

# THE STOCKBURY & SOUTH GREEN OBSERVER

*October 2022*

## **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**



**1926 - 2022**

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## Accession Proclamation of King Charles III

On Sunday 11th September, following the sad news of the unexpected death of HM Queen Elizabeth II at Balmoral on the 8th September, the Chairman of Stockbury Parish Council Phil Woods read the Privy Council Accession Proclamation of the accession to the throne of King Charles III.



This Proclamation was read on the Village Green in accordance with protocol and following a tradition dating from Saxon times, since in the days before easy travel and mass communication, this was the way of carrying news across the country.

The Privy Council Accession Proclamation had been read and televised for the first time ever, with appropriate pomp and fanfare at St James's Palace on

the morning of the 11th, following which it trickled down through the counties, cities, towns and villages of the whole United Kingdom, including Stockbury, later that same day.

Despite the last minute nature of the notification to residents, around 40 people attended Stockbury's reading of the Proclamation, which concluded with the rousing cry of 'God Save the King!', following which many of those attending remained to chat with neighbours or repaired to the pub to drink a toast to her late Majesty and to our new King Charles.

It seems strange, after 70 years of our well loved Monarch being on the throne to say 'God Save The King' rather than Queen but I'm sure we'll all get used to it. And after the end of the mourning period, we can now start planning for next year's Coronation celebrations!

God Save the King!

## Update

### The Possible Loss of the 332 Bus Service

Whilst the effect of the loss of the 332 bus service will be most felt by families with children attending Sittingbourne schools, it will have indirect consequences for everyone living in Stockbury and the surrounding areas. A village with no school bus service will have less appeal to families and as a result, the value of property in the village will be adversely effected. It may not be a huge loss, but it will be a consideration for any prospective buyers.

Now that I've hopefully got everyone's attention, this is a general overview of where we are at ...

A while ago a full KCC Councillors meeting decided to reduce the budget for subsidies paid to bus operators in Kent by £2m. As a result it was decided that the 332 along with over 40 other routes should be axed. This decision was called in by the Scrutiny Committee who are there as a sense check, 'are you sure this is a good idea?' The Scrutiny Committee is primarily made up of Conservative Councillors but they saw the problems the decision would cause so they referred it back to the Cabinet. Whilst some members of the Cabinet were sympathetic, they hid behind 'we need to make a £2m saving, we haven't got the budget'

so the decision still stands awaiting ratification by a full Council meeting which is now scheduled for 20th October. From what I've been told, KCC have to give 12 weeks' notice to the bus operators that they are going to withdraw the subsidy but they can't give notice until the decision has been finally ratified and then signed off, so the earliest it can be withdrawn is into the New Year.

It's also worth noting that whilst KCC Highways will make a £2m saving, the bigger picture is that KCC as a whole have a legal obligation to get children to their "nearest appropriate school". In the case of Stockbury, this is generally deemed to be Westlands in Sittingbourne. If your child goes anywhere else though, you made a choice to opt out even though you may not have been aware of it at the time. Over Kent this equates to a cost of £400k that gets picked up by the Education Department, so whilst Highways save £2m in real terms the overall KCC saving is only £1.6m. Robbing Peter to pay Paul ...

KCC schools are allowed to specialise, whether that be in drama, sports, faith or a grammar school. Your family may elect to exercise their rights in their school choice, as allowed for in the Human Rights Act but with no way of getting the child to the school, there is no choice. With no bus, our choice will be Westlands, Westlands or Westlands.

If the service is removed, the Westlands children will probably be picked up door to door by a fleet of taxis. The other children will have to go by family car, adding to the KCC funded taxis already on roughly the same journey, before the parent's dash off to work. As well as the practical problems this is going to cause the families concerned it is also going to add to the congestion and have a significant environmental impact.

Up until now, parents and children affected by the eventual loss of the bus have been lobbying / emailing the Councillors on the Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet to point out the error of their ways and try and get them to reverse the decision but we also still have a chance to try and influence the full Cabinet.

### So how can you help?

There are 81 Councillors that will be re-considering the decision and we need to hit them with as many emails as possible.

The main points you might like to make could be around the resultant increase in congestion and the environmental impact both of which KCC are supposed to be working to reduce, not increase. Other points may include, in no particular order:-

- How are the children supposed to get to school?
- Why should children in a rural location not have the same school choices as those living in urban areas where there is likely to be a regular bus service?
- The village will lose its appeal to families resulting in an ageing demographic.
- Instead of the carbon footprint of one bus, we could potentially have 10+ car journeys with parents taking children to school before they have to rush off to work.
- Sittingbourne is highlighted as being in the top three towns in Kent for congestion at school run time. This decision is just going to make it worse
- Air quality will deteriorate despite KCC's claims to be working to improve it.
- School transport is legally supposed to be sustainable - removing the bus flies in the face of this.





## THE HARROW PUB

Free House - Community Owned  
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**SAT 15th  
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**Sat 29th  
FINE DINING EVENING**

## THE HARROW PUB STOCKBURY



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## We Are Hiring

We are looking for a part time cook to work  
Lunchtime and Evenings  
Friday and Saturdays

For more information please contact Sarah  
(01795) 842448



## 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 -843222*

*We would love you to join us*



- This isn't just a school service, its removal will isolate the village even further. With the permanent removal of the bus stops on the A249, there will be no public transport serving Stockbury.
- Post Covid, Central Government is promoting the use of public transport but local government is taking it away.
- School choices have been made based on the bus being available. Removal of the service leaves children potentially having to move schools at an important stage in their education.
- The children on the bus form friendships with children that attend other schools that they otherwise would not have the opportunity to do.
- Forcing families out of villages and into towns is going to put yet more pressure on urban housing stock.
- Most parents in the village work, many as key workers but they won't be able to work and do the school run.

It would greatly help if you could join in the fun and lobby the KCC Councillors. These emails need to be individual as if they are a generic copy and paste, they tend to get discounted. Please feel free to use the points above but please do so in your own words.

Rather than having to enter 81 separate email addresses, all you need to do is send it to **members.desk@kent.gov.uk** and ask them to circulate it to all KCC Councillors. This needs to be as soon as possible, but definitely **before 19th October**.

Please remember, this affects all of us, not just the families of school children and we need as many people to write as possible. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to give me a call.

Dave Canham  
07767 635885

## The Harrow

### Auction Donation Update

You all know that Sarah smiles a lot and it is wonderful sight to see. Well now she has even more to smile about; that's all because of you, the generous auction sponsors. As you see, the warming cabinet with lit shelves and gleaming surfaces has been purchased and is now in situ. Eat your heart out Gordon Ramsay ...



Not only that, the auction money collected has stretched to a new, much more efficient ice machine and a bar wine cooler.

THANK YOU EVERYBODY!

Ann Rich

## The Harrow Book Corner

### Books & DVD's to Borrow or Keep!

We are now into autumn, nights are drawing in and as the long cold winter stretches ahead it's time to snuggle down in the evenings, perhaps with a book you've always meant to read or to watch a film you haven't had time see during the glorious summer we've just enjoyed.

We'd like to remind you that The Harrow has a well stocked book corner with a good selection of books covering a wide range of genres as well as numerous film dvds, for children as well as adults which are frequently changed.

These books/dvd's are free to borrow so do come in and browse and see what we have. If you have read a particularly good book recently and would recommend it to others please feel free to donate it by dropping it at the pub to add to the collection.

There has been a suggestion that we could also lend jigsaws, so if anyone is up for that idea, or if you have any other suggestions for items that we could stock for the benefit of the village, please let us know.

So, the log burning stoves will soon be lit, the pub will be a toasty warm and pleasant space to while away your autumn evenings in a quiet cosy corner, or you can take your chosen books and dvds and relax at home.

Coming up for you during October:

- **5th - Tractor Club - 12.30pm**
- **7th - Fish & Chip Night** - Please book your table in advance - takeaway available
- **11th - Games Night - 8pm start**
- **15th - Live Music - Elizmi - 8pm start**
- **18th Quiz Night - 8pm start**
- **29th - Fine Dining Evening with Chef Silvestre**  
A 3 course fine dining experience @ £45 per head, with a £20 deposit per person on booking. Space is limited.

Our guest beers this month are all from the Canterbury Ales stable and are:

**Red Godiva** is a red 4.1% single hop ale; the Godiva hop giving the ale spicy, tangerine and gooseberry hints. A good flavourful ale with a malty hint.  
**Jester Gold** is a 4% single hop golden ale.  
**Reeves Ale** is a 4.1% A tawny copper best bitter with nutty malts and berry fruit hops.

Don't forget that the pub is open every morning from Wednesday to Sunday from 10.30am and serves a range of tea and coffee all day and that every Friday is coffee and cake morning! An excellent excuse to flee those chores and have some well deserved 'me' time catching up with friends and family in the welcoming and warm atmosphere of our village pub.

And finally, congratulations to our Pétanque Team, The Harrow Percherons, who finished second in their Summer League table, narrowly missing out on the top spot by a mere 2 points. Two members of our Percheron team also won the Kent Over 55's Doubles Tournament too! A fantastic end to the team's summer season. Well done Team Harrow!

# 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)



## M2 junction 5 Stockbury interchange improvement scheme

We have now closed the M2 eastbound (towards the coast) slip roads on and off the motorway from Stockbury roundabout. This means you are not able to access Stockbury roundabout from the eastbound M2, or join the M2 eastbound from Stockbury roundabout at junction 5.

The slip roads will remain closed until 13 January 2023, at which point both slip roads will re-open. However, access from the M2 eastbound to the A249 northbound will temporarily be via Stockbury roundabout, until the dedicated slip opens in March.

We know there's never a good time to complete this kind of work at a busy junction like this, and understand these closures will cause disruption to journeys, for which we apologise. We appreciate your patience so far and in advance for the duration of these works.

### Oad Street closure

Oad Street will be closed between the A249 and Woodgate Lane until 10 October 2022, while we finish our widening work that we started in the Spring. All businesses remain open as usual.

You can find out more about these closures on our project webpage: [nationalhighways.co.uk/m2-j5](https://nationalhighways.co.uk/m2-j5)



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)





# Highways Improvement Plan

The latest version of the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) has now been submitted to KCC Highways, a copy has also been added to the Parish website ([www.stockbury.org/highways](http://www.stockbury.org/highways))

For those people who do not have access to the internet the below provides a summary of the HIP:

1. A request for Automated Traffic Counts (ATCs) survey lasting four weeks on Bimbury Lane, Yelsted Road, South Street and South Green Lane. These surveys will give a good indication of the type and number of vehicles using these roads along with speeds and will hopefully confirm observations made by a number of Parish Councillors and parishioners who have undertaken informal surveys. A request for KCC Highways to look at ways that the flow of northbound traffic along Bimbury Lane can be either limited or at least broken up into batches was also made.
2. A request for a 30mph limit along South Green Lane (from the hamlet name board to the Hazel St / Pett Rd crossroads) along with SLOW road markings. Warning signs to be placed on the approaches to the South Green / Hazel St / Pett Rd crossroads as due to the poor sight lines on the approach to this junction, it is often mistaken for a T-junction rather than a crossroads.
3. Our draft HIP included a request for a white line around the bend on Church Lane / Hill. After discussion with KCC Highways this has been amended to "SLOW" road markings and warning signs on the approaches to the bend. This alteration was made following advice that white lines are often interpreted as denoting a widening of the road and consequently results in increased speeds.
4. Reduction in speed limit to 30mph and increased signage along Bimbury Lane, Yelsted Road, Chalky Road and South Street. KCC Highways advise that too many signs will result in drivers invariably ignoring them, so currently we are requesting that efforts are centred around the junctions (Bimbury Lane / South St, Yelsted Road / Yelsted Lane and Yelsted Road / Hill Green). An additional ATC of traffic using Chalky Road has been requested.
5. An additional ATC of traffic using Chalky Road has been requested.

The initial HIP drafts contained a number of points that KCC Highways class as maintenance issues rather than improvements; these include such things as refreshing road markings, replacing missing or damaged signs and levelling or surfacing of passing places. These items have been removed from the HIP and instead raised via the normal KCC Highways fault logging webpage.

## Progress

KCC Highways have undertaken the ATCs along Bimbury Lane, Yelsted Rd, South St and South Green Lane for a total of 4 weeks. These surveys illustrate just how much of an imbalance in traffic heading north / south along Bimbury Lane and Yelsted Road there is and that whilst average speeds invariably fall in the 20-30mph range, there are instances of vehicles being driven at considerably higher speeds. On average there are two days a week where traffic that is trying to avoid the A249/J5 works by using Bimbury Lane builds to such an extent that opposing traffic is unable to progress along Yelsted Rd or Bimbury Lane. This invariably occurs during the 15:30 - 18:00hr 'rush hour' period. The survey data also shows that around 75% of

the traffic leaving the A249 at Bimbury (or Chalky Road) uses Yelsted Road to access either Yaugher Lane and Matts Hill Road in order to reach Farthing Corner or Rainham, or continues onto Hartlip. The remaining 25% of vehicles leaving the A249 are either local residents living in the village or are heading towards Hartlip via Bull Lane.

## Discounted Suggestions & Challenges

During the recent highways meeting, a number of residents raised the suggestion of having speed bumps, build-outs or other traffic calming measures installed in the centre of the village. Having discussed this with KCC Highways, it is apparent that such measures cannot be introduced due to a lack of space; both the road width and distance between junctions and additionally the requirement that all such schemes must include street lighting.

The request for 30mph limits along many of the parishes roads will no doubt prove challenging; such restrictions are normally only introduced where there is a cluster of twenty or more properties or a school, hospital, daycare centre or the like. Although South Green falls below the required number of properties for such a limit, the PC believe that the number of businesses operating from South Green and South Dean farms means that is a sufficient density of properties to justify a 30mph limit.

If anyone has specific questions regarding the HIP or further suggestions regarding signage, road markings or traffic calming measures, please email the Parish Clerk or come along to the next Parish Council meeting on 19th October at 7.30pm.

## Stockbury Harvest Festival 9th October

The village Harvest Festival will be held at 4.30pm on 9th October in Stockbury Church.

Following a short service of thanksgiving and familiar harvest hymns, there will be a wine and cheese get together; a chance for friends and neighbours to celebrate the end of a long glorious summer and to look back at the tumultuous events that have happened in the UK and the wider world and also to look forward to what we, in a small way, can do to help make a difference.

As this winter may be a very cold one, especially with the cost of living crisis making it even colder for many, we are asking for donations of non-perishable foods for the local food bank, as it is likely that it will be needed even more than most this year and by people who would not normally need to rely on a food bank.

So please come along, bring whatever you can donate, mix with your friends and neighbours and help support those who may be struggling.

Everyone is welcome, regardless of faith or not.



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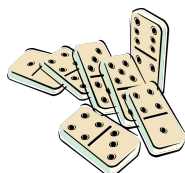
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**CALLING  
ALL  
GAMERS!**



**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.**



**OBSERVER DEADLINE**  
**MONDAY 24<sup>th</sup> October**

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

**Mobile Library Dates**

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> October, '22  
9.10am - 9.40am

**At the Village Hall**

**Church Draw September Winners**

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

1st £30 - Joy Waters  
2nd £20 - Richard Stevens  
3rd £10 - Amelia Clarke



## Rubbish in Yelsted Lane

To the person who:

- Owns a new “Minecraft” fleece blanket
- Has a small child
- Has a small dog
- Uses “pink lemonade” vapes
- Buys healthy snacks but does not eat them
- Left their rubbish in a black sack at the side of Yelsted Road on Sunday

... GOTCHA!

## Stockbury Gardeners

Refreshed from a weekend in the Malvern Hills and a return to gridlocked Stockbury!

The Chairman’s wife returned, however, with not one but three RED cards from the show bench at the Malvern Show, a big congratulations to her.

Stockbury Gardeners this month will meet on the 6th October at 8pm. The evening will consist of the AGM and the Autumn Show, judged by an independent judge, whilst the AGM ensues. Guests are all welcome, if you are curious enough to see the workings of your village society.

This month there are several things to be getting on with:

- Where the hot weather has burned off grass on the lawn by now it should be recovering; if not, you will need to re-sow with lawn seed, available from any good stockist. Start by simply “roughing” up the soil, mix sharp sand and seed and spread over the bald patches.
- It might be a good idea to shorten up buddleia and bush roses, if only to stop damage from the winter winds.
- Clear up leaves from paths before they become slippery.
- Any perennials trimmed up can have the seed heads and stems laid on the ground to give food and a habitat for insects.
- Clean glass on the inside of greenhouses.
- Check over heaters ready for use once the weather breaks.
- Wash seed trays and pots before storing them.
- One of the most exciting times of the year in gardening is picking seeds from the catalogue ready to sow for next year. You can save some of your own seeds if you wish to save yourself a few bob!

Chris Spree

## Patrik Says ...

### Planning Enforcement

Complaints about lack of planning enforcement are not uncommon in my inbox. Combined with this is often a gripe that officers ‘still’ work from home and cannot be reached.

Maidstone currently deals with 300 planning breaches. There are currently only 3 full-time officers in post while we are desperately trying to fill another 2½ positions. The sad fact is that qualified planning officers are as rare as gold dust which is a national problem.

At least 2 officers are always out on site visits between 7am – 7pm. Hybrid working is very beneficial because officers can go on site visits straight from home, cutting down on travel time and allowing for visits outside normal 9–5 office hours.

Because Enforcement Officers spend a great deal of time on site visits, they are difficult to trace at their desks or by phone. For that reason please always use the planning portal to contact the Enforcement Team. This assures the most efficient way that an officer can take up your enquiry:

<https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/planning-and-building/primary-areas/planning-enforcement/tier-3-primary-areas/planning-enforcement-information>

### Cost of Living Crisis

The Rural Services Network (RSN), which represents rural councils and other service providers, has produced a report which says the cost of living crisis is hitting people in rural areas harder than those in towns and cities. Those in the countryside are spending much more on essentials like heating, transport and housing, the study found. Rural households on a low income now spend around half of their earnings on rent – almost 5% more than low-income households in urban areas.

This comes as no surprise and I previously mentioned that the North Downs Ward ranks fairly low on Maidstone’s deprivation scale, along with Shepway and ParkWood although possibly for different reasons. Access to public transport and doctors seems to push us down the scale a lot. While MBC has no powers over those particular issues, I would still like to hear any thoughts on how we can help rural communities and families. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund, part of the government’s levelling-up agenda, awarded Maidstone £500,000 in support for rural communities.

I am keen to hear your thoughts how to utilise this effectively for sustainable community projects such as, for example, the Stockbury Community Bus, or any initiative to support local business. I am a bit concerned that, if we don’t put our thinking-caps on, the money may just be thrown (again) at the village halls – I say this without any disrespect to our village halls and their hard-working committees. However, you may remember that village halls were previously the recipients of very generous grants during Covid.

### Cost of Living Support Events

Maidstone is working with local organisations and holding a series of Cost of Living Support Events to help people worried about paying their household bills. People can talk to experts to get advice, information and any help they may need. MBC’s Council Tax, Benefits, Housing and Homelessness Prevention Teams will be joined by partner organisations including Citizens Advice Bureau, Maidstone Mind, Princess Project, Fusion Healthy Living Centre, Involve, Golding Homes, KCC Healthy Start and Free School Meals to let people know about funding and support that is available.

They will also be able to provide details on the Warm Home Discount Scheme, provide information about Universal Credit, support with Council Tax payments, healthy eating, wellbeing and to offer household bill payment support, money saving tips as well as debt advice.

The MBC Cost of Living Support events will be located in The Mall in Maidstone on the middle level near Iceland between 10.30am and 2.30pm Monday–Saturday from the 3rd to the 8th October 2022.

### Opportunities Ahead!

A crisis is not only doom and gloom but provides opportunity. It’s indeed a great time to start a new business, with many sources of funding available. Please check

## 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.



# Happy Halloween



## 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	7.30-9.30pm
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		



<https://businessinmaidstone.co.uk/connect-in-maidstone/> events and see what help is available and what our business team is up to. Of particular note is the 9th of November when the Maidstone Innovation Centre will be hosting its first Research & Development event. It will focus on supporting businesses within the medical sector by showcasing new technologies, exploring funding opportunities, learning about business support and networking with like-minded individuals. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-zMIGOk5Is>

### Important Websites

I mentioned these before but it may be worth a reminder, unless you have already book-marked them in your browser:

For events, activities, tourist accommodation, entertainment and shopping in Maidstone make this your first call:  
<https://www.visitmaidstone.com/things-to-do>

And at <https://letstalkmaidstone.uk.engagementhq.com> you can find and take part in consultations that interest you, share your ideas and influence the services we provide. Obviously you can email or call your local councillor too.

### Electoral Boundary Review

Over the past months I have kept you updated about the Electoral Boundary review. You may remember that the Commission proposed to join North Downs with Harrietsham and Lenham to form a 3-member super-ward.

I've worked hard on a proposal how to keep North Downs Ward separate. The Maidstone Council Democracy Committee accepted my suggestions unanimously last week and, subject to Full Council ratification while The Stockbury Observer goes to print, MBC will put these ideas to the Electoral Commission who will be the final decision-maker. Watch this space.

### And Finally ...

Good news from the Hollingbourne Railway Station Community project whose wheels I set in motion just over 18 months ago. After unforeseen delays this summer, I can report that the water is now connected and the possibility for the Station to be opened for community use is getting ever nearer. We are aiming to hold a Steering Group meeting within the next two weeks, followed by a loud call for able and willing volunteers.

PATRIK GARTEN

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

## Kent Fraud Alert

### Ofgem Phishing Email

Action Fraud have recently reported that they received over 750 reports about this phishing email which states that you are eligible for a rebate on your energy bill but need to click on a link contained within the email and disclose personal and financial information. It's a SCAM. The link will only take you to a genuine looking website, where the fraudsters will steal your details.

Please remember that banks and official organisations like Ofgem will *never* email asking you to click on a link to share this type of information. Please forward any suspicious emails received to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

If you think that you may have been a victim of this type of scam, then contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.

### HMRC Phishing Emails

Action Fraud have reported that they have received over 440 reports of fake emails impersonation HMRC, offering a Tax "refund." As always, they ask you to click on a link in the email, which will take you to a genuine looking website but which is under the control of the fraudsters, who are looking to steal your personal and financial data.

HMRC will **NEVER** send you a email like this requesting you click on a link to obtain a tax rebate and asking for that type of information.

If you receive one of these emails, please forward it to [phishing@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:phishing@hmrc.gov.uk).

### Have You Been Asked to Withdraw Cash by the Police?

This is a **SCAM**.

The police will NEVER ask for your bank details or PIN or ask you to transfer or withdraw and hand over sums of money. They will NEVER send a courier to collect your bank cards, cash or PIN either.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this type of scam, then contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.

If you are unsure about a call or visitor you have received:

- Don't give out any personal or financial information.
- Hang up or close your front door to check the callers identity.
- If they have phoned you, wait 10minutes before you use your phone again, or use a different phone in case they stay on the line.
- Contact their company yourself or dial 101 for the police **DO NOT** call a number that they have provided.
- Report suspicious activity straight away.

Kent Police

## Ditty Corner

### The Cost of Loving

By Brian Bilston

I love you more than life itself  
But I swear I'll love you better  
If you let me turn the heating off  
And you wear another sweater

I cannot get enough of you  
I'm completely in your thrall  
When I see you bending over  
To unplug the telly at the wall

Yes, you're the one for me  
My sweet and fragrant flower  
If you ditch the the daily baths  
For one weekly 4 minute shower

Make no mistake I love you loads  
You send my head into a spin  
Which reminds me eco-wash on thirty  
Cram as much as you can in

My cup of love is full for you  
It overflows my petal  
So make yourself a brew with me  
Just don't overfill the kettle

## 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