



# THE STOCKBURY & SOUTH GREEN OBSERVER



## Hall Diary

All events at the Memorial Hall unless otherwise stated

Thurs	1st		
Fri	2nd	Zumba	9.30 - 10.30am
Sat	3rd		
Sun	4th	Dog Club - Field	10.00-11.00am
Mon	5th		
Tues	6th		
Wed	7th	Pilates	9.30 - 10.30am
Thurs	8th		
Fri	9th	Zumba	9.30 - 10.30am
		Carols	5.00-11.00pm
Sat	10th		
Sun	11th	Dog Club - Field	10.00-11.00am
		Private Booking	12.00-6.00pm
Mon	12th		
Tues	13th		
Wed	14th	Pilates	9.30 - 10.30am
		Parish Council	2.00-4.00pm
Thurs	15th	Private Booking	1.00-4.00pm
Fri	16th	Zumba	9.30 - 10.30am
		Private Booking	12.30-3.30pm
Sat	17th		
Sun	18th	Dog Club - Field	10.00-11.00am
Mon	19th		
Tues	20th		
Wed	21st	Pilates	9.30 - 10.30am
		Parish Council	7.30-9.30pm
Thurs	22nd		
Fri	23rd	Zumba	9.30 - 10.30am
Sat	24th		
Sun	25th		
Mon	26th		
Tues	27th		
Wed	28th		
Thurs	29th		
Fri	30th	Zumba	9.30 - 10.30am
Sat	31st		

## UPDATE On The 332

At a recent KCC Council meeting it was decided that they were going to press on with their alleged £2m cost saving and scrap the subsidies for a number of routes across the county, the 332 that serves as our school bus service being one of them.

We put up a fight, but at the end of the day all they could see was the headline figure of saving £2m. That may sound like a lot of money, but in the overall scheme of KCC's budget of about £9 billion, it's not that much and you have to question the logic of such a relatively small saving versus the political fallout and loss of votes that it will cause at the next election.

We are still working with Shellina Prendergast, or local Kent County Councillor, to try and find a solution to getting children to school post the middle of February next year, but in the meantime we would like to thank all of you that took the time to join in the lobbying of the KCC Councillors. At least we can say we gave it a go.

Thanks again,

Dave Canham

## Kingswood Christmas Trees

For the freshest and most beautiful trees, come and buy directly from us the growers.

**£5 off a tree with this advert**

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## STOCKBURY COMMUNITY BUS

Tuesdays - Maidstone

Thursdays - Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre (Savacentre)

Pickups from 9:30 a.m. close to where you live. Give us a try!

**07551 454702**

## Christmas Carol Service

We will be holding a Christmas Carol Service in Stockbury Church on Saturday 17th December, starting at 4.30pm.

As this is our first Christmas opportunity post Covid to sing our hearts out, come along and join us for a short service and some hearty festive singing of your favourite carols.

We will be providing wine and mince pies afterwards to re-lubricate those vocal cords and replace all those vital calories lost!

Please come along and join us, everybody is welcome.

## Stockbury Carols on The Green

This year's Carols on the Green will be held on 9th December 2022, as usual with The Salvation Army, at 7pm outside The Harrow; continuing from 7.30pm in the Village Hall for more carol singing and refreshments.

As usual, there will be a collection of non-perishable food and toiletries as well as a raffle.

All proceeds and donated goods will go to The Salvation Army.

All are welcome.

## Stockbury Book Club

### Apples Never Fall by Lianne Moriarty

The Delaneys are a tennis family, a fixture in the heart of their community, particularly Stan and Joy, former tennis champions who are veterans of a 50-year marriage and are envied for their perceived durability and devotion. Their famous tennis academy has been sold and their four children, once competent tennis players themselves, have long since made their way in the world, away from the tennis scene.

Savannah, a stranger, is the interloper in the story; one night she appears at the Delaney's door dishevelled and bleeding and is taken in by the couple. Not very long after that Joy suddenly disappears.

On the journey towards solving this mystery, the family examines its history with the resulting discoveries spreading doubt, conflict and suspicion. And all the time there remains the question - what has happened to Joy?

Basically this narrative turned out to be an analysis of a flawed and complicated family. Whilst the problems raised would be all too familiar in any family life and in a marriage of such length, some of us thought the author wandered into an excessive amount of detail which unnecessarily confused the storyline and rendered reading or keeping track and sustaining interest quite a burden!

Many topics were tackled, and this resulted in a lot of repetition. It also meant that the story lost credibility, became tedious and Joy's perceived predicament or demise was lost in the muddle.

No scenes were set for the family encounters to add to the atmosphere, which it was felt was an omission. However it was pointed out that there were enjoyable passages, but the whole story, unfortunately, was too long. Some of the themes introduced seemed in our opinion to be superfluous

and it was commented that other Liane Moriarty novels were better constructed.

We gave the book 6 / 10.

Ann Rich

## Stockbury Gardeners

Season's greetings to all our readers and members in the Parish.

Our December meeting will be held at The Harrow with a finger buffet for members. There will be a small charge for this, however anyone wishing to find out more about the gardeners will be treated to a beer/drink from the Chairman, on the proviso that they sign up for a 2023 membership! As the meeting is in the pub on 1st December, we will meet at 19:30, however if you wish you can start earlier without us!!

Last week there was a meeting to plan the years speakers and schedule for the Flower and Vegetable Shows. One notable new inclusion in the schedule is a class for bonsai. What is it you may ask?? Bonsai is the Japanese art of growing and training miniature trees in pots, developed from the traditional Chinese art form of Penjing. I am not an expert, but looked it up on Wikipedia!

This traditionally is the month that we have cold weather, and for those long-standing residents of Stockbury, they will know what I mean. Who knows with global warming what we will get. Just in case, it would be a good idea to ensure that all frost sensitive plants are under cover or have some protection wrapped around them. Greenhouse heaters should be serviced and ready to be used. Bubble wrap can be pinned to the inside of the greenhouse as well.

By delaying any seed sowing this year by only a couple of weeks might save some electricity or gas costs.

Don't forget to keep an eye on the weather forecast, if it freezes hard you will not be able to lift your parsnips or carrots from the ground. At the time of writing this we were having downpours, currently I am looking for rice varieties that would be suitable to grow in Stockbury!!

Have a great Christmas.

Chris Spree

## Christmas Greetings

**Keith & Ann Rich** wish all their friends in Stockbury a very happy festive season. Instead of sending cards we will be donating to The Smile Train to give some youngster a new smile and a new life.

### **Karen and Mo!**

Wish all their friends and neighbours in the village a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy 2023.

**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.

**Brenda and Mick Bingham** wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Happy Christmas everybody and a wonderful New Year too.  
Ed



# THE HARROW PUB

FREE HOUSE - COMMUNITY OWNED

*A quiet village pub in the heart of Stockbury. Serving fresh home-cooked food.*

*Small functions catered for.*

Open from -

**Monday - Closed**

**Tuesday 3pm**

**Wednesday - Sunday**

**11am**

Kitchen open from -

**Wednesday - Saturday**

**12pm-2.30pm and 5pm-8:30pm**

**Sunday**

**12pm-4pm**

**Live Music 3rd Dec**

**Emily Jayne**

**Thai Night**

**Tue 6th Dec**

**6pm-9pm**



01795 843222



theharrowpubstockbury



The Harrow PubStockbury



contact@theharrowstockbury.co.uk

## EVENTS

*Fish'n'chip shop night on the 1st Friday of every month*

*Games night on the 2nd Tuesday of every month.*

*Quiz night on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.*

*Coffee and cake morning every Friday*



**Wi-Fi  
FREE**



## M2 junction 5 Stockbury interchange improvement scheme

Excellent progress has been made across the entire scheme during 2022. We've almost finished with our work to shape the area around the junction – this has to be carried out during the dry months of the year – and you may have also spotted work starting on some of the main structures.

We'd like to thank everyone for your on-going patience and understanding, especially when we've needed to close roads or work at night and weekends.

We'll be pausing our work, to allow the teams to spend time with their loved ones, from Thursday 22 December 2022 to Thursday 5 January 2023. The M2 eastbound on and off slips, will remain closed during this time, but there will be no other road closures linked to the scheme over this break.

Construction of the new slip roads continues and good progress has been made, despite the recent wet weather. The foundations are completed, with kerb installation and surfacing work scheduled before the Christmas break. We're on track to re-open the slip roads on Friday 13 January 2023 as planned.

On behalf of the entire team, we'd like to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.



We're carrying out improvements to help reduce congestion at the junction, and enhance the flow of traffic. This will provide a safer and more integrated network for everyone and bring real benefits to the drivers who use this junction daily.

To find out more, please visit our website: [nationalhighways.co.uk/m2-j5](https://nationalhighways.co.uk/m2-j5) or scan the QR code. You can also call us on **0300 123 5000** or email [m2j5@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:m2j5@nationalhighways.co.uk)



# The Harrow

Sarah and Stefan have been busy in the kitchen and we now have new main, light bite and Sunday menus to choose from at The Harrow! And for December, a **Christmas Dinner Menu** too, which will be available from **Wednesdays to Saturdays** from the **1st to the 24th** December which can be booked in advance from now with a £10 per head non-refundable deposit. Our 3 course Christmas Dinner is a very reasonable £29.95 a head and will be entirely prepared and cooked on the premises by Stefan using all fresh produce. Perfect for that pre Christmas gathering of family and friends ahead of the big day.

Looking ahead to **Christmas Day** itself, The Harrow will be open for drinks **ONLY** between midday and 2pm for that festive tippie while the turkey roasts contently at home. A chance for you to flaunt and compare those silly Christmas jumpers too!

The pub will then be **CLOSED** on Boxing Day and will **RE-OPEN** between 12pm and 6pm on the 27th December for drinks only.

On to New Year. There will be a **ticketed adults only** NYE party at The Harrow, with tickets at £10 each and live music from **The Three Hats**, the musical trio that entertained us so joyously during the recent Jubilee weekend. Tickets are limited so please book soon. Tickets are available to purchase from Sarah.

And if you are looking for that illusive Christmas gift, you are now able to purchase **Harrow Gift Certificates** for any value and any occasion. Just ask Sarah for details.

Coming up for you during December:

- **2nd - Fish'n'Chip Friday** Please book your table in advance - takeaway available.
- **3rd - Live Music with Emily Jayne** - 8.30pm start.
- **6th - Thai Night** - takeaway available.
- **7th - Tractor Club Lunch** - 12.30pm.
- **13th - Games Night** - 8pm start.
- **20th - Christmas Quiz Night** - please book your quiz tables in advance for this very popular evening. Max of 6 per team.
- **31st - New Years Eve Party 8pm - 12.30am with music from The Three Hats - Ticketed adult entry ONLY.** Limited tickets are available. Tickets are £10 each and are available to purchase from Sarah.

Our guest beers this month will be:

**Wife of Bath** is a Canterbury Ales 3.9%, golden bitter. It is crisp and spicy with citrus hops with a long dry finish.

**Kentish Best**, again from the Canterbury Ales brewery; it is a 3.7% traditional best bitter with well-balanced hoppiness and honey malts.

Looking forward to January, a date for your diary is Wednesday January 25th when we will be celebrating **Burns Night**. More details in the January Observer.

Thank you all for your patience throughout a difficult 2022 and wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year

See you all in 2023!



New Years Eve  
Party  
At The Harrow

Live music from  
'The Three Hats'

Tickets £10 per person  
Open from 8pm till 12.30am  
Adults only

Kemsing Singers present  
"Gabriel's Message"  
Featuring Magnificat by John Rutter



10<sup>th</sup> December 2022 7.30pm  
St Edith Hall, Kemsing TN15 6NA

In aid of Kent Air Ambulance  
Tickets £10, U18 £5  
Box Office 01959 523752  
or on the door  
[www.kemsingsingers.com](http://www.kemsingsingers.com)

Arranged and Conducted  
by Sara Kemsley

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## **Polly's Beautique** **At The Herb Garden**

Surrounded by fields my Salon will offer you a peaceful and private treatment allowing you to relax, enjoy and be beautiful...

To see a full price list, learn more about the Salon and its offers or to book an appointment See the following:

 *Polly's Beautique at The Herb Garden*

 *@pollys\_beautique*

 *07725 403697*

### **Price List:**

- Gel Polish nails - £20
  - Builder Gel with Gel Polish - £25
  - Gel Polish toes - £15
  - Gel Extensions with Gel Polish - £30
  - Gel Extension Infills with Gel Polish - £25
  - Waxing - prices from £7 for Eyebrows to £25 for Full Leg
  - Range of Facials (Inc. Microdermabrasion, Dermaplaning etc) prices from £20 - £75
  - Full Body Massage - £40
  - Back and Shoulder Massage - £20
  - Wash and Blow dry from £15
  - Eyelash and Eyebrow Tinting from £5
  - Lash Lift and Tint - £25
  - MICROBLADING - Eyebrow Tattooing
- Enquire for Prices

## **New Salon** **Treatments**

Hybrid Lash Extensions  
£35

Russian Volume Lash Extension  
£40

*Polly Kingsford-Field*  
*Stockbury, Kent*

*Email: [pollykf@btinternet.com](mailto:pollykf@btinternet.com)*

## Stockbury Christmas Fair

This year Nikki master-minded the arrangements for a Stockbury Christmas Fair, with a myriad of helpers scurrying around in the background. And didn't she do well! If you were not there you missed a cracker (no seasonal pun intended!).

There were 16 tables packed full, with a tremendous variety of goods rivalling anything you would find in an up-market department store: from honey to hats, pottery to pictures, bracelets to bags; I could go on and on. There was so much to choose from and everything was of a high quality and unique. Such style! Such ingenuity! Such colour!

Visitors, local and not so local came in a steady stream for all the three hours and the convivial buzz mingling with a little light music really created a wonderful atmosphere.

Thanks to those who made everything come together making for a happy experience: advertising, putting up the decorations, erecting the tables, providing the refreshments, clearing away and being so wonderfully cheerful!

Also a special thanks to the organisers, as I understand a donation is winging its way to the Village Hall Funds as a result of yesterday's proceedings.

Congratulations to everyone involved for making November 20th a very pleasant experience.

Ann Rich



**A Christmas Whimsical Evening  
at  
The Harrow, Stockbury  
Friday 30th December, 2022  
Starting at 7pm  
An evening of carols, stories and  
poems**

If you have a poem, recital, song,  
joke, story, or whatever,  
for us to hear

Please contact me on  
**07944 811668**

Brendan



## Patrik Says ...

The biggest issue this month:

**The road closure at The Dirty Habit in Hollingbourne.** Road-closures, as any highways matter, falls into the remit of Kent County Council. As such, you should raise your concerns with our County Councillor Shellina Prendergast. Before I deny all responsibility in this matter I must also acknowledge that Maidstone Borough has a role to play in this. The Dirty Habit is a listed building and, even in its current state, is protected by very strict national legislation. As such MBC Conservation Officers have been consulted as well as Maidstone's Building Control department. Maidstone's role is to ensure that legislation regarding the heritage status is complied with as well as to ensure that the public is adequately protected. The latter includes construction workers as well as passers-by.

Ultimately MBC acts in an advisory role but also carries the final responsibility to sign off any project as safe and compliant. It is The Dirty Habit's architects and site engineers who will take the leading role to propose and execute the most appropriate way to recover and reconstruct the building.

In emails to me, residents mooted whether the wall should be torn down and rebuilt brick by brick or salvaged in one piece. Ultimately this a matter for the on-site Structural Engineer in charge. In any case, I presume that a supporting scaffold is needed until either the wall is torn down or made safe.

I am in close contact with the senior officer at MBC Building Control and will send updates to anybody on my e-mailing list, if and when I have more definite information. Please send me an email to be included on my e-mailing list, if you haven't signed up yet.

Unfortunately, as I said before, we are in the hands of the Structural Engineers and winter is not normally a prime time for the building trade.

I sympathise with the plight and inconvenience to all communities north of The Dirty Habit and for those residents who are affected daily by the closure. It is difficult to see a positive angle of this dilemma. However, the road-closure gives Hollingbourne relief from the ever increasing through-traffic and may even discourage many from rat-running long after this road will be opened again. The worn out back-roads, which will be entirely ruined by then, won't make the North Downs any more attractive to rat-runners either.

### **Terrible Water Pressure**

Residents in the East of my ward may welcome that South East Water are currently planning a project to lay 17km of pipeline to enhance network resilience. They will be laying 13km of pipeline between their storage reservoirs in Warren Street and Potters Corner, and two pipes, totalling 4km, will be laid in the Wichling and Doddington areas of Kent. This project is currently in the planning phase, with construction anticipated to begin in April 2023. A test drill will be carried out before Christmas to aid planning.

### **Design and Sustainability Consultation**

MBC is consulting on the development of a Design & Sustainability Development Plan Document and is encouraging residents, businesses and stakeholders to have their say to help embed good design and sustainability within new development. In an ideal world this should be an essential part of Maidstone's Local Plan. Unfortunately time

## Calling All Advertisers

Our annual rates for advertising in 12 editions are:

A whole page £400

A half page £200

A quarter page £120

Our advertising year starts in April and new adverts for less than 12 months duration will be charged on a pro-rata basis. Rates for ads smaller than a quarter page will be given on application.

If you would like to place an advert in The Observer, please email [stockburyobserver@gmail.com](mailto:stockburyobserver@gmail.com) The Editor will confirm receipt and an invoice will be sent along with details of how to pay.

If you are a new customer, please also attach your artwork, preferable in MS Word or as a PDF file.

This is a great opportunity to promote your business as The Observer is delivered to every household within the Parish of Stockbury as well as having an online presence.

**It's never too late to advertise in  
The Stockbury Observer!**

### Stockbury Parish Council Minutes

The minutes for our Parish Council meetings will be approved at the following meeting and will then be published on [www.stockbury.org](http://www.stockbury.org) within 5 days of the meeting at which they are approved.

## OBSERVER DEADLINE

**MONDAY 19th December**

Please email your contributions to  
[stockburyobserver@gmail.com](mailto:stockburyobserver@gmail.com)

### Mobile Library Dates

Thursday 1st, 15<sup>th</sup> & 29th December, '22

9.10am - 9.40am

**At the Village Hall**

### Church Draw November Winners

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

1st £30 - Chris Porter (81)

2nd £20 - Colin Prior (111)

3rd £10 - Clare Stevens (147)



## Calling the "Ladies" of Stockbury:

*Come and join like-minded ladies for a lovely lunch and a catch up*

*At*

*The Harrow Pub on the last Thursday of the month*

*at about 12.30pm*

*Please book your place directly with The Harrow on*

*01795 871322*

**We would love you to join us**



**CALLING  
ALL  
GAMERS!**



**Following its previous success, we are re-establishing a traditional games evening at The Harrow Pub on the second Tuesday of every month.**

**This is a great opportunity to play old favourites and to learn some new games.**

**Come along for an evening of traditional fun in the gloomy depths of winter and beyond.**

**We aim to start about 8 pm and would love to see anyone interested and you are welcome to bring any games with you.**



pressures imposed on us by national legislation didn't allow us to incorporate this 'nice' bit. So while the forthcoming Local Plan deals with location and numbers of new homes to be build, this Sustainability Development Plan will make sure that we will have the tools to ensure that best design quality and high sustainability lie at the heart of all forthcoming development proposals. This Policy, once implemented, will have the same strength whether it forms an integral part of the Local Plan or whether it is a stand-alone policy. Together with my colleagues I have worked hard over the past two years to bring this plan forward. The consultation closes on 12 December 2022 and can be found here:

<https://maidstone.objective.co.uk/portal/>

### **Council Tax Referendum Limit**

The Chancellor announced that the core threshold for Council Tax will increase from 1.99% to 2.99%, and the Adult Social Care precept payable to KCC will be 2% in 2023-24.

So will we increase the Council Tax at MBC? This depends on your point of view. If your Council Tax is £1,000 this year, then a 2.99% increase brings your tax to £1,029.90 next year. If the tax you paid last year bought £1,000 of services and inflation stands at 11%, we would require £1,110 this year to provide the same services. So one could argue that a Local Authority actually cuts Council Tax when the increase is lower than inflation.

This is VERY different to Income Tax and National Insurance, where the Government always takes the same percentage of your money, regardless how much your money is worth. An increase of income tax percentage points are always an increase of the burden of taxation, an increase of Council Tax percentage points is not.

Some food for thought ...

### **COVID**

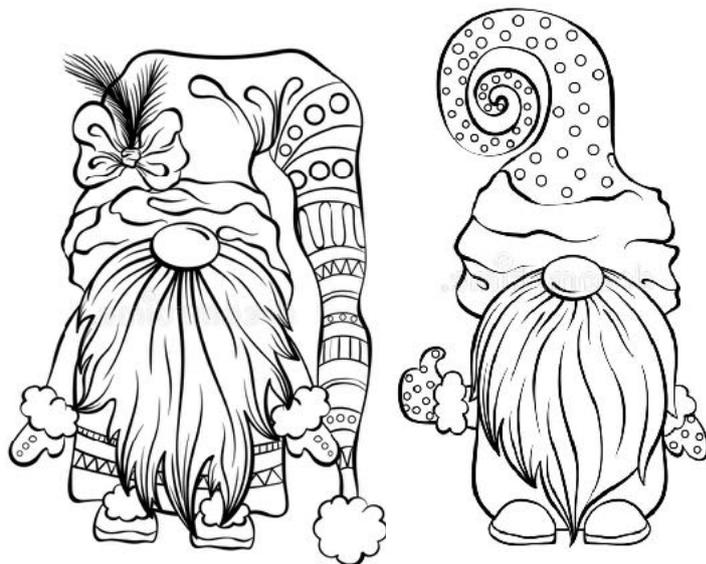
There is some encouraging news in that the number of recorded cases in Kent has continued to decrease but at a much slower rate than in September. Since 31st October, rates have decreased by 14.4%. The number of Covid patients in hospital has reduced too. We would be foolish however to let our guard down. Weekly deaths seem to be on a slightly upward trend, the highest since July. Variants data also shows that significant cases of Omicron spinoffs have been detected in Kent, which has been noted for its rapid growth. On a positive side, no new variants of concern have emerged so far. Let's hope that it stays this way and that we can all enjoy a Christmas not tarnished by Covid. We are all responsible not only for our own health but for everybody with whom we come into contact with.

### **And finally ...**

For the next few weeks Maidstone Town Centre is illuminated to herald in the Christmas season. In the following weeks there will be a multitude of events, filled with family fun, to put us into Christmas mood:

<https://www.visitmaidstone.com/whats-on>

PATRIK GARTEN  
MBC Councillor for North Downs Ward (Conservative)  
Phone: 01622-807907



## Useful Contact Information

Church Matters St. Mary Magdalene		01795 227329
Community Bus	Booking Line	07551 454702
Cricket Club	Enrique Damian	07522 691831 07967 890010
Crimestoppers	(Confidential)	0800 55511
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	Philip Painter	07850 190204
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
Parish Council Clerk	Sherrie Babington	01634 867173
Pétanque Club	Tina Jacobs	07743 910185
Photographic Club	Tim Arnold - timarnold@btinternet.com	01795 843049
Police	Emergency Only Non-Emergency	999 101
Police Community Support Officer for Stockbury		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	Janet Bracey - dd.fastmail.co.uk	
South East Water	Emergency Only Non-Emergency	0333 000 0365 0333 000 3330
Stockbury Observer - Editor	stockburyobserver@gmail.com	
The Harrow Public House	contact@theharrowstockbury.co.uk	01795 843222