

Bridgend Town Council Blue Plaque Unveiling



A Blue Plaque Scheme was introduced by Bridgend Town Council in 2019 to recognise significant contributions made to the area and commemorate notable people, places and events within the Bridgend Town Council wards of Morfa, Oldcastle and Newcastle.

Bridgend Town Council Regeneration Committee consult with representatives from Bridgend Civic Trust and Bridgend Historical Society to consider recipients for plaques.

Recipient of the plaque:

John Thomas was born in a house situated at Elder Street, Bridgend, on St. David's Day, 1826.

He was given the title of 'Pencerdd Gwalia' at the Aberdare Eisteddfod of 1861. At this time, he was an avid promoter of Welsh Music and supported over forty annual Welsh Music concerts in the Bridgend area.

He went on to become the harpist of Queen Victoria and her successor King Edward VII.



Wording and image of the plaque:

Bridgend Town Council
John Thomas
1826 – 1913
Pencerdd Gwalia
Harpist to Queen Victoria
{image of harp highlighted in gold}
2022



Proposed location of plaque:

The proposed location is on the wall above an existing heritage panel in Elder Street, Bridgend, CF31 1AF.



Permission to erect the plaque:

- Permission has been granted in principle by a BCBC Conservation and Planning Officer to site the plaque on the listed building in Elder Street.
- Further clarification is needed to establish if a Planning application is required.
- The property owner, HD Ltd has granted permission to install the plaque on the wall.
- Discussions will be required with the owner of the Poco Poco restaurant and Huna Café Bar regarding the timing of the unveiling event and any disruption to the business.

Considerations:

- The town centre is normally closed to traffic between the hours of 10am – 6pm. This is controlled via a bollard system managed by Bridgend County Borough Council.
- The Poco Poco restaurant immediately next to this wall operates at the following times:
 - Monday to Wednesday: Lunch 12-2pm & dinner 6-9pm
 - Thursday: Lunch 12-2.30pm & dinner 6-9pm
 - Friday and Saturday: 12-2.30pm & dinner 6-10pm
 - Sunday: Closed
- The Huna Café bar has its entrance alongside this wall and operates at the following times:
 - Wednesday & Thursday: 5.30pm – Close
 - Friday & Saturday: 2pm – Close
- There is an opportunity to arrange a small exhibition and recital by Ms Sioned Williams, former Principal Harpist, BBC Symphony Orchestra, either at the Council building, Carnegie House, Wyndham Street or at the event location.
- Refreshments can be provided potentially at the Poco Poco restaurant or in a marquee in Elder Street or at Carnegie House.
- There is not an independent, locked toilet facility in this area. This would need to be hired if required.
- Large town centre events in Bridgend typically require an event plan, risk assessment and evacuation plan to be submitted to the Event Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) which include South Wales Police and representatives of Bridgend County Borough Council.
- Crowd control barriers and stewards are usually hired from a private contractor for large town centre events.

Key Contacts:

Job Title	Full Name	Email address
Town Clerk	Mrs Leanne Edwards	leanne.edwards1@bridgend.gov.uk
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Democratic Services Officer	Ms Julie Brown	julie.brown@bridgend.gov.uk

Blue Plaques previously installed by Bridgend Town Council:

Caroline Wyndham



In 1857, Caroline Wyndham, Dowager Countess of Dunraven paid for a pipe-line to be laid to provide free clean water in Bridgend Town Centre and later paid for the 'Randall Memorial' drinking fountain to be erected.

Sir Morien Bedford Morgan



Sir Morien Bedford Morgan, originally from Caroline Street Bridgend, often referred to as Morgan the Supersonic, or the Welsh Father of Concorde.

St John's House



St John's House, a protected Grade II Listed building within the Newcastle Conservation area and is the oldest residential building in Bridgend Town (circ. 15th century).

Tudor Plaque



Commemorating 500 years of the granting of a Royal Market Charter to Bridgend by King Henry V111 in 1516.

Monsignor Dilwyn John Lewis



Monsignor Dilwyn Lewis was born in Bridgend. He was a renowned international fashion designer. In 1974 was ordained as a Catholic Priest and was later posted as a canon of the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome.