortunately too late to include a report in

this edition of Town and Around, members were taken on what I am

sure will have been a fascinating visit to Rhuddlan Castle by County Archaeologist, Fiona Gale. It was a wonderful opportunity to learn so much of the history and background to what was for many of us one of the lesser known of Denbighshire's Castles



Ruthin Livestock Market Redevelopment nears Completion

Miles Anderson welcomes the impressive new facilities

In September last year Town and Around reported on the plans for the changes that were to be made to Ruthin Farmers' Market over the next twelve months. It was hoped it would ensure that this site remains a contender to be the best livestock market in Wales if not much further afield – a market fit for the 21st Century. Since the move from the town centre in 1992, the business has grown exponentially. There are many Ruthin residents who will remember how on Market Day you took your life in your hands to venture into the town centre. Best for sale would be brought into Ruthin and their noise and detritus took over the town – very picturesque, possibly, but as the years went by this was hardly a practical way of auctioning beasts.

Market Street, as its name implies, was once the hub of the livestock sales. Now with the improvements, any of them as a result of the recent Art Trail, it is hardly recognisable as the same place, although we do have Roger Edwards' inspired image in the spy hole there as a reminder of how it once was.

Recently, the directors felt that these changes were needed to safeguard the future of the business and to provide an up to date facility for the local farming community, and those not so local, who have built up a healthy relationship over the years with Ruthin Livestock Market.

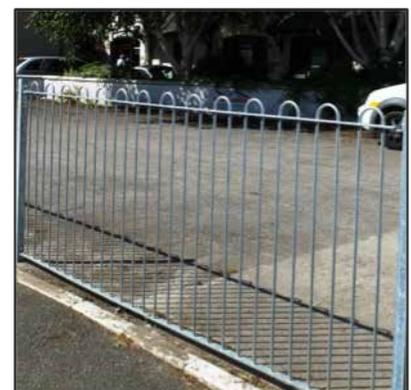
As the development now moves into its final stages, the visual evidence is that the project will realise all the hopes and aspirations of the initial plans of the company directors. Certainly on the day we went on site to take a picture, the carpark was full and all around there were huge crowds of farmers here for the sales. It is easy for Ruthin's town dwellers not to realise how much business comes here via the farmers market.

And wouldn't it be good if those farmers brought their wives along for the ride sometimes so that they could spend a day in town shopping?

Seen in passing....

- Talking to people from Llangollen and Corwen, they now have to come into Ruthin on a more regular basis because of bank closures in their towns. We still have our banks on St Peter's Square open and they keep the prime positions of commerce in the town centre lively and populated. It is unimaginable to think of these buildings being closed with 'For Sale' signs hanging on them!
- A couple of editions ago our 'Grumpy Old Man' was having his usual grouse about the concrete 'pillows', as I believe they are called, being used to block off parking areas on Station Road. Surprise, surprise – they are now replaced by elegant, unobtrusive grey painted railings. A great improvement, thank you
- We have complained often enough over the years about the unkempt bit of land at the end of Wynnstay Road behind what used to be Santander Bank and is now behind what purports to be another carpet shop that doesn't seem to be open for trading. The site is now much tidier, but its front wall is little more than a crumpling pile of stones and although the wild Valarian flowers that grow out of it are decorative, we would appreciate the wall being restored to the condition in which it was originally

It was hoped it would ensure that this site remains a contender to be the best livestock market in Wales if not much further afield – a market fit for the 21st Century.



Ruthin Leisure undergoes further improvements

Denbighshire's Sion Goldsmith promises improved facilities and better access



This summer, the centre will undergo further improvements to the swimming pool, gymnasium and former reception area.

The additional studio will allow day time use for the community enabling the service to create more opportunities to increase the levels of physical activity in Ruthin and the surrounding area.

Ruthin Leisure Centre is located on the grounds of Ysgol Brynhyfryd. It is a dual – use centre, sharing the sports facilities with the school during term time but fully open to the community during evenings, weekend and school holidays.

In 2013, Ruthin Leisure Centre underwent a £1.3 million development which included an extension to the existing building, the creation of additional customer parking and the construction of a full size synthetic all weather pitch. The new extension accommodates a 30

station fitness suite, reception, changing rooms and a pool viewing area. Prior to this extension, the leisure centre's small fitness suite was unavailable to the public during the school day and only had 45 members. The fitness suite now boasts over 425 members.

The Council has continued to invest into facilities at Ruthin Leisure Centre having carried out several small projects to improve circulation spaces and energy efficiency on the site.

This summer, the centre will undergo further improvements to the swimming pool, gymnasium and former reception area. The gymnasium will undergo a full refurbishment which will include the replacement of all the windows and doors, significant plaster work, redecoration, refurbishment of the flooring, replacement of the existing heating system, re – wiring of all the electrics and new LED lighting. This work will be complete by mid October 2015. This refurbishment will be a significant improvement in the standard of accommodation for both the school and leisure centre.

Alongside this refurbishment we will also be refurbishing and remodelling the old reception area that become redundant after the major development in 2013. This area will be developed into a multi - functional exercise studio which would be used by both the leisure centre and the school. Currently the area is segregated into a lobby / foyer, reception area and back office.

As part of the works, all internal walls will be removed to create a large open space. All external windows will be replaced, a multi – functional matted flooring installed, all internal and external doors replaced, the mechanical and electrical services would be upgraded which will include the installation of two wall mounted air conditioning units, LED lighting set into five acoustic rafts and complete redecoration. This development will give Leisure Services the opportunity to develop a broader range of activities and increase participation within inactive and active children as well as reduce the number of inactive adults. Currently, Ruthin Leisure Centre has no day time access to studio space as these areas are used by Ysgol Brynhyfryd. The additional studio will allow day time use for the community enabling the service to create more opportunities to increase the levels of physical activity in Ruthin and the surrounding area. Ruthin Town Council has made a contribution of £41,000 to this develop of the studio, which will be a facility for GP referrals also.

The studio development will also improve the learning environment at Ysgol Brynhyfryd, raise PE standards and provide better accommodation for community users that are fit for purpose and meet customer needs and aspirations.

The swimming pool is also undergoing a refurbishment. The existing pool surround tiles are being replaced with a new non slip material that will provide a safer more attractive surface. As well as this work, the pool liner itself is being recoated with a specialist solution that seals and secures the lining ensuring the long term integrity of the pool. The pool will re -open on the 1st September 2015.

Awelon – a case for change

Bobby Feeley sets out the consultation process

Most of you will have heard by now about Denbighshire's review of our remaining 'in house care' services (already 95% is in the private sector), which affects Awelon Care Home in Ruthin. I thought it would be helpful to try and explain a little more fully why the Council have decided on this course of action:

Social Services have been engaged in the Modernising Agenda of change for several years now; it began before I became involved three years ago. The need to change is not only driven by budgetary pressures but the increasing demographics and improvements in medical science means more of us, are living longer lives.

This is not only in Denbighshire, Wales, and the UK, but across Europe, where 37% of the population will be over 50, (190m) by 2033; the population of over 85s is set to double.

The increasing age profile is a fact we can't ignore, we cannot carry on as we are, and in a climate of decreasing budgets, we need to redesign how we look after people's needs to make our services sustainable into the future.

Denbighshire have been working hard towards this, we need to modernise and change our services, there is no alternative. This will involve a dramatic culture change. We need to encourage people to take responsibility for keeping well and fit and to stay independent for as long as possible. We need to work with DCC departments, partners, across Denbighshire and the North Wales region, We need the community and individuals to get behind this and help us get it right. We have to establish an attitude of 'can do' not 'can't do', or those who really need our care will lose out.

With this in mind, the Council's Performance Scrutiny Committee established a 'Task and Finish' group to examine our in house care services and look at options for delivering high quality care in the County.

The Group have taken a thorough and fair approach and assessed each of the individual establishments in great detail, taking on board the needs and requirements of the individuals served by them, and the geographic, cultural and languages of the areas in which they are situated.

Awelon Care Home is part of this review. The changes here are likely to be a fairly long term plan, but the 'Vision for the future' of the site is to turn it to extra care flats, with a community facility for wider use of Ruthin residents. There are currently 17 residents with 2 in hospital and some respite availability, which I hope could continue under any new scheme.

Because of the frail and vulnerable nature of the residents, 4 are over 100, no one will be required to move, so this will be a very gradual change. I think it's worth noting here that there is currently a waiting list of 50 for Llys Awelon Extra Care, situated behind Awelon, whilst numbers requiring the care home are decreasing.

Myself, some members of the T and F Group, and relevant officers along with a union representative, have visited staff at all



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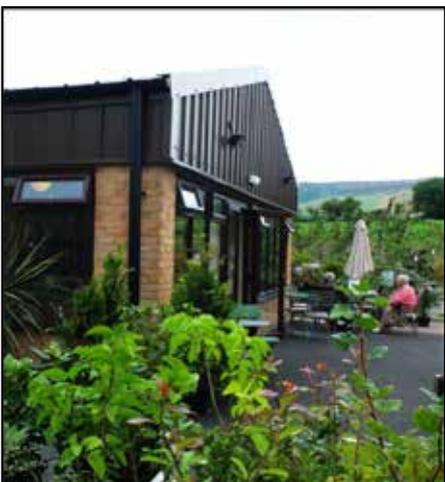
Nobody likes change, especially older people, Awelon Care home had been a much loved facility, in the heart of Ruthin since the 1970s

establishments to ensure they are fully in the picture. There was a lot of straight talking on both sides and very frank and open exchanges but I believe it was the right thing to do.

Nobody likes change, especially older people, Awelon Care home had been a much loved facility, in the heart of Ruthin since the 1970s, and any changes will be very sensitively handled, and the needs of every resident considered fully and carefully. No final decision will be made until a full consultation has taken place, which is likely to take 3 to 4 months. The conclusions are likely to be brought back to Council in early 2016.

Seen in Passing . . .

- The erstwhile, rather characterful Park Café, by the entrance to Cae Ddol, which has been for sale for years, now has a new identity as an Indian Restaurant and take-away. It is good to see the building much restored and looking quite smart. It would seem that we now have three take-aways of different exotic identities – one Chinese, one Turkish and one Indian – all tasted catered for!
- A very decorous wedding party was recently seen leaving Nantclwyd y Dre. What a lovely place to have a wedding, the beautiful house and lovely garden. I am sure this will not be the last such event to take place there. Another wedding venue to add to the others already keeping the town busy with nuptials – it is all good for business.
- Visiting Café R and the Ruthin Craft Centre recently the baskets of flowers look most attractive and the new planting of the permanent beds is very good. In the past there has been criticism of the courtyard looking a bit bleak, but now it has had longer to develop and is looking mature and very welcoming.
- There can't be many small market towns like Ruthin that have two thriving bakeries as alternatives to the ubiquitous supermarket bread. Eagle Bakery on Clwyd Street still bakes bread on his own premises as well as producing pies and cakes, and has a steady and faithful clientele Whilst up on St Peter's Square Bar Llaeth now has such a demand for their home-made artisan bread that they have had to move the baking process down on to Lonparcwr. Their bread may no longer be baked on the premises but it is still baked in the town. It is all fresh and great to eat.
- The White Horse in Llanfair D.C. has over the years when it was owned by Punch Taverns had a succession of landlords, some more successful than others. There have also been periods when it was closed for business and its future looked uncertain. Earlier this year the owners of the Plough at Llandegla took it on. They cleaned it up and put fresh flowers in the beds at the front and now they have purchased the freehold. It looks as though this pub has a future at last!
- I am not sure that we need another café in the town but perhaps the Sevenoaks Garden centre is sufficiently far out of town not to be in competition. Certainly these days a trip to a garden centre is seen as another opportunity for a sit down, coffee and cake and a chat. It looks most attractive, as do all the plants and shrubs. If of course you want your plant sales nearer the town centre, the Market Hall also has a fine selection. In the old days of Percy Thrower we were all encouraged to grow our own from seed, prick the seedlings out and grow them on. It's a sign of the times that we want our flowering plants and shrubs instantly available!
- Wayfarer shop, on Well Street, is celebrating 50 years trading.



The Cunning Green closure update

Could the saga of the closure of the Cunning Green really be drawing to a close? It was early in 2013 that it all started.

The Civic Association felt that once again we need to find out if there is any action likely in the near future. Initial enquiries were made to Phil Ebbrell, now part time and no longer involved. However we did then get a lead that took us down south to Cadw which brought news of funds, matching funds and the distinct possibility of some action.

A very prompt response from Cadw's officer confirmed that the Welsh Government have offered grant support to Denbighshire. For further information the trail then led to Fiona Gale, County Archaeologist, who confirmed the financial offer had been accepted and the matching funding from the adjacent landowner is in place. Once costings are agreed with the contractors work will commence.

There really could be an end to this closure – there might be light at the end of the tunnel!



Annual General Meeting of the Ruthin and District Civic Association

We are pleased to invite all members to attend the AGM of the Association which will take place at 7pm on Thursday 22nd of October 2015 at the Llanfwrog Community Centre.

It is most important that members attend this meeting when the officers and committee will be elected to serve for the next twelve months. There are vacancies on the committee and we will be seeking to appoint a new secretary as Miles Anderson, the current secretary, is stepping down for personal reasons.

We have had a busy and very productive year, as you will hear from the Chairman's report, and we believe that the association is influential in helping Ruthin to be a welcoming, successful and vibrant small market town.

The meeting is open to all members of the public, who are very welcome to attend though only members will be eligible to vote

After the formal business is concluded, we are delighted to have Caryl Hughes, the Welsh National Assembly Outreach and Liaison Officer with us on this occasion to give us an open presentation on 'Understanding and Engaging' and will then be happy to answer any questions on the subject.

Please make a red-letter diary entry for Thursday 22nd October for what promises to be an important, stimulating and enjoyable evening.

Subscriptions now due

September the 1st is the date when subscriptions to the Ruthin and District Civic Association fall due. Please ensure that the Association can carry on its good work by supporting us. Membership renewal forms are included with this edition. Please complete them to join the Association or to continue membership

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We welcome letters and contributions.

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