



THE STOCKBURY & SOUTH GREEN OBSERVER

'In the Garden of England'



A Christmas Message

It's been a gloomy day today, which is not unexpected as it's November, the month when the days get shorter and nature quiets down. It's only a week since we had the celebrations for Remembrance Sunday and it is the time of the year when we have all our services to remember those who have gone before us.

It is good that we have all the light of the Christmas season before us. I am very aware however that particularly this year it may be a difficult time for some.

During all the hype of Christmas and the forced gaiety the real meaning of Christmas can get lost.

A baby was born in a stable and quickly became a refugee – and he was sent here for us – He came to show God's love for us and particularly at Christmas we should show love for each other, a thing which in my experience the village of Stockbury is very good at.

We will gather to celebrate both at The Carols On The Green and at the Carol Service. This year during the Carol Service there will be an opportunity to light a candle and say a prayer for those who need our prayers and show our love for them. If you are unable to attend the Carol Service and there is someone you would like to be included and remembered in our prayers at the service on the 23rd December, please let me know.

I hope Christmas will be a very blessed time for you all

Rev'd Liz Cox

**ROAD
AHEAD
CLOSED**



Temporary Road Closure

Yelsted Road, Yelsted – from 11 December 2018 for up to 1 day

The road will be closed between Yelsted Lane and South Street Road.

The alternative route is via Hill Green Road, South Street Road and vice versa.

The closure is to enable works on an overhead structure to be carried out by BT Openreach.

December '18 Diary

All events at the Memorial Hall unless otherwise stated

Sat	1st	Private Booking	1.30 - 4.00pm
Sun	2nd	Dog Club - Field	10.00 - 11.00am
Mon	3rd	Bowls	7.00 - 10.00pm
Tues	4th	Bowls	2.00 - 4.00pm
		NSYC	7.30 - 9.30pm
Wed	5th	Pilates	9.30 - 10.30am
Thurs	6th	Gardeners	8.00 - 10.00pm
Fri	7th	Dancing Club	8.00 - 10.30pm
Sat	8th	Christmas Fayre	11.00 - 2.00pm
Sun	9th	Dog Club - Field	10.00 - 11.00am
Mon	10th	Private Booking	7.00 - 9.00pm
Tues	11th	Bowls	2.00 - 4.00pm
Wed	12th	Pilates	9.30 - 10.30am
Thurs	13th	Bowls	7.30 - 9.30pm
Fri	14th	Carols On The Green	7.00 - 7.30pm
Sat	15th		
Sun	16th	Dog Club - Field	10.00 - 11.00am
Mon	17th	Private Booking	7.00 - 9.00pm
Tues	18th	Bowls	2.00 - 4.00pm
		NSYC	7.30 - 9.30pm
Wed	19th	Pilates	9.30 - 10.30am
		Sew & Chatter	2.00 - 4.00pm
		Parish Council	7.30 - 9.30pm
Thurs	20th	Bowls	7.30 - 9.30pm
Fri	21st	Dancing Club	8.00 - 10.30pm
Sat	22nd		
Sun	23rd	Dog Club - Field	10.00 - 11.00am
Mon	24th		
Tues	25th		
Wed	26th		
Thurs	27th		
Fri	28th		
Sat	29th		
Sun	30th	Dog Club - Field	10.00 - 11.00am
Mon	31st		

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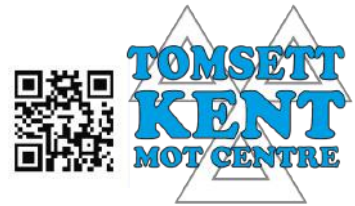
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Events



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Observer

Visit Us At

www.stockbury.org.uk

You get more with the online

**Stockbury
Observer!**

St Mary Magdalene Church



The services for December are as follows:

- 2nd December – Advent 3pm Sung Communion
- 16th December - 3pm Sung Communion
- 23rd December – 3pm Carol Service.

There will be no service at Stockbury on Christmas Day but there will be the following services in the Benefice :

- 24th December - 11.30pm @ Iwade, Lower Halstow and Newington.
- 25th December - 10.0am @ Upchurch, Lower Halstow, Newington and Iwade.
10.30am @ Hartlip.

Please Note

The works are now delayed until further notice.

Details of the range of services held within the benefice of the six parishes, to which Stockbury belongs, can be found on the parishes' website www.thesix.org.uk or contact the Rev'd Liz Cox

For baptisms, weddings or funerals please contact The Rev'd Liz Cox on 01795 844241

Penny Stevens - PCC Secretary

St Augustine's RC, Deanwood Drive, Rainham

Mass Times
Weekdays 9.30 am
Saturday 10.00 am and 6.00 pm
Sunday 9.30 am and 11.00 am

November Church Draw Winners

CONGRATULATIONS!

1st - Joe Waters
£40 (60)

2nd - Chris Porter
£20 (81)

3rd - Anne & Julius Hutson
£10 (136)

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

1915 FOR 100 YEARS 2015

Stockbury
W.I.

What a very moving and emotional gathering at the Church on November 11th and also at the Lighting of the Beacon during the evening. A big thank you to all those who worked so hard to bring it all together on the day to make it a truly memorable occasion. Many thanks to Ann and Wendy for helping to decorate both in and outside the church and the selling of our knitted poppies for which we are sending a cheque of £113.92 to the Royal British Legion.

The WI are celebrating 100 years of Resolutions. Since 1918 we have passed over 400 Resolutions and have achieved change on hundreds of issues that affect women and their communities across the world. WI Campaigns are still going strong and currently we are tackling issues such as mental health stigma and loneliness. Members can make a positive move by highlighting important issues, turn them into a campaign and so start the process of change for the better. The WI has never shrunk from a fight nor been deterred by setbacks. Members are tenacious, driven by compassion. No challenge has ever been too big and no issue too small. So here's to the next 100 years!!!

The Christmas Fayre is being held in the Village Hall on **Saturday 8th December**. There will be many stalls with lots of ideas for Christmas gifts. Refreshments will also be served, so please do come along and support this event.

Carols On The Green this year will be on **Friday 14th December at 7pm** with the Salvation Army Band and after in the hall for refreshments and more singing and jollities. There will be collection boxes for donations, so please bring your change (notes will do!) with you. We will also have boxes in the hall to collect donations of non-perishable foods to give to the Salvation Army to distribute e.g. any canned food, pasta, rice etc. with a long use by date.



We would like to wish ALL a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Happy 2019.

Heather Tomsett

Observer Deadline!

If you would like to advertise or have item included in next months Observer, we must receive it no later than

Monday 17th December, 2018

Please email your contributions to
stockburyobserver@gmail.com

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100 Years On

It was a clear night with a light wind. The walk from the village was a combination of the sombre and almost magical with the strategically placed solar lamps dimly marking the way to the church; but when we arrived an island of light and sound greeted us. Early 20th century songs played in the background as more than two hundred people gathered to pay their respects.



At fifteen minutes before seven the short speeches given by Phil Woods, Liz Cox and Mick Bingham were moving and apt and the empathetic feelings surrounding this event were palpable. Ten minutes later we listened to Reveille and the Last Post followed by sounds of the most horrendous shell and gun fire, fading to rain and finally to total silence. That silence bringing with it tears of emotion flooding in.



The moment the beacon was lit at the appointed time, seven o' clock, the mood lifted, murmured conversation began and gradually we all strolled back to the village, past clumps of simply crafted poppies, reflecting on events, swinging our lanterns just like our ancestors before us would have done leaving the church 100 years ago.

Then some crowded into The Harrow where the air was full of chatter about

local and national events. An excellent exhibition of WWI artefacts, short histories and poems were on display and engaged the interest of many in the gathering. Sam thoughtfully provided a simple repast of cheese, ham, bread and pickled onions... loved them ! - Thanks to Penny Spearman for those.

It was a good Armistice Day celebration, made special by the inspirational crafts and hard work of the committee. Posters were designed and distributed, poppies knitted, poppies 'planted' along the lane and hills, poppies hung on the fence, sound systems erected, music taped, lighting arranged and everything co-ordinated seamlessly; all contributing to a very fitting and respectful commemoration of the

end of WWI.

So on behalf of Stockbury parishioners I would like to thank the committee, (alphabetically), Mick Bingham, Rod & Wendy Gibson, John Goldfinch, Fiona Moody, Anne Southern, Penny Spearman and Dave Tomsett, for all their worthwhile work, along with the volunteers of the evening Alan Cooke, Gavin Mace, Phil & Aston Monk, Geoff Moody, Chris Porter, Alison Roberts, Jamie Stone and Ray Tomsett.

Thanks also to Ann Ballard and the W.I. and Nikki Bonner for their inspirational poppies which decorated the church and parish and Joe Gibson, Rod & Wendy's 16 year old grandson, who is an apprentice welder and made the fabulous beacon basket.

Ann Rich

A personal note of thanks from Ed to Tina Jacobs and Gavin Mace for the photos accompanying this article. - Ed

Stockbury Great War 100th Anniversary Remembrance

A couple of years ago a member of the Parish Council, who shall remain nameless, (actually Dave), with great foresight and a love of pyrotechnics signed the village up to 'Battle's Over', set up to co-ordinate a chain of 1000 beacons around the country to commemorate the centenary of the end of The Great War.

Nothing more was done about this, other than printing out reams of instructions from the website, until a couple of months ago when the 11th November 2018 was rapidly approaching. Realising this, Dave sprang into action, recruited a team (with some arm twisting) and the result, after lots of (quite enjoyable) meetings in the pub, was a Remembrance Day befitting the occasion.

The Beacon Lighting was a community event which also looked to the future as the village now has a splendid beacon next to the church, made by Wendy and Rod Gibson's 16year old apprentice welder grandson, Joe which should last for another hundred years.

Many village societies were represented in marking the occasion. The WI made fabulous poppies, appearing all over the village, on lapels, fences, walls and even down on the A249. Brenda Mace's idea for a simple supper went down a storm (thank you Sam!) and the Community Bus was brought into service as a shuttle to the beacon.

The Rev Liz Cox obtained the haunting 'There But Not There' silhouettes which added poignancy to the church service and the beacon lighting. The names of the Stockbury fallen were read out with great solemnity, despite Liz having had to climb a ladder to get onto the scaffold, stage, sorry!. Phil Woods and Mick Bingham spoke movingly and a poppy wreath was handed by Mick to two young children of the village, symbolising the handing of the memory down the generations.

The evening worked like clockwork thanks to Dave and his big box of matches and brother Ray masterminding the proceedings to the second with his giant stopwatch and laminated schedule. Music provided by Ray, Fiona and Mick was spot on and some of us managed to get to 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' at the end before being reduced to tears.

cont'd ...



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Stockbury Neighbourhood Watch

We are a Police registered Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Neighbourhood Watch is a way for communities to help themselves stay safe. We are volunteers who work in partnership with the police to:

- Distribute safety advice
- Help make sure that elderly and vulnerable residents are not targets to criminals
- Gather information to help police tackle local problems
- Alert residents when there is a particular crime problem in the area

Our aim is to help people protect themselves and their properties and to reduce the anxieties of becoming a victim of crime.

Please be vigilant and report suspicious characters or incidents to the police and also to your co-ordinator (details below).

Co-ordinators will cascade any information from the police or neighbours to members.

CONTACT NUMBERS:

Emergency : 999
(crime in progress/life threatening)

Non-Emergency : 101

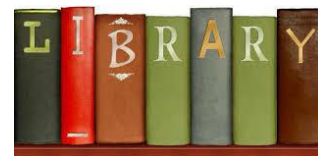
Rosemary (Ann) Ballard (*Co-ordinator*)
(01622) 736331

Alternatively you may e-mail the Co-ordinator at:

stockbury-neighbourhood@outlook.com

Any ideas and views would be greatly welcomed at the above mentioned e-mail address.

If you know of any other residents who would like to receive information from Stockbury Neighbourhood Watch, then please ask them to either contact the Co-ordinator on the above telephone number or e-mail their details to the above mentioned e-mail address.



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Stockbury Great War cont'd

At the pub afterwards people could look at histories of the fallen and artefacts from the War loaned by descendants, conversations overheard were overwhelmingly about the horrors of war.

So on behalf of the Parish Council, thank you to everyone who was involved, including those who volunteered on the day, (you know who you are!) it was a real team effort.

Most of all thank you to the hundreds who came out to remember and respect the fallen.

Stockbury Parish Council

JUST FOR FUN

We seem to be looking back lately, rather a lot. They say you do that when you reach a certain age... I don't know about that but I've found a few things which have struck me about 'The Past'.....around the fifties actually.

Do you remember when a Big Mac was what you wore when it was raining – hard?

None of us had heard of yoghurt and healthy food consisted of anything edible, you know, meat and two veg.... We called calamari squid and the fishermen used it as bait. We didn't think seaweed was a food and eating raw fish probably meant you didn't know how to cook it.... AND of course fish didn't have fingers in those days either! People who failed to peel potatoes just hadn't grasped the basics and cooking outside was called camping. A kind of muesli *was* around but cattle had that; it was called 'animal feed'.

We love Indian restaurants now but then they were only found in India. Oh, and curry was a surname... A take-away was a sum you puzzled over in school and a pizza -- was something to do with a leaning tower? Which brings me on to garlic.....

Life wasn't complicated crisps were just plain and you added salt yourself (included in a little, blue paper twist.) How hard is that!

Oh by the way, prunes were medicinal and drinking water came only out of a tap.

Hey ho... what price progress ?

Ann Rich

STOCKBURY COMMUNITY BUS

Calling All Passengers!!

Why not join Kevin on a trip to Canterbury for the Christmas Market at Whitefriars and a spot of Christmas shopping. The bus will depart the village at 9.30am on Wednesday 12th December, leaving to return home from Canterbury around 3pm.

National Bus Passes are valid for this trip, with a £5 fare for paying customers.

So are you coming? Call Fiona NOW!

07551 454702

Souper, spooky Halloween at The Harrow!

I just had to write to say how much we enjoyed our Halloween Night at The Harrow. Sam, Ellie and Nicky had dressed the pub and themselves in suitably creepy, yet cosy, fashion. We had also made some effort and featured evil queens (easily done!), a mad monk and the butler Lurch. The menu was awesome: three courses with three choices for each course. Witches' fingers, Dracula's soup, Mackerel tartar muahaha and 'I vant your blood' might not sound too appetising but believe me, everything we had was beautifully cooked, crafted and presented. At only £30 each including all our drinks, this was a memorable evening at great value.

I normally choose pub venues over restaurants and can confidently say that I have not found better food or ambience in any of the South-East pubs that I know. Sam doesn't 'vant your blood' but he does deserve your custom.

Sara Kemsley

Stockbury Dog Club

Mick Bingham started Stockbury Dog Club back in 1993 as a result of a request to help train a litter of White German Shepherd puppies and 25 years on, around 30 members continue to attend to train their dogs every Sunday at Stockbury playing fields.

The formation of the club was on the understanding that all money raised was donated to Hearing Dogs for the Deaf and small local animal charities; to date they have raised and donated a whopping £40,000. The donations are intended to be used directly for the welfare of the animals such as food, bedding or maintenance of kennels etc rather than go towards admin costs.

So dedicated is Mick, that he is there to help with training every Sunday whatever the weather along with 5 other trainers all of whom are volunteers and who are occasionally asked to help train dogs with problems such as nervousness, hyperactivity and aggression.

In appreciation of his dedication, Mick was recently presented with an inscribed silver tankard by the members of the Stockbury Dog Club in recognition of all his hard work.

Stockbury Dog Club meets every Sunday at 10am for an hours training on the playing field behind the village hall for a donation of £4 per session.

For more information about the club please go to www.stockburrydogclub.uk



Su Good

Well done and congratulations Mick, well deserved - Ed

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You don't need any special skills or previous crafting experience, come along for an afternoon of fun for all ages.

Saturday 1st December

1:30pm - 4pm

Stockbury Village Hall

£5 Entry Adults £2.50 Children

Under 5s Free



All proceeds go to Mind UK and raise vital funds to make sure no one experiences a mental health problem alone.



Raffle Refreshments Crafts

If you are interested in having your own stall or would like to volunteer to help please contact Jamie on 07863 969 783



Stockbury Gardeners

Finally I arrived indoors after spending the whole day working in the garden, it was a really good Stockbury winters day, a bright low sun and no clouds; I think we get a better quality of clear air than in the low lands of Hartlip, and Sittingbourne. Time to put my feet up!! Oh NO! E-mail from the Ed, deadline for this article is due. So-be-it!

Diana and I made our way to Llanberis in North Wales a few weeks ago, attending a residential course run by Medwyn Williams MBE, veg fanciers may recall that he won 10 consecutive gold medals for displays at Chelsea Flower Shows. Each year he runs a 3 day course and this year we were lucky enough to attend, not really a relaxing weekend as we both sat through 9 one and half hour talks, presented by some of the top growers from the UK. Talks were presented on shallots, chillies potatoes and breeding Narines and Amerilis. Further information was given on breeding tomatoes and growing with Hydroponics. I can assure you that I was glad to leave and get back to driving on the M25 which seemed a breeze.

Tasks to do this month are clean and tidy the greenhouses, - I have just disinfected mine and washed the glass with warm water liquid soap and some vinegar to get through the grease build up on the glass. Take the opportunity to reduce top growth on roses and to start pruning apples and pears. DO NOT prune peach or any stone fruit during the winter months.

I have covered bare parts of the ground known to have a perennial weed problem with a black membrane to stop any further growth during the winter and thereby saving me work in the summer. Shortly onion seeds will need to be sown in the greenhouse, shallots can be started in pots as well, as can garlic. I just need to mention that I have still growing cucumbers which were sown late, (the variety was Styx), really a bit late but the seeds were out of date, I must own up to heating the greenhouse though. See picture but note the mousetrap and fleece on standby!



If you have stored vegetables or fruit in an outbuilding or in a spare room, please check regularly for any rotten ones as they will quickly affect the others, the old saying "one bad apple".

The Gardeners meet on the 6th December, it's a social evening with the prize giving and pre-xmas party, all are welcome to this and if anyone is considering joining

joining us it's a good time to come along and put your toes in the water.

We do not have a meeting in January due to Stockbury having in the past been cut off with bad weather!! But we are reconsidering this now due to global warming having arrived.

May I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Growing Year.

Chris Spree

Stockbury Garden Society Needs You!

Our Garden Society has been in existence for more than 70 years. Changing lifestyles and the passage of time have had their effects though, so now we need to encourage new members and the proposals for events next year aim to broaden the range of activities and speakers.

Seasonal shows invite friendly competition in many categories involving vegetables, flowers, cookery and handicrafts. There is a junior section too which is open to all young people regardless of membership.

Responding to feedback, show schedules have been updated in all categories in order to encourage more participation.

Please consider whether you might like to join the Society, whatever your level of gardening skill. We will be producing the 2019 schedule shortly with some interesting, even exciting (!) upcoming events.

Meetings are held in the Village Hall at 8pm on the first Thursday of the month and annual membership is only £10. Speaker events cost £3 for non-members and all are welcome to turn up on the night. There is even tea and cake for a very modest fee!

We would like to know more about the type of activities and events you may be interested in so please let us know your thoughts to enable us to continue to broaden the appeal. Please contact me or speak to any of our friendly members with your ideas!

Penny Spearman
p.spearman52@btinternet.com
01795 842914

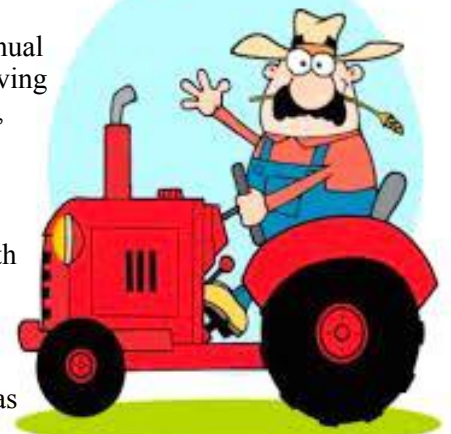
Rod's Christmas Tractor Road Run

Join Rod Gibson for his annual vintage tractor road run leaving from Serenity, South Street, Stockbury on Saturday the 29th December.

The event will take place between 10am and 4pm with a light lunch provided and also a raffle.

Donations to participate on the day are encouraged as this year we will be raising much needed funds for Stockbury Church.

Please contact Rod or Wendy on 01795 841775 for more information and if you would like to join in the fun.



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Stockbury Book Club



“The Christmas Truce”

After You

by Jojo Moyes

A couple of years ago we read and enjoyed ‘Me Before You’ by Jojo Moyes and last month we read the popular sequel, ‘After You’. We weren’t sure whether we would enjoy it as much but found it to be a very pleasant, and easy read.

Louisa is now living in a flat in London and has a job in a bar while she struggles to come to terms with life without Will. The consequences of an accident bring her into contact with a strong-willed character, a teenager called Lilly who, it turns out, is Will’s daughter. Lilly makes Louisa’s life quite complicated but her presence links the families together and by the end of the book most of the characters have moved on in a positive way. The ending for Louisa though is left open as she moves onto the next stage in her life.

This next and final stage is set in New York with the title ‘Still Me’. This book has some very good reviews so we may choose to read it next year and see if Louisa really does manage to have her happy ending.

We gave a score of 7.5 for ‘After You’ and next month we’re reading the very well reviewed ‘All The Light We Cannot See’ by Anthony Doerr and of course enjoying our Christmas film night and supper.

Jan Butterfill



Best wishes and festive greetings to all our friends in Stockbury! We shall be supporting ‘The Smile Train’ again this year instead of sending out Christmas cards.

Keith & Ann Rich

Christmas Greetings from Mick & Brenda Bingham
Once again we will not be sending Christmas cards but will give a donation to Demelza House Charity.

Rod & Wendy Gibson wish all our friends and neighbours a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Chris and Sue Porter would like to wish all their friends in Stockbury a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Instead of sending Christmas cards, we will be making a donation to Demelza House Hospice.

Wishing all our friends in Stockbury Parish a wonderful Christmas season and a happy and prosperous 2019.

Geoff & Fiona Moody

Halfway round the Memorial Arboretum at Alrewars, we came across the display. “The Christmas Truce” and I thought I’d make that my Christmas message and story for this year.

They were in the trenches, armed with guns, bayonets, grit and determination facing the snow covered battle field and winter’s freezing frost. The only prospect, a whistle or bugle, ordering the charge to climb out and face the far greater discomfort of dying by shell, machine gun, bullet, bayonet or gas.

So on one of those snow covered winter days in the midst of the conflict it was unexpected, to hear “Silent Night” in the enemy trenches. “Silent Night” – ridiculous against the background of guns and bombs being dropped in the midst of anger and hatred. What made a man start singing that? But he did. They did, and the numbers singing rose until all were singing. Confused feelings on this freezing snowy day; where did the warmth come from? Nostalgia? Of home and family? Even from the poorest, for you can’t put a price on Christmas. The 25th of December 1914; a Dickensian surmise.

“How might anyone argue or fight on Christmas Day?”

At no time in history was ever a war stopped for 24 hours?

I am assured. these short lives were not in vain. When I think of the sacrifices made and question is it not in a seed dying that fruits grow? The closing trees as the leaves fall in Autumn, the buds retreating, beasts sleeping, constantly followed by the spring of new life. I know in our friends dying, we live, if we can only learn to love and respect each other with the joyous warmth of Christmas.

Those who stood daring to defy orders and stop the war for 24 hours, those who held the white flags of truce, those who hugged and shared what little they had of comfort, letters from loved ones. fruit cakes and pies; but in much greater abundance, the gift of love and friendship. The warmth in kicking a solid leather ball together. Christmas held high above the officers, war and the snowy clouds, Christmas allowed.

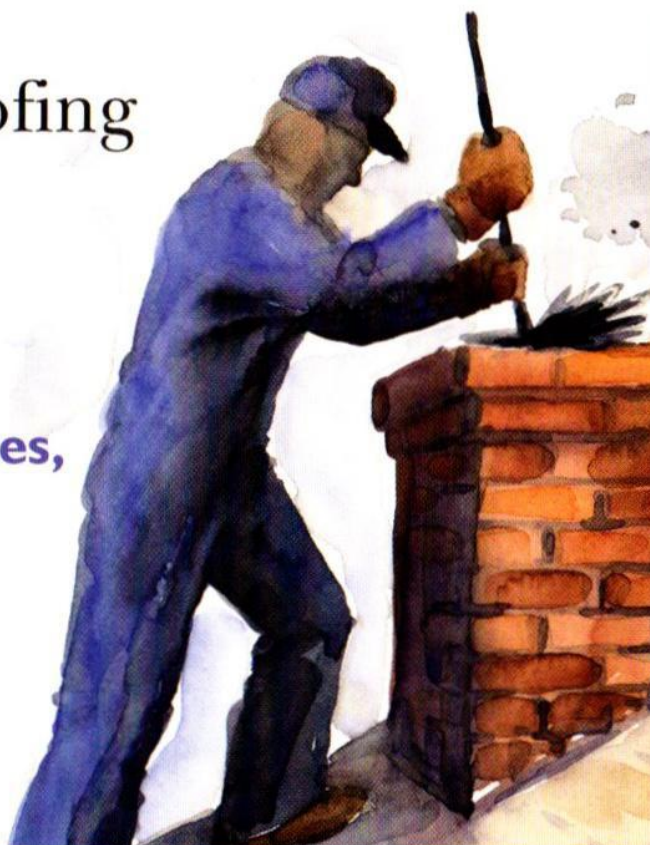
We admired and valued those young people who gave us our freedom to celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary one hundred years on.

God Bless you all and a Merry Christmas. And may I ask you to share with me on Christmas Day a toast to our friends of the Christmas Truce.

Brendan Ferill

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Patrik Says

Dear Residents

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Yes, we are still working on the Strategic Plan: Eight key points were put up for consultation two months ago. We Conservatives always pursued a six point plan. The officers now produced, after the public consultation finished, a four point plan; - albeit very much in line with our proposals.

Can the Strategic Plan be an ambitious, courageous vision or just a statement of the obvious?

- Well, I hope it'll turn out to be a bit of the former, but as a two tier Local Authority, Maidstone has little scope to draft grandiose visions without the cooperation of other bodies.

For example, the draft Strategic Plan seeks an improvement of infrastructure. This includes:

- roads, which fall within KCC's remit,
- doctors => the remit of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- trains => Network Rail
- electricity supply, => National Power
- broadband
-

....- do you get my frustration?

PLANNING

Your local councillor likes to keep an open mind on ALL planning issues. I certainly DON'T see myself as the local "Planning Policeman". Indeed, if your activity does not bother your neighbour nor the public at large, I wouldn't consider it my business either.

Having said that, I'll always be happy to look into a planning application, which you may be concerned about.

As your local councillor I have the power to call-in any planning application. This means that if an application is of concern to you, your neighbours or the public, I can ask the case to be heard by the Planning Committee. In that case, the planning officer cannot take the decision on his/her own, but must leave it to the committee of elected members. I have previously explained the powers of the planning committee. (Jan 2018 edition)

Most call-ins are made in order to stop a development but I've also called-in an application because the officer wanted to refuse it. The powers to call-in can work either way.

However, in order for me to call-in an application, I must do so within 21 days form the date of advertisement. This is a VERY short time! If you want

me to act on an application, please do not wait until day 20.

There is often much debate about the advertisements. Only the most immediate neighbours in the same road will be notified by post. If your house backs on to an application site but you live in another road, you will not be notified. Notices on lamp-posts, fences etc are an antiquated means of communication and are often overlooked or illegally removed.

If you are concerned about a particular site, you can follow it via the Planning Portal:

<https://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications/>

If you are concerned about an illegal development, you can report it here:

<https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/do-it-online/report-it>

FREE MONEY!

I mentioned before that I have £1,000 to give away but surprisingly, so far nobody's asked for it: A Members' Community Grant fund has been created to support local community groups and organisations with one off pump priming money. Please see my September newsletter for further criteria.

ARE WE DEPRIVED?

Did you know that North Downs is the 5th most deprived ward in Maidstone? In terms of deprivation we are ranking closely with Park Wood and Shepway South.

There may be some factors, which skew the statistics. The low population number may be one, which will drop the overall affluent community average very quickly into the lower percentile by just a few residents who are genuinely deprived.

Other factors may include the actual criteria of this statistic. Measurements of the quality of the local environment may not appreciate the rural nature of our environment, such as poor transport links and long distances to a doctor's surgery. Most people live here by choice, despite the perceived negative factors.

Nonetheless the Indices of Deprivation are certainly contrary to the general perception of the North Downs Ward. Drop me an email for a copy of the whole document.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR COMMENTS, PLEASE

Do these statistics reflect your community appropriately? - And if so, what can be done at Borough level to alleviate this deprivation ?

AND FINALLY

They say that a week is a long time in politics and so it is still a very, very long time until the festive week. This being the December issue however, let me wish you a Happy Christmas and may 2019 bring us lots of health - and wise politicians, locally and especially nationally.

PATRIK GARTEN

MBC Councillor for North Downs Ward

Email: patrikgarten@maidstone.gov.uk

Phone: 01622-807907

(for back-copies of my Newsletters see:

<https://www.stockbury.org.uk/observer>)

Useful Contact Information

Church Matters St. Mary Magdalene	Revd Liz Cox revlizcox@outlook.com	01795 435184
Community Bus	Booking Line	07551 454702
Cricket Club	Roger Milton	
Crimestoppers	(Confidential)	0800 555111
Dancing Club	Brian Crisp	01634 231886
Dog Club	Mick Bingham	01795 842480
Electricity Problems		0800 7838866
Environment Agency	Incident Hotline	0800 807060
Fly Tipping & Waste Collection	Including bulky items	01622 602162
Gardeners	stockburygardeners@live.com	
Golf Society	Jeff Hall	01795 843296
Hall Bookings	Sue Porter	01795 843715
Kent County Councillor	Shellina Prendergast shellina.prendergast@kent.gov.uk	
Maidstone BC Councillor	Patrik Garten - patrikgarten@maidstone.gov.uk	01622 807907
MB Farms Stores & Post Office		01795 842401
Member of Parliament Faversham & Mid Kent Ward	Helen Whately - helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk	
Neighbourhood Watch	Ann Ballard	01622 736331
Not So Young Club	Rosemary Leonard	01634 232672
Parish Council	Sherrie Babington	01634 867173
Petanque Club	Tina Jacobs	07743 910185
Photographic Club	Tim Arnold - timarnold@btinternet.com	01795 843049
Police	Emergency Only Non-Emergency	999 101
Police Community Support Officers for Stockbury	Daniel Genn daniel.genn@kent.pnn.police.uk	101
Public Footpaths & Bridleway	Reporting issues with. - westprow@kent.gov.uk	03000 417171
Roads, Potholes, etc	(manned 24hrs) - www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/ report-a-problem	03000 418181
RSPCA		0300 1234999
Short Mat Bowls	Tony or Angela Russell	01795 842738
South East Water	Emergency Only Non-Emergency	0333 000 0365 0333 000 3330
Stockbury Observer - Editor	stockburyobserver@gmail.com	
The Harrow Public House	stockburypub@gmail.com	01795 843222
WI	Pat Fothergill	01622 734093