

# THE STOCKBURY & SOUTH GREEN OBSERVER

January 2022

Hall Diary All events at the Memorial Hall unless otherwise stated				
Sat	1st			
Sun	2nd	Dog Club - Field	10.00-11.00am	
Mon	3rd			
Tues	4th	Bowls	2.00-4.00pm	
Wed	5th	Pilates	9.30-10.30am	
Thurs	6th	Gardeners	8.00-10.00pm	
Fri	7th	Zumba	9.30-10.30am	
Sat	8th			
Sun	9th	Dog Club - Field	10.00-11.00am	
Mon	10th			
Tues	11th	Bowls	2.00-4.00pm	
Wed	12th	Pilates	9.30-10.30am	
		Parish Council	2.00-4.00pm	
Thurs	13th			
Fri	14th	Zumba	9.30-10.30am	
Sat	15th			
Sun	16th	Dog Club - Field	10.00-11.00am	
Mon	17th			
Tues	18th	Bowls	2.00-4.00pm	
Wed	19th	Pilates	9.30-10.30am	
		Parish Council	7.00-9.30pm	
Thurs	20th			
Fri	21st	Zumba	9.30-10.30am	
Sat	22nd			
Sun	23rd	Dog Club - Field	10.00-11.00am	
Mon	24th			
Tues	25th	Bowls	2.00-4.00pm	
Wed	26th	Pilates	9.30-10.30am	
Thurs	27th			
Fri	28th	Zumba	9.30-10.30am	
Sat	29th			
Sun	30th	Dog Club - Field	10.00-11.00am	
Mon	31st			

# **Stockbury Covid 19 Support Group**

Who'd have thought that another year on and here we are again. Notwithstanding all the millions of vaccines and booster jabs, we're still subject to mask wearing and restrictions! Couldn't make it up. But onward and upwards, let's look at the positives, this virus can't last forever ...

This message is to reassure you that that although the virus is still with us, so is the Stockbury Covid 19 Support Group of doughty volunteers, who are ready and able to offer help and support in any way we can. Whether it be assisting with the collection or deliveries of essentials, medication etc for those vulnerable, self isolating or just fearful of venturing out in these current uncertain times.

We're also here as a friendly voice at the end of the phone (or email) if needed, for those of you who've been unable to see or spend time with loved ones over the Christmas period and just fancy a chat.

So you're not alone, please feel free to get in touch, the phone number is the same as the Community Bus 07551-454702 and the email address is communitybus-stockbury@hotmail.co.uk

We wish you all a very happy New Year and look forward to better times ahead.

### Scam Altert BEWARE: NHS Covid Pass Text Scam

I have received a text telling me that I could now apply for my NHS Covid Pass and that I could be fined if I did not apply! The text had a link to a website. Its a scam to get your bank details, so if you get such a message just delete it.

You CANNOT be fined for not having a Covid Pass, it's nonsense! The NHS app is FREE to download and, if you've the appropriate jabs, the NHS Covid Pass is completely FREE of charge.

Please spread the word about this and similar scams going round, as someone may be taken in and follow the link, giving the crooks valuable personal details and access to their bank account.

If in doubt, and you want a Covid Pass, go to the NHS website or get help from a family member, trusted friend or neighbour to help you do it. Please do not be taken in by this scam.

Wishing you a happy and safe New Year.

Anne Southern



# KENT WASTE

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# STOCKBURY COMMUNITY BUS

Mondays - Sittingbourne 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

### **Temporary Road Closures**

### Hazel Street, Stockbury 10th January 2022

It will be necessary to close part of Hazel Street, Stockbury from 10th January 2022, for approximately one day. It will be closed between the junctions with South Lees Lane and Kennel Barn Road, to the extent indicated by signs and barriers on site.

The alternative route is South Lees Lane, Old Forge Lane, South Green, Hazel Street and vice versa.

The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while pole testing works are undertaken by Openreach.

### Yelsted Road, Yelsted

### 17th January, 2022

It will be necessary to close part of Yelsted Road, Yelsted from 17th January 2022, with estimated completion by 21st January 2022. It will be closed in the general vicinity of Beaux Aires Cottage, to the extent indicated by signs and barriers on site.

The alternative route is South Street Road, West Wood Road, Hill Green Road, Yelsted Road and vice versa.

The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while repair works on apparatus are undertaken by South East Water.

## Stockbury Book Club

#### The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah

In this story Ernt Allbright is a Vietnam war veteran; a former POW who is prone to unpredictable and coercive behaviour. Impulsively, when he lost yet another job, he decided to take his family, (wife Cora and daughter Leni, 13) away to make a new start in the wilds of Alaska. Hoping for a better future and a calmer husband Cora is agreeable and falls in with his wishes as she always does.

However, their relationship is volatile and increasingly physically violent. Leni, who endures life in the middle of this tension tries her best to make sense of her parents' problems whilst contending with her own needs. Gradually she too becomes the focus of Ernt's obsessive actions but she finds comfort with a gentler young man in the person of Matthew.

Along the way we meet various strong female characters and several obsessive male ones, which have grown part of this accepting, isolated community. What unfolds is a tragic tale of violence and tension.

Our group liked the descriptive writing of the Alaskan landscape; it was superb and the atmosphere this generated felt uninviting and authentic. The build-up of menace in the remote State was chilling and handled well by the author. However there were some reservations concerning the characterisation of, particularly Ernt, who was never given voice to his feelings and reasons for his behaviour, whereas Leni could be clearly understood. Big Marg did leap off the page but even Cora appeared one dimensional at times having only certain phrases allocated to her dialogue. Finally, it was felt that the completion of the storylines seemed rushed and condensed rather rapidly, to 'round off' the whole saga.

Having said all that, it was we agreed, a compelling read and gave it  $7\frac{1}{2}$ 10.

So if you are missing seasonal winter snow then maybe this will be a story for you - or perhaps not! It depends if you want to have a harrowing read ... I leave you with that thought.

Ann Rich

### Stockbury Gardeners

We will be resuming the Stockbury Gardeners calendar on Thursday January 6th at 8pm in the Village Hall, please come and join us, everyone is welcome including non members.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy New Year.

Chris Spree

## **December Church Draw Winners**

### **CONGRATULATIONS!**

1st £50 - Samuel Martin (86)

2nd £30 - Carol Waters (256)

3rd £15 - Rose Hickmott (51)

# AWARD WINNING M B Farms

Monday to Saturday: 8:00am - 5:00pm. Sunday: 8:00am - 3:00pm

# **Post Office Hours**

Mon, Tue, Thurs, Fri: 9:00am - 5:00pm Wednesday: 9:00am - 4:00pm Saturday: 9:00am - 12 noon

# National Lottery Available

www.mbfarms.co.uk

Tel: 01795 842401





# M2 junction 5 Stockbury interchange improvement scheme

#### **January Closures**

We'll be closing the A249 northbound between Rumstead Lane and the Stockbury roundabout from 10pm Friday 21 January 2022 until 5am Monday 24 January 2022.

The diversion for this closure is detailed on the map to the left. Please note, you will not be able to access the A249 via Church Hill from Stockbury, as it will be closed from the Honeycrock Hill intersection. However, you will still be able to access Church Hill via the crossover from the A249 southbound carriageway.

The following weekend, we'll be closing the A249 northbound between the Stockbury roundabout and Key Street roundabout from 10pm Friday 28 January 2022 until 5am Monday 31 January 2022.

There will be a signed diversion to Maidstone Road and Sheppey Way, details of which can be found on our website: <u>nationalhighways.co.uk/m2-j5</u>

highways

We're carrying out improvements to help reduce congestion at and on the M2 junction 5 Stockbury interchange, and enhance the flow of traffic, bringing real benefits to the drivers who use this junction daily.



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

## The Harrow

Our quaint, little village pub has been awarded the coveted Environmental Health 5 star food hygiene rating on a recent spot check visit; what a fantastic start to the newly managed Harrow. Many congratulations to the team for all their hard work in achieving this accolade. Onwards and upwards!

The Christmas Quiz Night at the beginning of December was a resounding success with 6 teams participating, all eager to claim the winner's title. It was a close run thing, with two teams vying for the title on 48 points, so it went to a tiebreak question – oh, the suspense! It all got very competitive between the 6 teams and a little raucous at times too but a superb and fun evening was had by all. On the night, there was a lot of talk about a re-match which is now in the diary for Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January. Get your team of 6 together, swat up on all those useless facts and book those quiz tables before they all go, ready for the re-match!

A big thank you to Ann Rich for setting the questions (we missed you) and Irene Milton for being our Quiz Master for the evening.

A raffle was also held on the night and raised an amazing £177 towards much needed equipment for The Harrow. Sarah and Gareth are in the process of writing a 'wish list' of items that they require to enable them to create a more varied eating experience for you, i.e. they are in need a of a deep fat fryer to enable them to do fish and chip nights and also be able to offer a take-a-way service too. If you can spare a few pence (or pounds!) towards their wish list, or donate a new much needed item(s), big or small, please speak to either of them. All donations will be very much appreciated.

The pub had a good December with plenty of Christmas Menu and evening bookings as well as a fabulously delicious 6 course Tasting Menu evening, however it is still really quiet during the lunchtime period, so why not treat yourselves to something delicious from the lunchtime menu? You deserve no less after all that festive cooking! Go on, indulge, you will be glad that you did as you tuck in, in front of a roaring, cosy fire! And you will be helping to secure the future of The Harrow too.

There are exciting plans afoot for the coming months including **Burns' Night** on Tuesday January 25<sup>th</sup> and a special **Valentine's Day** menu to treat the special one in your in life; so keep your eyes peeled to social media for updates on events and menus, as well as The Observer. Please pre-book for either (or both!) of these evenings, or, why not pop in for a drink, have that conversation and book a table for the occasion while you are there!

And, of course, don't forget to come along to all the regular pub social occasions – Games Night, Ladies Wot Lunch (please ring to book - last Thursday of each month) ... watch the Harrow Haflingers pétanque team in action on a Wednesday's Winter League home game or cheer on The Harrow Darts teams on a Thursday evening.

Shares in The Harrow are still available to purchase; if you are interested to do so, please contact Chris Porter on 01795 843715 for more information.

## **Carols On The Green**

On a very cold night, many Stockbury residents once again turned out in support of The Salvation Army for Carols outside The Harrow Pub.

Thank you to Rodney Gibson for making the road safe for everyone.

A big thank you to Doris and family and MB Farm, as well as celebrant Barry Nixon for the help in sponsoring this event.

Also, I would like to thank the WI ladies who made mince pies and served hot drinks in the village hall, where after the refreshments there were more carols and solo pieces from The Salvation Army Band. The children who read us a story and sang "Away in a Manger" was beautiful to hear and really started off the Christmas celebrations.

It's a shame not many people came into the village hall but it is a sign of the current times we are living in.

The collection raised £241.80 and there were boxes and bags of food left in the hall for the less well off, so many thanks to all of you who donated to this very worthy cause.

Thank you to everyone who helped clean up at the end of the evening.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Covid safe New Year.

Ann Ballard

# **Mobile Library Dates:**

The mobile library will be at the Village Hall on

Thursday 13th & 27th January, 2022 from 9.10am - 9.40am











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.





# Calling the "Ladies" of Stockbury:

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

The Herrow Pub on the lest Thursday of the month et about 12.30pm

Please book your place directly with the Harrow on 01795 -843222

We would love you to join us

# Patrik Says ...

The year draws to an end and with it, in a way, the Conservative's honeymoon period in charge of Maidstone Borough Council. After our election-win in May we got on with the task of mapping the route to take MBC forward into a member lead direction. While I won't dwell on the national (or even county) Conservative 'activities', the Maidstone Leadership ploughed through 2021 and achieved what we set out to change. 2022 will show whether the pinned route forward will prove as good as it looks on paper.

As reported before, we are on track to change the administration to a more efficient executive model, away from the cumbersome and officer-led current committee system. We also, finally, managed to change the constitution to enable us to have **4 yearly elections**. Yes, the opposing parties seem to crumble into various forms of independent groups, so we chanced a second attempt to call for a vote. This time we managed to get the needed 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority on our side to fulfil the will of residents as expressed by an overwhelmingly clear survey, earlier this year.

While the electoral commission will no longer object to retain single member wards, before the next election in 2024 they will most certainly re-draw ward boundaries. Across-party working group suggested to them to reduce members from the current 55 to 48. Most certainly North Downs will become even larger in area and by population but I hope that we will retain our rural identity.

Another project for 2022 will be the development of a **Town Centre Strategy Policy**. Maidstone is not unique in seeing its town centre undergoing rapid changes. With a Council-led strategy we are seeking to give a steer to make Maidstone an attractive place to live for the years to come. In order to take the lead and not being made a hostage to fortune, we suspended permitted development rights for the main shopping district in the town centre by what is called an Article 4 direction.

I see permitted development rights as a property right, vested in the owner and therefore have never previously supported such measures. With a heavy heart and great enthusiasm for a member-led Town Centre Strategy Policy, I supported this Article 4 direction, urging the officers to involve all property owners at an early stage in the discussions and workshops when we approach this important project.

Obviously a modern town centre needs to be accessible to everyone and that requires affordable parking provisions, so it comes as a shock that **Park & Ride** once again hit negative headlines. You may already have read in the local press that the current P&R service will come to an end in February. Unfortunately we had to refuse Arriva's request for an additional £200 000 annual subsidy. Maidstone council tax payers already subsidise this service at a tune of £160 000 pa. Considering that only 600 cars are using this service, the additional burden on the council tax payer would be £333 per vehicle or a total subsidy of £600 per vehicle. I must reiterate that it was Arriva who pulled out of their contract early and whilst I appreciate the personal inconvenience to those 600 users, I cannot allow the council tax-payer being held to ransom by a multinational bus operator.

While the P&R service will be finishing, the council is looking urgently at alternative uses for the sites. Although nothing has been decided yet, this may well be the continued use for free or low-cost parking, where users may use local buses for the final leg of their journey. Watch this space ...

A quick update regarding the ongoing problem of **Garden Bins**: I mentioned this in my recent newsletters and won't deliberate much about it this time, only to say that early in the new year the Community & Housing Committee will debate possible solutions to this problem. With North Downs being one of the worst affected areas, I shall attend the committee and make representations on your behalf.

The Local Government Authority has urged **people looking to buy pets** to vet sellers properly, as the rising demand for dogs in particular is attracting irresponsible or criminal sellers. The LGA has urged people to check that their seller has a licence from their local authority, and has genuine paperwork for test results, vaccinations and microchips.

And finally ...

Regular readers will be aware that I am fighting a oneman battle to keep **light pollution** at bay in the AONB. I am pleased to note that residents have recently started to report possible planning breaches in this respect and Enforcement Officers do take these complaints seriously.

... and on that note, may 2022 bring us all what we want and deserve.

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

# **Observer Deadline!**

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

# **MONDAY 24th January**

Please email your contributions to **stockburyobserver@gmail.com** 

# **Corner Ditty**

### Resolutions

Another year, a brand new slate Of resolutions I hope keep I will join the gym and learn to skate Give up coffee and eating cake A brand new year, a brand new slate

Try as I might to focus straight My good intentions soon crumble and fade Another year, a brand new slate Of resolutions I'll never keep!



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# Cooking with Zeina

### Zeina's Warm Citrusy Chicken Salad

We eat a lot when it's cold (well ... we might also eat a lot when it's not cold ...) and by the time this is published, we will have all consumed pre-Christmas feasts, Christmas feasts, leftover feasts and New Year's Eve feasts. A lot of rich food! And so I'd like to suggest a salad to help us ease into the New Year a little gently.

This recipe is one I'm perpetually changing. I had a sleepy meal one day at a restaurant somewhere in Oxford many years ago, it was the best salad I've ever had. I don't know whether it was so good simply because I was so sleepy, but whatever it was, I've tried to recreate the memory over the years and I'm still perfecting it, but this is very close:

Here's the latest iteration of this drowsy delicious memory:

### Ingredients

- Cooked chicken breast/ shredded roast chicken, 0.3 kg
- Rocket leaves chopped roughly, 80 grams
- Iceberg lettuce -chopped finely, 60 grams
- Balsamic vinegar a splash or two
- Carrots chopped roughly, 1/2 kg
- Honey 2 tbsp
- Pomegranate seeds a generous handful
- Pistachios chopped roughly, 4 tbsp

- Cucumber chopped thinly, 1 large
- Baby spinach chopped finely, handful
- Grapes (seedless) chopped roughly, handful
- Brown bread cubed, 3 slices
- Orange juice 1/3 cup
  Lemon juice 2 Tbsp
- Extra virgin olive oil 1 cup
- Salt & pepper to taste

### **Method to The Madness:**

- 1. Vinaigrette: Mix the orange juice, lemon juice, extra virgin olive oil, 1 tbsp of honey, salt and pepper together and put aside to emulsify. (This will make more than you need).
- 2. Lightly toast the bread pieces under the grill and then for added crunch, toss with olive oil and then dry fry in a hot pan. Season these croutons if you'd like.
- 3. Toss the carrots in some balsamic vinegar and salt and pepper and then fry them in a little olive oil. They should begin to shrink in size. Add the remaining honey and let it all caramelise slightly. Set aside to cool completely.
- 4. In a large bowl, mix together the baby spinach, lettuce and rocket.
- 5. Layer the chicken, cucumber and sweet carrots. Toss.
- 6. Sprinkle the pomegranate seeds, grapes and pistachios on top. Add the vinaigrette one tablespoon at a time, tossing and tasting. as you go Add the croutons on the side.

Perfect with warm buttered crusty bread on the side and good conversation.

(And something crisp and white in a wine glass? - Ed)

Love, Zeina



Ba our ESCAPES



Luxury Shepherd's Hut in Yelsted with wood fired hot tub, stunning views and set exclusively and privately alone in an acre meadow field.

We would like to offer a discount to the local residents and the families and friends of Stockbury, Yelsted and Hartlip. Ideal for Christmas, New Year and family celebrations.

For further details please email info@courtbarnescapes.com





The Hook and Hatchet Inn is located on 573 acres of park and woodland. There are a number of desirable amenities onsite other than just the fabulous bar and dining area - paired with a wide selection of beers, ales, spirits and wines and also fantastic homemade pub food! The pub is dog friendly and also boasts an area for horses to be tied up and watered free of charge outside too! The Hook & Hatchet is always bursting with events.

**Food at The Hook & Hacthet Inn** Food is available 7 days a week from noon, and earlier on weekends and bank holidays to cater for breakfast guests.

## **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
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	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
Not So Young Club	Rosemary Leonard	01634 232672
Parish Council Clerk	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 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	Ann Rich - email: ann.stockbury@btinternet.com	07718 070807
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
WI	Ann Ballard - email: rosemary.ballard@outlook.com	01622 736331