

Letters *10 am Sunday*

Concern over plans for the Borough Theatre

As theatres across Wales are coming out of hibernation it seems Abergavenny Borough Theatre will be having a 'lie in' and won't be opening its doors until 2022 due to a refurbishment.

This would usually be something to be celebrated, however, I am deeply concerned as there seems to have been no public consultation into this.

As a regular patron of the Borough, I was very surprised to hear (on Facebook) that the much talked about refurbishment was finally underway and after a few searches, I found the proposed plans and my heart sank.

According to the plans, the auditorium now has two large aisles, something called 'sound and light lobby' (seemingly posh corridors) and retractable seating.

It all sounded very exciting until I noticed that according to the plans there are around 100 fewer seats.

The impact of this would surely be dire for the future of the Theatre let alone the wonderful local performers that use it.

I take my family to Abergavenny Pantomime Society each year, a company who regularly donate their profits to charity.

They would lose around eight hundred audience members a year. I am sure that the other groups would lose huge numbers too.

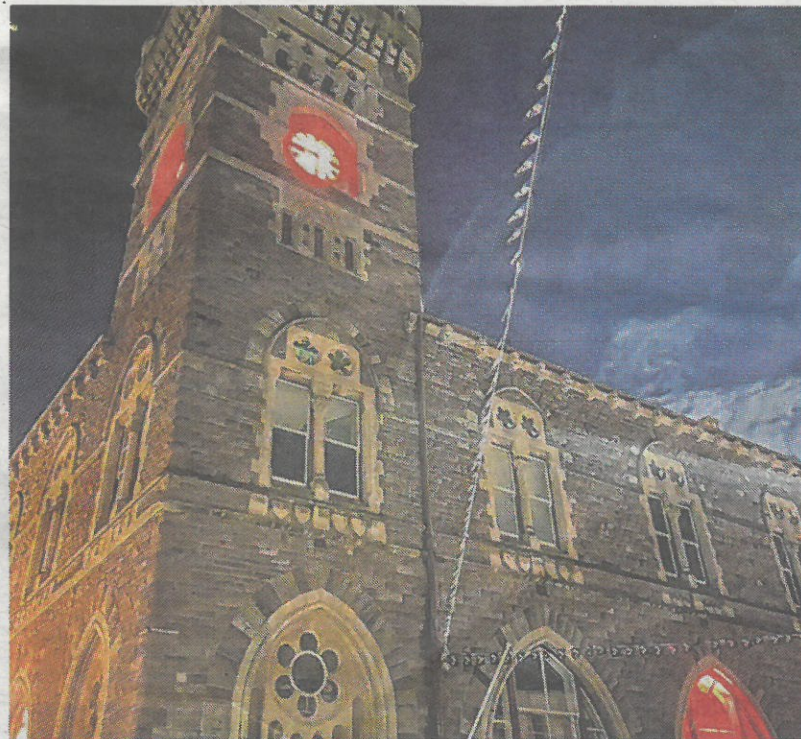
Another worrying aspect of the plans are the four proposed unisex toilets!

A very forward-thinking idea that could have its merits in the right venue. But in a theatre with over two hundred people, four unisex toilets surely spell a disaster waiting to happen?

The pessimist in me wonders if the Theatre and MCC have consulted with anyone over this or whether they are hoping that they can push these plans through under the guise of Covid without proper consultation.

For anyone like me, concerned about the proposed plans, they are available on Monmouthshire County Councils website under the 'Planning' Tab.

Name and Address supplied.



I will be in Normandy in spirit

I have read with greatest interest the article on Normandy Veterans in the 5th May edition of the Beacon, regarding this year's ceremony, to be watched by Normandy Veterans and families, unable to travel to Normandy because of the virus.

I understand the British Normandy Memorial records names of those under British command who fell on D.Day and during the summer of 1944.

I am a resident of the Penpergwym Care Home, my age 99 years, and I will reach my centenary on November 15th 2021.

At the time of the invasion 1944, I was a young nurse, studying for State Registry in a London hospital and on June 7th I was instructed, together with my group to pack all personal belongings and to proceed by coach to the British Legion Hospital near Maidstone, converted to a Military hospital.

British and Canadian military casualties from D.Day were being nursed in a series of prefabricated wards and

nursing staff were accommodated in steel-roofed huts, whilst Doctors and Matrons were in the 'Big House', a stately home on site.

As young nurses, we quickly learned that nursing in a military hospital was quite different sometimes with Spitfire and Hurricane pilots. Very young were bought in, badly burned and bullet wounded fatally.

They were sent to East Grinstead, the Burns unit, merely having left school.

On one occasion, I was guarding a young dead pilot and was instructed to take his Squadron Leader who had come to take the personal possessions to his parents.

I had to accompany the Officer to Matron. As we walked, I said to the Squadron Leader 'you have a very difficult job' and he replied 'you have a very difficult job as well'. Nothing more was said.

This was burned onto my heart and still is to this day.

I shall be at the ceremony in spirit, remembering such a traumatic time in my life, as clear as yesterday.

At present, in Britain, retired nurses who served the wounded at D.Day will

be so few in numbers, there is only a handful left.

Mrs Dorina Heuclin

Help on hand for parents of newborn babies

Some new parents have been left speculating the effect the closure of baby groups and soft play centres, and the reduced interaction with family and friends, since the start of the pandemic will have had on their baby.

To help reassure them and increase their confidence in supporting their baby's development, at the NSPCC we've launched a baby brain-building campaign in partnership with Cardiff Council, The Vale of Glamorgan Council, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, and Cymraeg for Kids project.

It's called Look Say Sing Play and it highlights to parents how their interactions with their baby in every day moments can help with their development.

Parents are encouraged to take a look at what their baby is focusing on and how they react, say what they are doing and copy the sounds their baby makes, sing along to their favourite tune or play simple games to see what their baby enjoys.

A child's brain makes one million neural connections every single second, so positive and supportive experiences with parents and carers from birth help children learn how to control their emotions, cope with stress and learn new skills that serve as a foundation for later life.

It's why the theme for this year's Infant Mental Health Awareness Week, organised by the Parent-Infant Foundation, is such an important one - making sure infants are included in children and young people's mental health policies, strategies and services.

Parents can sign-up for weekly Look Say Sing Play tips via the NSPCC website. Each one is fun and age-appropriate that can easily fit in to their daily routine using every-day household items.

**Emma Motherwell
Local Campaigns Manager
NSPCC Cymru/
Wales**



**YOUR MP
WRITES:
DAVID TC
DAVIES**

Nothing to fear from UK/Australia talks

ARE the Australians about to flood Britain with vast quantities of cheap beef and shut down British cattle farms en masse as a result of a free trade deal?

You would have thought so judging by some of the more hysterical reports in the newspapers last week.

Commentators suggested British beef farms are about to be closed down in large numbers to make way for cheap Australian meat imports.

The stories do not stand up to serious scrutiny.

Britain is about 75 per cent self-sufficient in beef and imported 242,828 tonnes in 2020 on top of what we produce.

Seventy-eight per cent of imported beef comes from the Republic of Ireland.

The Australians are already free to export to Britain and sent around 560 tonnes of beef and veal here last year worth £4.1m.

It is a truly tiny amount compared to what we produce ourselves and what we bring in from Ireland and elsewhere.

There is good reason for this. Australian beef is not cheap at all, contrary to the scaremongering stories.

Anyone with serious interest in the subject could spend 10 minutes on the internet googling the prices of identical beef cuts in British and Australian supermarkets and see it is more expensive.

It is therefore not true that the UK faces huge imports of cheap beef from Australia and, if it were true, Irish beef farmers would be the first to feel the problem.

It has not escaped notice though that some of those loudly expressing concerns were completely opposed to Brexit.

Send letters to the editor Gina Robertson by email or drop them off at the Chronicle office in Nevill Street to arrive by noon on Monday. The editor reserves the right to amend or alter letters for accuracy. Email letters to gina.robertson@tindlenews.co.uk and mark them Chronicle letters. Thank you