

WINTER 2014/2015 | EDITION 7

cwtdb

AT HOME IN CARDIFF

Official publication of



WARM AND WELCOMING PONTPRENNAU

We take a look beyond the mock-tudor architecture
PAGES 12 & 13

CATCH-MENT IF YOU CAN!

New local primary schools affect property prices
PAGES 6 & 7

CHAMPIONING WELSH MUSIC

Radio One DJ Huw Stephens on the ones to watch
PAGES 3 & 4

Editor's letter

Welcome to our bumper Winter Issue. We have plenty to keep you occupied through the darker evenings.

Find out why Pontprennau is the place that will bring a smile to your face, and why there is more to the considered 'new kid on the block' than meets the eye.

Radio One DJ, Huw Stephens, takes a breather from his packed schedule to speak to us about his Swn Festival 2014, who influenced his career, and why Cardiff will always have a place in his heart. Read more about the Welsh acts Huw is championing on page 3.

Fancy yourself as a budding property developer? We question a local industry professional on page 8 and reveal his tips for success.

We investigate how plans for two new primary schools in Cardiff will affect the local property market. Read more on local catchment areas and how these boundaries are affecting house prices near you.

If your new year's resolutions include taking up a new hobby, look to broaden your skills with some local craft courses. We explore the 'make-do and mend' philosophy and see what is available to people seeking out more vintage-inspired craft skills in our city. And yes, novices are more than welcome, read more on page 10.

Finally, don't miss our round-up of local community events. Cardiff-born Dr Rhys Jones, of BBC One's 'Rhys Jones' Wildlife Patrol', hosts Cardiff Clicks – a new amateur photography competition. See the winning photos on page 16. The Great Roath Bake Off team don their aprons for another round of baking fun at the Wellfield Winter Festival, and, lastly, Made in Roath celebrates the local area and its talent in their unique showcase of the flourishing contemporary art scene in Wales.

I hope you enjoy our magazine.

Look out for more articles and local events on our facebook page [facebook.com/CPSHomesCwtch](https://www.facebook.com/CPSHomesCwtch)

Emma



It's what we do

As a local company born and bred in Cardiff, we like to think we know our city and its people pretty well. And having been doing business for over a decade, we're confident we know its property market like the backs of our hands too.

Here at CPS Homes, we bring a refreshingly honest approach to everything we do. Whether you're a vendor or buyer, landlord or tenant, our friendly and knowledgeable staff are on-hand to lend their expert advice whenever you need them.

If you're working nine-to-five and/or juggling a hectic family life, our Residential Sales Team has a service to suit. Flexible viewing times, legal advice, unrivalled area knowledge and aftercare - you name it, we've got it. Our Investment Sales Team help prospective landlords enter the world of buy-to-let. We market properties with potential and arrange plans to help you picture what you could make of your investment, then organise architects and contractors to put those plans in place, if that's what you'd like us to do.

Having developed close relationships with plenty of investor clients over the years, we've got a large database of buyers who are just waiting for the right house to arrive on the market. Our Lettings Team offer landlords a variety of different services, all dependent on how much involvement they'd like or can afford to have. If you require full management – meaning we're the tenant's first point of contact – or if it's just a tenant-find you need, we're confident we'll fill your property quickly. Our average void period is just six days, compared to the national average of three weeks.

So, next time you're thinking of buying, selling or renting, give us a call.



Residential Sales

02920 454555
66 Albany Rd, Roath, CF24 3RR

Investment Sales and Lettings

02920 668585
34 Woodville Rd, Cathays, CF24 4EA

Sales and Lettings

02920 480490
18 James St, Cardiff Bay, CF10 5EX

enquiries@cps homes.co.uk

We caught up with Radio 1 DJ Huw Stephens at his own Cardiff music festival in October. He told us how the Duke of Edinburgh got him into radio and Mark E Smith hated his band.



Image Copyright © BBC

Cardiff Over Coffee

IN 2007, YOU CO-FOUNDED SWN MUSIC FESTIVAL HERE IN YOUR HOMETOWN, WHICH HAS BECOME AN AUTUMNAL HIGHLIGHT. WHAT'S RUNNING AND GROWING IT BEEN LIKE? We jumped in headfirst when starting Swn. John Rostron and I have worked with some amazing people every year to make it happen. We wanted to prove that it could work in Cardiff, and that an ambitious, eclectic festival like it had an audience. It's been hard work over the eight years, all without payment, but I have really enjoyed it and am proud of it.

WHAT WAS BEHIND THE DOWNSIZING THIS YEAR?

We had to change it this year, or not let it happen at all. Swn takes a lot of time, effort and money to make happen. Making it a one-day event this year and calling it Dim Swn made complete sense.

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN A PROONENT OF NEW MUSIC. WHAT'S OUT THERE THAT EXCITES YOU? ANYTHING COMING OUT OF SOUTH WALES WE SHOULD BE LISTENING TO? I grew up with so much going on in Cardiff. It was an



exciting time. Since then, I've heard so much great music from all over the place that I get to champion on Radio 1. South Wales being home, it's great to see bands like Samoans, Cut Ribbons and Kutosis come through and I love what Bodhi are doing too. They're house producers from Cardiff who are making waves. And Rockwell is one of the most exciting drum and bass producers around. With a lot of new music to devour, I listen to loads and try to play a good range on the shows. When I buy music, it tends to be compilations of music I've never heard; rock n roll, soul, that kind of thing.

WERE YOU IN A BAND AS A TEENAGER? I wouldn't say I was in a band – more of a project. We were called Picnic, and it was lead by a mysterious man from Angelsey called Johnny R. He did a lot of underground, experimental electronic music. We played two roadshows for BBC Radio Cymru, released a green seven-inch single, got slagged off by Mark E Smith of The Fall in Melody Maker, then split up. They were very happy days.

WHAT MADE YOU REALISE YOU WERE BETTER OFF PLAYING AND TALKING ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S MUSIC? I loved listening to the radio, and I thought working on it would be the best job in the world. When I started the Duke of Edinburgh Award in Whitchurch Youth Club, I asked if I could go to a radio station. They sorted it out for me to go to Rookwood Sound (hospital radio),

“I love discovering music and hearing something interesting. That’s why I love going to record shops in the different cities I visit.”

which was based in Llandaff back then, and I went in as a volunteer initially. I eventually got my own show playing whatever I wanted, as well as doing requests. I was 15 and absolutely loved it. I learnt how to do a show there, how to put a running order together, how to talk into a microphone... that kind of thing.

WHO IN THE WORLD OF BROADCASTING HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST INFLUENCE? Steve Lamacq and Jo Whiley on the Evening Session were my favourites, and Steve has become a friend, giving me loads of advice. Bethan Elfyn took me on-board as her co-host when we started the Session in Wales back in the day, and I’m forever grateful to her for giving me such an amazing opportunity. John Peel was the greatest DJ who ever lived, and an amazing man. I also loved listening to Chris Evans, Mary Anne Hobbs and Owain Gwilym on BBC Radio Cymru.

WHAT WAS THE FIRST RECORD YOU BOUGHT WITH YOUR OWN MONEY AS A KID? WHAT ATTRACTED YOU – AND STILL ATTRACTS YOU – TO INDIE LEFT-FIELD MUSIC? The first 12-inch I bought was Red Alert by Basement Jaxx from HMV. The first record was from Spillers Records, and I think it was an Edwyn Collins single. I love discovering music and hearing something interesting. That’s why I love going to record shops in the different cities I visit. iTunes and Spotify is fine if I want to hear something specific, but finding a CD or record in a shop that makes you excited – new or old – is really cool. What attracts me to independent music is that there’s so much good stuff out there, but it can be hard to get heard. You need to support it so it can carry on and keep making the world interesting.

“I’m in Cardiff whenever work doesn’t mean I have to be elsewhere. It’ll always be home, and I love it to bits.”

CAN YOU TELL US A SONG THAT HAS CHANGED YOUR LIFE? Patio Song by Gorky’s Zygotic Myncci. They went from being local heroes to stars. They were an amazing band, and Euros Childs and Richard James are still incredible composers. That song made me realise you could take your music anywhere; to the charts! They used to be signed to Ankst Records, and I’d hang out there instead of going to maths class in school. They inspired me to be involved in music. They



also sponsored my hospital radio show by giving me loads of CDs to play.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU RETURN TO CARDIFF? HOW DO YOU VIEW THE CHANGES – ARE THEY ALL POSITIVE? I’m in Cardiff whenever work doesn’t mean I have to be elsewhere. It’ll always be home, and I love it to bits. Like every major city, it has changed a lot, but it’s essentially the same every time I visit. I wish we’d kept the older buildings, rather than demolish them and build modern ones everywhere. We still have a lot, and we must keep the arcades. I also hope the Coal Exchange stays and is used for something good.

WHICH PUBS AND CLUBS DID YOU LIKE IN YOUR LATE-TEENS? Metros was fun! Barfly was essential, and The Green Parrot on Westgate St was a favourite. The Hippo Club was the stuff of legend, and we once had a school party in there.

WHAT DOES A GOOD NIGHT (IN CARDIFF OR OTHERWISE) CONSIST OF THESE DAYS?

A curry, a band and a pint. Ideal!

WHICH OTHER PLACES IN WALES DO YOU LIKE TO VISIT AND WHY?

My wife is from Tregaron, and I love going there to see her family. My Mam was born in Aberystwyth, so it’s always lovely to go there and see the sea.

MANY DJS SEEM TO MAKE THE JUMP TO TV, AND YOU’VE PREVIOUSLY DONE STUFF ON S4C. WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE, AND DO THEY INVOLVE TELLY? I’ve done a bit of Bandit on S4C for about ten years, then I worked for Sky at Bestival and did a series called Topman CTRL for Channel 4. I also covered Glastonbury for BBC Two earlier this year, which was a lot of fun. But I have no ambitions to be on TV at all. Everyone knows radio is a billion times better!

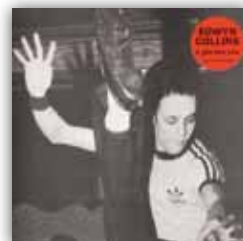
Huw’s influential tracks



Patio Song
Gorky’s Zygotic Myncci



Red Alert
Basement Jaxx



Girl Like You
Edwyn Collins

How do we measure up?

From the first time we speak to you to the last, we pride ourselves on our transparency of service. We believe it's the sincerity of our actions that you'll appreciate the most, which is why we tell you our fees before we visit, and give both honest and realistic valuations. We'll even give you the simple tips on how to make the most out of your home for sale.

We sold
70%
of homes within
11 days*

We sold
88%
of homes at
full asking price*

A realistic, professional market valuation of your home.

(Bells and whistles are lovely, but we promise to get down to brass tacks.) When you call us out for a free valuation, we don't just bring price comparables. We bring over twenty-five years worth of local sales experience to your door.

Flexible low sales fee guaranteed.

Floor plans for all of our properties, regardless of size and value.

A Rightmove study showed 1 in 5 buyers will ignore properties if no floor plan is published.

Fully accompanied prospective buyer viewings.

We ensure every would-be purchaser sees the best of your home at a time convenient for you. If you like the idea of an open-house block of appointments at a scheduled time, we'll arrange that for you.

Every prospective buyer we find will be genuinely ready to buy and financially qualified.

Accurate and honest feedback

It's as as important to you as it is to us, which is why we'll always let you know what prospective buyers thought about your property within 24 hours of any viewing.

You can count on us to support you throughout the sale and beyond.

Whether it's negotiating the best price, speeding up the communication between solicitors, or answering any queries you may have, we'll be there for you – right up until completion.



The little things matter

*correct at time of printing



Marlborough Primary School

School catchment areas have long been on every parent's 'dread list'. No sooner than they emerge from the haze of sleepless nights and changing nappies does their home - once comfortably meeting their needs - fall under the infamous school catchment area spotlight.

Ad-mission Impossible:

New schools set to hit local property prices

'Ad-mission Impossible', as we're calling it, really does make the difference between a good location and a perfect location for many parents or soon-to-be parents.

"It's fantastic to see Pontprennau finally getting a primary school of its own. Properties in the area are highly affordable... I wouldn't be surprised to see new amenities in the area before too long"

In a bid to ease the mounting pressure on school places in certain parts of the city, Cardiff's Local Education Authority (LEA) has given the green light for two new primary schools to open its doors in the near future.

The first, named Pontprennau Primary School at this stage, is currently being worked on by builders and is due its first intake of nursery and reception pupils in September 2015. The £6.6m project will see 420 pupils aged 3-11 being

educated, and will be a welcomed addition to one of Cardiff's newer residential areas. Seen as a long overdue necessity in the area, the extra admission places will ease the pressure on nearby

Bryn Celyn and Glyncoed Primary Schools, and ensure areas such as Llanishen, Lisvane and Thornhill are

more capable of satisfying their local demand.

"It's fantastic to see Pontprennau finally getting a primary school of its own. Properties in the area are highly affordable, and this is another string to the bow of what is already a popular location for new families. History tells us house prices within the school's catchment will rise, and I wouldn't be surprised to see new amenities in the area before too long. It's great news for current residents, but it'll also grab

the attention of those looking for somewhere inexpensive to live, wanting to tick the boxes of modern family life at the same time." Amanda Trinder, Sales Manager, CPS Homes.

The second primary school to open will be in the long-established family area of Penylan, which comes as good news for parents with children due to start part-time or full-time education in the near future, particularly following recent reports that the area's Marlborough Primary School received 109 applications for just 60 places in their two reception classes in September 2013. The situation saw many residents vent their frustration, with plenty left feeling they had paid a premium to live in the area, but weren't now benefitting from their designated school.

"I was horrified when my daughter was refused a place in Marlborough Primary School's reception class, especially as she had already spent a year in their nursery class and was settled there. She's a shy girl and it took her a while to feel comfortable, so to have to move her to a different school the year after caused a huge amount of unnecessary anguish for all concerned. Despite appealing, we had to accept a place in Roath Park Primary School, which is more than twice as far from our house. Thankfully, my daughter is now happy in her new school, but I can't help feeling the situation could have been avoided." Penylan resident.

Due to be built on the Howardian site, which many will know as the old UWIC Business School, Penylan's new school will share the same catchment area as Marlborough Primary School



Building works at Pontprennau Primary School



Drawing of Pontprennau Primary School



The start of the building work at Pontprennau Primary School



Waterloo Road

and operate the same admission system. It will take in nursery, reception and year-one aged children from September 2016. Parents have been told they won't be able to select the new school in the applications process, but they may be offered places later in the process.

"Recently, house prices on streets closest to Marlborough Primary School have been strong - with many selling at record prices - and I predict the new school will have an impact on the properties that fall within the catchment periphery, or perceived periphery. I think it'll lead to an estimated 7% increase in the price of some homes, such as those just off Colchester Avenue, which already benefit from more spacious, semi-detached dwellings." Barrie James, CPS Homes.

For some time now, the LEA has been committed to their pledge of 'local schools for local children'. They scrapped the previous 'feeder'

or 'link' school system in 2006, which linked certain primary schools and secondary schools and provided a pathway for children from the first point of education. Instead, location and catchment areas became the key factors.

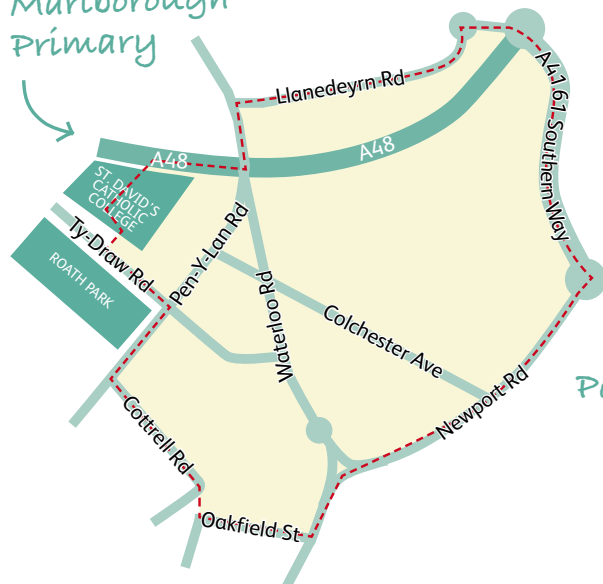
"The issue with catchment areas is that in order keep class sizes down, you have to reduce the size of your area. This leads to rising prices on the streets surrounding Cardiff's most popular schools. Yes, entry demand will vary year-upon-year, but parents won't take the risk of being on the periphery anymore, so school catchment area has become the number one search criteria for families. Some move literally two or three streets just to gain the security of admission for their son or daughter." Barrie James, CPS Homes.

Local NHS records show the demand for primary school places will continue to grow into 2016, so with many schools already operating at maximum capacity and having to turn down applications, how future-proof these new schools will be in meeting local expectations remains to be seen. What is perhaps more certain is that as children progress through primary school, the requirement to meet demand at high school level becomes more important than ever, and so may parents' next house move.

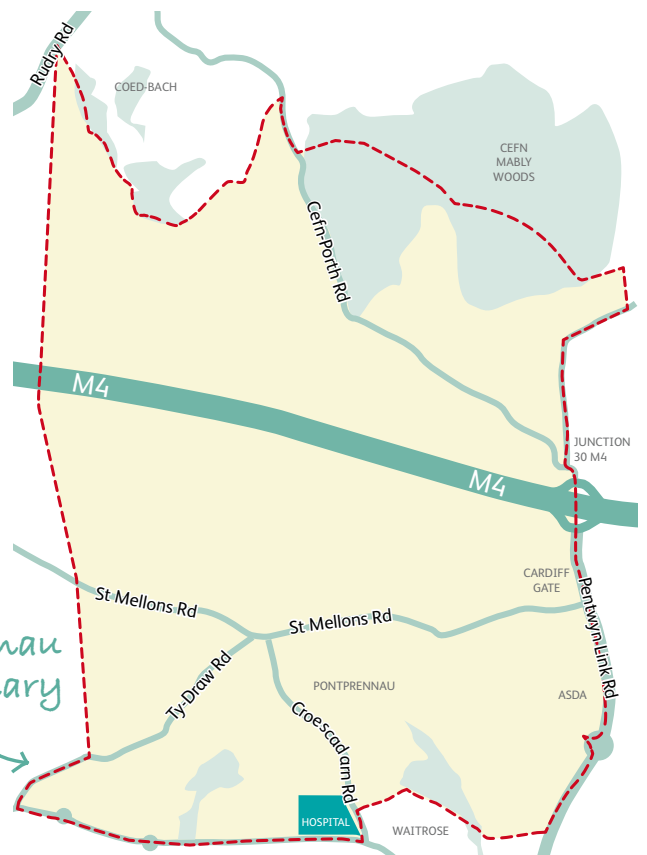
Follow the building progress of Pontprennau Primary School on Twitter @Pont_Primary

Catchment crisis, are you in the right area?

Marlborough Primary



Pontprennau Primary





Could you make it as a property developer?

As a nation, we love property. Whether it's hunting for the dream home, DIY renovation projects or property investments, our TV schedules are littered with ever-popular property shows. Kevin McCloud and Sarah Beeny have brought property development to the masses. So, we asked John Pinn, Director of a local property development company named Quin & Co Ltd, whether it's as easy as it looks.

DID YOU MAKE ANY MISTAKES WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED OUT?

Yes, absolutely. I found I sometimes missed the bigger picture. Property development isn't just about being on site giving orders and directions. As a business, you have to schedule work, maintain momentum at multiple sites, understand health and safety legislation, and keep up-to-speed on changes to building regulations. It's not just a case of being available to decide where to build a wall!

AT WHAT POINT DID YOU CONSIDER DOING THIS AS A CAREER?

I started gradually. I've always had an interest in construction as my father is a builder, and I was lucky to find a job that allowed me to combine property development alongside other related work. During my mid-twenties, my practical experience felt like it was speeding ahead of my educational knowledge, so I decided to address the balance and enroll on a part-time Masters Degree in Real Estate Management. It really boosted my off-site skills, giving me a more rounded base to work from.

ARE THERE ANY PROJECTS YOU WOULD AVOID? I wouldn't say "avoid", but I never leave a stone unturned before committing to a project. The slightest oversight can be very costly. Developing in a popular city

can be competitive, so getting your figures wrong can result in months and months of work for no end profit.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU PASS ON TO ANYBODY JUST STARTING OUT?

Don't rush in. If you're seriously looking at property development as a career, then you need to be prepared to take your time and put enough effort into understanding the whole industry. It's worth taking steps to get either practical or educational experience. Learning skills, such as completing viability studies and understanding the economics of running a project, will prevent risks later. Being unable to obtain finance, developing for the wrong market, or taking on projects simply not worth the investment are risks that can be avoided if you do your due diligence.

YOU'VE RECENTLY BOUGHT AND DEVELOPED YOUR OWN HOME. DID YOU FIND THAT EASIER?

Yes and no. Having prior experience gave me enough confidence when it came to the costs involved and the process as a whole, but making choices on a personal level is harder than I imagined. I felt as if I needed more time to make decisions – probably because the game changes when you have to live with your choices. I lived without a fridge for 3 months, which would be a complete no-no on a professional site!

John's diary

- ☀ **7am** My day starts early. I have to be on site to ensure it opens as scheduled, and pre-empt any contractor no-shows or failed deliveries.
- ☀ **8am-10am** By visiting each site in person, I tend to spot things that are easily missed on paper or e-mail. It's time consuming, but I think I've saved as much time as I've spent operating this way.
- ☀ **10am-12pm** Dealing with items noticed on site or following up on things contractors have reported to me, such as ordering materials and investigating resolutions to problems. I often speak to structural engineers and examine product specifications.
- ☀ **12pm-4pm** Anything from architect meetings to arranging utility connections. I'm often updating health and safety paperwork too. Some days may require further site visits, depending on impending decisions.
- ☀ **4pm** End of day Preparing for the next day, which often requires reallocation of labour – all dependent on the progress made on each site that day.

If you are looking to undertake a buy-to-let development project, speak to our in-house property investment specialists. We can offer advice at all stages of the process. Contact Barrie at our Albany Rd Branch on **02920 454555** or via email **barrie@cpshomes.co.uk**.

Making your money work harder for you

Property is still one of the best ways to invest money, particularly in today's climate where interest rates are low and the stock market is volatile. At CPS Homes, we cater for all types of landlords, from first-timers to those with an extensive portfolio. We sell plenty of investment properties that are already tenanted, so you'll be reaping the rewards straight away!



East Grove, Roath £365,000
Commercial block of apartments

This is an ideal investment opportunity to purchase three professional let flats covering four floors in an attractive period building. On the ground floor, a two-bedroom flat covers the entire floor and allows access to a spacious rear garden, as well as a large, undeveloped basement. The first floor houses a self-contained, one-bedroom flat to the rear of the building, with a three-bedroom flat at the front - covering the whole of the second floor - giving it plenty of light and space.

This is a fully-let investment opportunity and achieves a net rent of £26,100 per annum, with a gross yield of 7.1%.



Rhymney St, Cathays £180,000
3 bedrooms, 2 receptions, 1 bathroom

Ideal investment opportunity located within the 'golden triangle' in Cathays. Conveniently located for the university sites, students union, city centre and local shops. This traditional property briefly comprises of two good sized reception rooms, modern kitchen, downstairs bathroom and three bedrooms to the first floor. The property further benefits from gas central heating system and rear garden.

This potential four-bed let has been rented as a three bedroom property until June 2015 at £825 pcm

Need advice on developing your property? We can help maximise its potential
02920 454555

High yields



Malefant Street, Cathays

GUIDE PRICE £320,000 - £330,000
7 bedrooms, 1 reception, 3 bathrooms

Ideal investment opportunity located in the popular area of Cathays. Conveniently situated for the university sites, University Hospital of Wales and local transport links. This large property briefly comprises of seven spacious bedrooms, two kitchens and three bathrooms.

Fully let for Academic year 2015-16 at £22,000 p.a. 7% yield.



Crafty Cardiff

Cardiff's getting crafty. Learning a craft, using traditional skills, upcycling, and taking a more hands-on approach to things has never been more popular. Christian Amodio finds out where you can get creative and make a few friends into the bargain.

It may be in part recession-inspired (or required) making do, a reaction to modern living in which things are discarded rather than mended, born of a love of vintage, a desire to learn new skills, or to make new friends, but one thing's for sure – handicrafts and people's desire to have a go at them is experiencing a resurgence. Whatever takes your fancy, the chances are there's a course or group offering it nearby (not to mention a dedicated magazine and numerous websites).

"I think renewed interest in sewing began when the recession first hit, with sewing machine sales reported to have increased ten-fold," says Angela McKenna of Venn Tailoring in Canton. "It's likely people thought they would save money by doing their own alterations and repairs, or perhaps turn their skills into extra cash by selling their creations at craft markets, which have also increased in popularity. It's fantastic to see people embracing traditional skills again, and I'm sure that TV programmes like the Great British Sewing Bee have played a part."

A former Slater Menswear tailoring manager whose sewing career started in 1982, Angela founded Venn Tailoring in 1999 to offer high-end garment alterations. Her clients include celebrities, the Ministry of Defence, the USA Ryder Cup team, and she is currently the official tailor to the England and Wales rugby teams.

For the past three years the public have been able to glean knowledge from Angela through a range of sewing courses, including sewing skills, dressmaking, pattern cutting, craft items and soft furnishings. "Sewing just wasn't being taught very much, if at all. Not even at a basic level."

"One of the benefits of being an independent school is that I can respond instantly to demands," says Angela. "I don't mind testing the water. Student request has been an excellent steering tool – next year there will be three more new courses because of it."

Crafting kids

The brilliantly-named Calon Yarns in Canton is probably the city's best known knitting and crocheting hub. In addition to being a wool shop, six resident tutors offer a range of workshops and classes for both adults and kids. Yes, it seems children are just as into crafting as grown-ups.

Across town, Deborah de Lloyd, who worked as a dress/costume-maker and designer for TV and theatre for 15 years, has started running toy-making workshops for children aged seven to

12. Following popularity at the Made In Roath festival, Deborah has also enjoyed holding workshops for children at M.A.D.E on Lochaber Street, Roath.



Deborah, recently set up new venture, ZAP Upcycled with her friend Melanie Hobday, to run "fun and snappy skill-share workshops" for people of all ages and abilities to reuse and recycle existing clothing. The talented pair show attendees how to make use of existing clothing with found and foraged fabrics, haberdashery and various creative techniques.

A social fabric

Although it can be an insular activity, needlework and other crafts offer the opportunity to make friends, and in some cases even influence people.

"It's much easier to learn from someone in person rather than from a book or YouTube," says Sian Lile-Pastore, who works in the education department at St Fagans Museum. "It's also great to be able to share ideas and projects, and if it's your first craft club, making something gives you something to chat about without feeling awkward."

Inspired by a workshop run by Sarah Corbett, founder of the London-based Craftivist Collective, Sian and her friend Sara Huws founded Cardiff Craftivists, to increase social engagement, make statements on issues important to them, and to protest against social injustice.

The pair have recently started a new Craftivist project making mini suffragette banners on which they cross stitch or embroider the names (or portraits) of women who have inspired them. "We want to make hundreds of them and bring attention and recognition to amazing women all over the world," she says.

Another local guerrilla crochet outfit – and a far more secretive one – whose work you may have

spotted in the summer at Mermaid Quay (they dressed John Clinch's Tiger Bay couple and dog statues in bright crocheted shorts, bikini and accessories), is Welsh Woolly Wo(men).

The yarnbombing group, is led by a 60-year-old woman. Speaking anonymously to WalesOnline, she said that the activity had changed her life. "It's been a lifeline to us ... I'm going to become an art student in September. I don't know if I would have had the confidence without the group."

Sew on-trend

"I think Cardiff has become more crafty," says Emma Rees, who started upcycling and craft while in her final year at the university of Northampton studying textiles for fashion. "There are certainly a lot more places to go to explore and have a go at craft, as well as markets where you can buy one-off gems. It's great that so many people are having ago, and trying new things."



Emma's company, REtrose, offers an ethical fashion and textile range "that's contemporary but with a kitsch retro feel". All of its products are made to order and totally unique.

"Cardiff Open art school offers some great courses if you want to learn new skills," she tells Cwtch. "If you're looking for more of a social gathering, there are always things on at Chapter and The Gate. There are even coffee and tea shops venturing into craft – I live just across the road from ARTea in Victoria Park. It has some great events on, and the PrintHaus in Canton runs some really good classes for beginners as well as the more advanced."

Cardiff Open art school, based at the Cardiff School of Art and Design in Llandaff, offers courses on everything from ceramics and printmaking to 3D printing and computer-based design. With so much on offer, here and across the city, what's your excuse for not trying out a new activity? Who knows – one day we may see your creations in Roath's Oriel Makers Gallery or even Craft In The Bay.



Tip!

Anyone interested in sewing should bookmark the sewingdirectory.co.uk. It is by far the best resource for all things sewing related.

Angela McKenna,
Venn Sewing



Crafty links...

Beti Biggs: betibiggs.com
Calon Yarns: calonyarns.co.uk
Cardiff Craftivists: facebook.com/cardiffcraftivists
Cardiff MADE: facebook.com/pages/Cardiff-MADE
Cardiff Open art school: cardiff-school-of-art-and-design.org/coas/
Chapter: chapter.org
Craft In The Bay: makersguildinwales.org.uk
Cwtch Club: cwtchclub.co.uk
The Gate: thegate.org.uk
Made By Hand: madebyhand-wales.co.uk
Oriel Makers Gallery: orielmakers.co.uk
PrintHaus: printheaus.org
REtrose: retrose.bigcartel.com
Venn Tailoring School of Sewing: venntailoring.com
Zap Upcycled: zapupcycled.com

Emma's diary

Our very own Emma James samples what our city has to offer the novice artisan.

With two young children, free time is often just a pipedream, and a hobby a somewhat distant memory. So when I was asked to learn a new skill, the opportunity ticked both boxes for me, and I gleefully signed up for a day of 'me time'.

ANNIE SLOANE CHALK PAINTING WORKSHOP FOR BEGINNERS

Location: Beti Biggs, Albany Rd, Roath

Contact: betibiggs.com 029 20372111

Cost: £65 for 4 hour course including all materials and light refreshments.

Next course: January 2015

Beti Biggs is a treasure trove of homemakers delights, so being asked to go 'backstage' felt like a little delight in itself. The large communal table was set up with pieces of wood and, appealing to the child in me, pots and pots of chalk paint - lids off, brushes ready to go! Jan, owner of Beti Biggs, made everyone feel very much at home with cups of tea and an informal, yet informative, talk on the 'magic' paint made colourful by her own experiences. What I loved was being able to get stuck in from the off. Jan demonstrated and then we were left to try the different techniques, no colours barred, no skill required. The finale was to decorate our own 'take home treasure'. Worth a visit for the hospitality and homemade cake alone.

BEGINNERS WORKSHOP FOR SEWING

Location: The Stitchery, Inverness Place, Roath

Contact: thestitchery.org 02920 463924

Cost: £40 for the day including tea and coffee

Next course: 11th January 2015

Helen, formerly of The Milkwood Gallery, has created a bespoke studio in her own home to accommodate the classes. You can choose to take your own sewing machine or use one of those in the studio. Aimed at beginners, this lesson, one of many available at differing skill levels, went back to basics. It's perfect for those who haven't found, let alone threaded, their 'bobbin' yet! As a complete novice, I was taught how to thread the machine, how to correct problems, plus a number of different stitches and seams. Helen was fun and enthusiastic, keeping us entertained and the machines sewing throughout the lesson. Each of us ended the day having made our own cushion cover with button hole (even if it did take me several attempts).





A bridge to calm in Cardiff

A suburban sprawl of winding cul-de-sacs it may be, but to thousands of Cardiffians Pontprennau represents wonderfully located pockets of calm, tucked away from the bustle of city life. Christian Amodeo was sent to find out more...

Edgy may not be a word you'd associate with Pontprennau, but right now this Cardiff suburb is about as edgy as you can get. After all, it makes up a sizeable chunk of the city's northeast fringe. Dad jokes aside, Pontprennau is all too easily dismissed as a characterless swathe of mock-this and mock-that architecture, but many of those who live here love it. So, is there more to Pontprennau than meets the eye, and is it possible to show the place in a new light?

"Whenever I think about Pontprennau, it always makes me smile," says Georgina Phillips, Labour councillor for Pontprennau electoral division, which includes Old St Mellons. "It slopes to the south and sees the sun for most of the day, so it always feels warm and welcoming."

"I go over to the Community Church Centre coffee shop as often as I can, as it's the community focus where residents (mostly mums with young children) get together for a natter."

Welcoming, with a community focus? Now, don't lie – your eyebrows went up a bit at that, didn't it? Perhaps that was too much too soon. Let's start with some more obvious attributes...

INCREDIBLY HANDY

Pontprennau's very existence is symbolic of Cardiff's popularity and the result of a growth spurt late in the 20th century. It's well connected – Junction 30 of the M4 was created with the suburb in mind, and the nearby A48 allows great access in and out of town.

"That's the best thing about the place," confirms Valentino Cellupica. "If you're a motorist, it's just a quick drive down the road to Newport, or the other way up to the M4. That said, its position can be a bad thing too, as a taxi ride home from town is pricey, and it's the last stop on the bus."

Valentino settled in Acorn Grove when first moving to Cardiff six years ago. "Though my wife was from Cardiff, my family are in Newport, so Pontprennau was a perfect location for us," says the Graphic Designer. "It's a perfect place to live with a new family like we had. As housing areas go, it's quite picturesque."

Valentino describes Acorn Grove as "a nice little road", but admits it wouldn't be everyone's cup of tea. "It had a retail park at one end, which

some people don't love, but it wasn't an issue for us. At the other end was a quiet country path offering prime running space, which I would take to every day."

This blend of out-of-town shopping and greenery is clearly popular – Pontprennau's population of 9,720 (along with Old St Mellons) has risen by a quarter, on average, across its neighbourhoods since 2001. Though that's not to say it feels crowded; population density here is 11.4 people per hectare compared to the Cardiff average of 24.7.

Meaning 'Bridge of Trees', as in wooden footbridges across the Nant Pontprennau, the district enjoys many pockets of parkland and play areas, and footpaths allow residents to move about away from traffic. There's also a significant, tree-filled 'nature corridor' that follows the eponymously-named stream's course through the middle of Pontprennau, and ultimately joins the Rhymney River on the other side of the A48.

"It's surprisingly green actually, with loads of nice walks, leading down onto the Rhymney Trail," says Pontprennau newcomer Sarah Lethbridge, Director of Executive Education at Cardiff Business School. "Admittedly, the trail may not be as nice as the Taff Trail, but hopefully it'll improve with age."

Sarah finds her commute into town just as quick now as from her previous home in Llandaff North. "There are loads of positives about



Pontprennau. I was also delighted to discover how close I am to a McDonald's, KFC and even a Starbucks – thanks to Cardiff Gate services."

It's probably fair to say that Pontprennau's commercial offerings are better known than its recreational spaces. Nearby is 100-acre Cardiff Gate International Business Park (the 'International' is a more recent inclusion on the sign, presumably to give it a touch of élan, and why not? We know of English people who work there), hotel and motorway services. While across the country lane in Pontprennau proper is a similarly homogenous retail park.

With its large Asda, McDonald's, B&Q and furniture retailers, Cardiff Gate Retail Park may

from houses for keeping an eye on little ones playing in the quiet streets.

Not that only families live here. Twenty-something Matt Owen lives with his girlfriend in Rowsby Court. "We live in a quiet little estate of townhouses and flats, and there's no trouble or anti-social behavior. Everyone is genuine and pleasant here, and we're right around the corner from pubs and supermarkets," he says.

And its popularity is set for a major boost, according to Amanda Trinder, CPS Homes' Sales Manager. "Pontprennau

is a desirable location for buyers of any age due to the variation of properties, from one-bed flats to five-bed detached homes," she says. "It represents great value in comparison to many of the city's more established village-type suburbs, and the likelihood is that the location will become even more desirable when the primary school they're building is complete."

Finally set to open in September 2015 on Heol Pontprennau is a much-needed new English-medium primary school for 420 children, plans for which saw objections from Pentwyn's Glyncoed Primary School only.

"The primary school feels like the final piece of the jigsaw puzzle," says Cllr Georgina Phillips.

"They have all waited so long for it, and there is a real expectant buzz in the area."

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Yet, even without a school, to dismiss Pontprennau as lacking a sense of community would be unfair. "It's true that there is very little there besides all the residential development, but there are some very strong ties amongst the residents who live there," asserts Georgina.

In one part of Pontprennau there's a cul-de-sac barbecue every summer to which everyone is invited. "They put chairs along the road and sit around chatting well into the night. It's always a great success," she says. The same group also goes out singing carols at Christmas, and elderly and infirm residents sit near their windows so they can listen and feel a part of things.

Once where there were only cows and sheep in fields, a community called Pontprennau thrives. And with Redrow already building homes in nearby Lisvane, the economy re-finding its strength, and the Council's plans for 6,500 new homes in Pontprennau's vicinity by 2026, it won't be the Johnny-come-lately among Cardiff suburbs for long.

"Whenever I think about Pontprennau, it always makes me smile... It slopes to the south and sees the sun for most of the day, so it always feels warm and welcoming.."

be a bit 'Any Town, UK', but it's incredibly handy. What more does the modern family need, I hear you ask.

Well, at the other end of Pontprennau (and the retail rainbow) is a Waitrose, not to mention a Jaguar garage and a private hospital – the latter two being older than Pontprennau, so state their addresses as Pentwyn (which is only across the road). There are also two doctors surgeries and the aforementioned community centre. See, there's a lot to it.

THE QUIET LIFE

It may seem like a maze, but Pontprennau has been carefully planned too – most homes lie on cul-de-sacs to limit traffic, with good visibility

Your local sales listings...



Barons Court Rd, Penylan £450,000

A second opportunity to buy this recently refurbished and extended four-bedroomed family home. With a full width, open-plan living space, featuring bi-fold doors, leading onto a good-sized garden. Previously sold within a day, this property won't be around for long!



4 bedrooms 2 bathrooms 2 bathrooms



SOLD!

Kimberley Rd, Penylan £439,950

An impressive, family home occupying a corner plot on one of Penylan's most desirable roads. Full of character and boasting three double bedrooms and a host of original features.

4 bedrooms 4 bathrooms 1 bathroom



SOLD!

Waterloo Road, Penylan £399,950

Beautiful family home situated on a corner plot. Set over three floors and boasting from a host of period features throughout including picture rails, coving and panelling.

2 bedrooms 1 bathroom 1 bathroom



£340,000

Tydfil Place, Roath

A traditional double bay, spacious family home, retaining its character with a host of original features throughout, including ornate coving, fireplaces, sash windows and flooring. Within Cardiff High School Catchment and conveniently located for the University Hospital of Wales. No chain.

3 bedrooms 3 bathrooms 2 bathrooms



Amesbury Ave, Penylan £430,000

The property offers a wide, inviting entrance hall, two light and airy reception rooms both with bay windows, open plan kitchen dining room with patio doors opening onto beautiful rear garden. Five bedrooms are spread across the first and second floor, sharing two bathrooms, one with a roll top bath. The property retains its character with a host of original features throughout, wood burner and stripped floorboards. Large double garage.



5 bedrooms 2 bathrooms 2 bathrooms



£220,000

Plasgwynt, Pontcanna

Fantastic apartment in the heart of Pontcanna. Renovated to a high standard throughout, featuring a large attractive open plan lounge and kitchen, plus two double bedrooms. Currently rented to tenants until October 2015, this property fits the bill as either a buy-to-let investment or city centre home. Please note, there is no parking available with this apartment.

2 bedrooms 1 bathroom 2 bathrooms

66 Albany Rd, Roath
CF24 3RR, 02920 454555
cpshomes.co.uk

Your local rentals listings...



Breakwater House, Prospect Place, Cardiff Bay

£1,100pcm

AVAILABLE: IMMEDIATELY

Featuring fantastic water views from the private balcony, this two double-bedroom apartment is being offered fully furnished, including water rates. The development boasts a swimming pool and two gymnasiums.



£600pcm

Embassy House, Cardiff Bay

AVAILABLE: IMMEDIATELY

Stunning one bedroom property in this recent development in Cardiff Bay. Embassy House is located in the heart of the Bay near Mermaid Quay. Featuring a high-spec open-plan kitchen and lounge, double bedroom and superbly finished bathroom. The property is offered fully furnished.



£1,200pcm

Sapphire St, Adamsdown

AVAILABLE: IMMEDIATELY

Fully refurbished, spacious double-bedroom property close to the City Centre. Ideal for young professionals.



RENTED!

Arabella St, Roath

£1120pm

AVAILABLE: IMMEDIATELY

Located in a popular area for students, young professionals and families, this inviting property is close to both Albany Rd shopping area and the local parks. Light and bright throughout with a large kitchen diner.



RENTED!

Mackintosh Place, Roath

£2275pcm

AVAILABLE: IMMEDIATELY

Recently renovated 7 bedroom property, features a stunning modern dark blue kitchen with white brick tiles and living area with large corner sofa. The colour scheme is continued through the house with feature blue tiled walls in each of the bathrooms.



Acorn Grove, Pontprennau

£1,000pcm

AVAILABLE: IMMEDIATELY

A beautifully presented three bedroom semi-detached house on the edge of Pontprennau, overlooking parkland and trees. The property benefits from an extension encompassing a large modern kitchen and has been recently decorated to include new carpets throughout the first floor. Featuring, UPVC double glazing throughout, a garage and additional off road parking space on the driveway. Property comes unfurnished with the exception of white goods.



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Cardiff Clicks! New local amateur photography competition 'focuses' on bringing families together.

Cardiff Clicks

Cardiff Clicks, the brain child of Photography Junior and I Loves The 'Diff, celebrated its first exhibition of finalists at The Cardiff Story in Cardiff's city centre. Supported and sponsored by CPS Homes, the night saw experienced and first-time photographers sit side-by-side in celebration of both local talent and the city as a whole. Attracting all ages, the simplicity of the competition meant anyone could enter, simply by capturing 'What Cardiff means to them' on camera.

"We were thrilled with the response", exclaimed Natasha Jenkins of Photography Junior. "We simply wanted to encourage people – young and old – to pick up their cameras and enjoy going out as a family".

Christian Amodeo, creator of I Loves The 'Diff, said: "I really liked the idea of celebrating our city through photography, so I was keen to get involved with the event".

The awards event was hosted by Cardiff-born Dr Rhys Jones, host of BBC One's 'Rhys Jones's Wildlife Patrol', and was attended by over one-hundred people, all vying for the top awards in each of the three age categories. As judge for the Adults category, Dr Rhys Jones was bowled over by the standard of the submissions.

"I was taken aback not only at the number of entries, but also their quality", Rhys said. "Eventually, and after much deliberation, I chose three pictures that moved away from the traditional rugby balls, castles and stadiums. They were three pictures that spoke to me, representing all that is good about Cardiff." Talking of the winning photograph, Rhys enthuses: "This brilliant photograph by Paddy Faulkner screams everything that makes me proud to be a Cardiffian. Cardiff is arguably the most successful multicultural city in the United Kingdom, and has been for over a hundred years."

The three chosen winners from each category (the Under 12s, Teens and Adults) got to see their photographs professionally exhibited, and they won prizes that included a camera and camera vouchers worth £150. Also, thanks to Cardiff Life Editor, Velimir Ilic, they will get to see their photographs featured in the magazine.

"Speaking to the children, parents, enthusiasts and supporters who attended, it was apparent that people really relished the opportunity to be part of this local event", said Emma James of CPS Homes. "The quality of photographs across the age ranges astonished me. As an established, local business, one of our greatest pleasures is to use the skills and knowledge



Dr. Rhys Jones, Natasha Jenkins, Emma James, Christian Amodeo





we've accumulated over the years and give back to the same local community that helped us grow. Being able to get involved and help shape Cardiff Clicks into the successful event we saw unfold was really quite a special opportunity for us all."

Natasha's aim was to inspire the next generation of photographers through creativity and experimentation. With the help of both Christian at I Loves the 'Diff and Emma at CPS Homes, Cardiff Clicks seems to be well on its way to achieving Natasha's dream.

Natasha Jenkins is a professional photographer who also founded and runs Photography Junior, an award-winning children's-only camera club, which is the first of its kind in Wales.

Host and judge, Dr Rhys Jones BSc (Hons) MPhil PhD FLS FSB MCIEEM, is a broadcaster as well as being an ecological scientist and lecturer at Cardiff University.

Special thanks to: Wally's Delicatessen & Touch Graphics of Cathays. Event photographs by Scottandrachelp photography.com

the winners

click
click!



UNDER 12's

- 1st** Sophie Frost – Self Portrait
- 2nd** Lily Gunnarsson – Roath Park Blossom
- 3rd** Agnes Little – Roath Park Swan

"I am pleased to own a real one, not a toy or mummy and daddy's, but my first proper camera."

Sophie Frost, Under 12 category winner



Sophie Frost

TEENS

- 1st** Genevieve Leake – Rowers on the Taff
- 2nd** Sara Szwarc – Cardiff Sunset
- 3rd** Daria Gutowska – Hands



Genevieve Leake

ADULTS

- 1st** Paddy Faulkner – Carnival
- 2nd** Gareth Thompson – Sculpture
- 3rd** Thomas Roberts – Fishermen

"I was three feet away from Daniel when I took the picture, and he wasn't in any mood to stop or lose momentum. I thought I may get run over!"

Paddy Faulkner, Adult Winner



Paddy Faulkner, panopticphotography.co.uk

SPONSOR AWARDS



Under 12s – chosen by I Loves the 'Diff
Sophie Frost – Skoda



Teens – chosen by CPS Homes
Matt Peters – Pontcanna Fields



Adults – chosen by Photography Junior
Mike Griffiths – Cardiff Bay Fireworks



Highly Commended Awards – chosen by Cardiff Life

Under 12s: Cameron Carbis – Seagulls Roath Park
Teens: Matt Peters – Pontcanna Fields
Adults: Jools Abel – Tiger Bay Cranes



Matt Peters won the Teens sponsor award chosen by us for his beautiful photo Pontcanna Fields.





If you love to bake, keep up-to-date with news on the next Roath Bake Off, coming spring 2015!
[facebook.com/CPSHomesCwtch](https://www.facebook.com/CPSHomesCwtch)

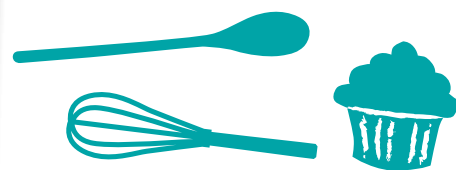


The Junior Bake-Off

Back again by special request for the Wellfield Winter Festival in Roath, the Bake-Off team donned their aprons for another round of labelling, tasting, judging and fundraising.

Wayne, Lorraine and team kindly asked our very own Amanda Trinder and Sophie Packer to be guest judges for the afternoon of cake chaos. Once again the entries were of an amazing standard, with the local under-12s astonishing those who came to join us for a slice or two with their fantastic creations.

"It's lovely to have a community event such as the Junior Bake-Off inspiring children to be creative and encouraging families to spend time together. I love baking, and I'm sure that stems from the hours spent with my Nana baking everything from jam tarts to marzipan sweets." Emma James, CPS Homes.



Made in Roath 2014

October saw another successful year for the Made in Roath Festival and the hard working team of Helen, Becca and Gail.

"We were thrilled to be asked to be part of the event. The lovely and talented Shirley Pearson transformed our window display at our Albany Rd branch in Roath." Sian Hiatt, Albany Rd Branch Manager, CPS Homes.

With displays and interactive exhibits across Roath and nearby Cathays, Splott and Penylan, the whole area was given a touch of the colourful and unusual. As fans of the festival have come to expect, the diversity of the exhibits – appealing to both adults and children alike – were still at the heart of the event. "We endeavor to accommodate the broadest possible range of submissions, whilst maintaining standards of excellence that reflect the flourishing contemporary art scene in Wales", said the Made in Roath team.



Creative writing, children's toy making, animation, performance art, music, poetry reading, pottery, prints and paintings were some of the many interesting pop-up experiences on offer. With new areas each year, plus the rather unusual ice cream van space, the festival attracts more interest each year and is seen as a real heart of the community event.

Well done to the Made in Roath team for another great event and here's looking forward to next year!



Our office window full of prints from Shirley Pearson

Bags of style!

"We wanted to give the organisers something more than simply a donation – so together we came up with the idea to make canvas bags to sell at the event. We had endless requests for them when they were displayed in our window, and it wasn't a surprise to hear that they sold out! I have to admit, we were all quite smitten with them in the office and I did keep one as a memento!" said Emma James, CPS Homes.



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*Internal customer survey 2014

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