



THE STOCKBURY & SOUTH GREEN OBSERVER

June 2021

Threatening and Anonymous Letter

Stockbury Parish Councillors are disappointed and concerned to learn that a resident of Stockbury has been sent an anonymous letter, apparently sent to complain about the recipient of that letter having taken an inappropriate interest in activity within the sender's property.

This anonymous letter is drafted in a manner that is both unpleasant and threatening in tone and so is, of course, entirely unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The letter has been passed to the police and the sender should identify himself or herself to the police, so that the matter can be resolved appropriately.

Needless to say, nobody should have to be subjected to the experience of receiving unpleasant anonymous letters and if any more are sent, they should be dealt with in the same way, immediately.

Stockbury is a supportive and friendly community, as shown during the current pandemic and we hope and expect that there will be no further such letters sent. But should anyone be unfortunate enough to receive one, please place it in a plastic bag and pass it to the authorities.

Please feel free to contact any Parish Councillor should you be affected in any way.

SPC

Stockbury Parish Council Casual Vacancy

You may already have seen the notices at the Village Hall, MB Farms, Facebook etc, but just in case ...

There are two Councillor vacancies on Stockbury Parish Council. If you are interested in being considered for co-option onto the Parish Council, please contact our Parish Clerk, Sherrie Babington:

stockburypc@sherriebabington.co.uk

01634-863719

Mrs S Babington, 4 Birkhall Close, Chatham, Kent
ME5 7QD

The closing date for applications is 11th June.

SPC

Stockbury Roundabout Update

We were initially told that we would receive the Secretary of State's decision on 21st April. Nothing.

We were then told to expect the decision on 18th May. Nothing.

At the time of writing, 22nd May, we are still waiting ..

At some point, the Secretary of State will have to make his mind up but we have no idea when this might be.

If we hear before the next edition of The Stockbury Observer, notices will be posted in the usual places.

SPC

Stockbury Superfast Broadband

Quick update ...

The quote is now £350,446 for 59 properties. So approx £6K per property which is still well above the grants available even for businesses.

Still working on it with KCC and Councillor Shellina Prendergast, so don't give up hope just yet ...

Anne Southern
SPC

Stockbury Village Hall

We are delighted to let you know that your hall is now open for clubs / societies and anyone who would like to hire it. Please contact me for details.

Sue Porter
01795-843715

Stockbury Playing Field

Not everyone realises that the hall and playing field is owned by the village, is held in a trust and run by a committee.

It has come to our notice that there have been a few instances where activities have taken place on the edges of the playing field without permission. If you are planning to dispose of any soil or cut down any trees on the field, please talk to one of the Hall Committee first.

Many thanks

Stockbury Hall & Playing Field Committee

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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

St Mary Magdalene

Services for June in Stockbury Church

13th June - 6pm Holy Communion

27th June - 6pm BCP Evensong

Weekly services within the Benefice can be found on
The Six website - www.thesix.org.uk

For Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals please contact
The Revd Julian Staniforth - tel. 01795 - 227329.

Penny Stevens
PCC Secretary

May Church Draw Winners

CONGRATULATIONS!

1st - B Rose

£40 (146)

2nd - Dorothy Stamatakis

£20 (181)

3rd - Denise Gee

£10 (213)

Ditty Corner

The Birds

Summer has come, the blackbird sung
The woodpecker drummed his beak
The swallows did follow with an aerial dance
Who flew with acrobatic grace
In envy the sparrows they did wishfully dream
Whilst the wood pigeon coo'd his delight

Rain!

It rained on Monday when I wanted to cut the grass
And then on Tuesday it rained some more
When I'd planned to hang the laundry out
Wednesday was a cloudy day
With thunderstorms interspersed
Whilst Thursday came with a deluge
Which everybody cursed
Friday brought a drizzle worse than a Scottish mist
And after Saturday's thirty minutes of drought
Rapidly followed some refreshing showers
A typical British summer's week
But hey! ... Sunday I forgot to mention
Which was a blustery rainy day!

A Soldier - Fond Memories

Part Three

The operational tour in Borneo came to an early end when the confrontation was declared over. It had been a fascinating period during which I enjoyed great independence. I only met my Squadron Commander occasionally, routine communication was by radio, not by voice but using morse code!

Back in Kluang the Adjutant informed me that my time commanding a troop would be cut short as I was to be posted to the Training Depot Brigade of Gurkhas in January. I was bitterly disappointed and made this very clear. Shortly afterwards I was called for an interview with the Commanding Officer. As I waited to go into his office I was expecting "an interview without coffee"! To my amazement the CO informed me that I was to take his vacancy to trek in Nepal in September. The purpose of these treks was to maintain a link between the Regiment and soldiers' families. No mention was made of my reaction to the forthcoming posting!

The journey to Nepal was not without incident. I flew to Calcutta, spent a night there and next day flew on to Kathmandu. The embassy were arranging my onward movement to Dharan, the recruiting depot for East Nepal. They had fixed for me to hitch a ride in an RAF Beverley that was stopping at Dharan on its return flight to Calcutta. We arrived over the grass strip at Dharan in a storm and the pilot decided he couldn't land so, much to my dismay, continued on to Calcutta. My passport had been stamped on arrival at Kathmandu. Back in Calcutta I spent a long time explaining to officials how I had managed to leave Nepal without a departure stamp in it!

I eventually arrived in Dharan where I met up with a soldier from my troop who was on leave. Gurkha soldiers only get home leave every three years. Having hired porters, bought some supplies and a good pair of walking boots off we set for a most interesting three weeks trekking from village to village, sleeping under the stars or in a tent. At that time the only roads in Nepal were in Kathmandu. My abiding memories are the clean air, thin as we climbed into the hills, no light pollution, the vistas across the foothills of the Himalayas with Everest always in view and above all the hospitality and generosity of the people I met. Most were very poor but whatever they had they insisted on sharing with me. It has been my experience in other places that those with the least are often the most ready to share what little they have.

Sadly all good things must come to an end, the time had come to return to Kluang. It had been an amazing experience, one that I shall never forget and it didn't even count as leave!

Tony Kerr

THE HARROW IS OPEN!

Please Pre-Book Your Table

Phone: 01795 843222 or 07909 631057
Email: contact@theharrowstockbury.co.uk
booking@theharrowstockbury.co.uk



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MB Farms: Origin & Legacy

We all feel a sense of pride in our local farm shop and people come from far and wide to be part of the community built around it. From your morning newspaper to fresh meat and a post office, the range within the shop is impressive. There is an old world charm at MB Farms, with their cheeses, stationery, chutneys, greetings cards, jams and sweets. Not to mention the busy atmosphere and cheerful and welcoming staff. Managing Director, Nick Brown, the successful proprietor and owner of MB Farms is a well respected pillar of the community and someone we all turn to for advice and help.

The Stockbury Observer wanted to give parishioners the inside scoop on how MB Farms came to be what it is today so Zeina sat down with Nick to find out more about its origin story and his views on farming.

Nick described the near century old business and how it started with his great grandfather, Mr. Maddocks, who bought the place in 1926 and ran it initially simply as a barn. It then passed down to Nick's grandfather and was then inherited by his mother, Doris Maddocks, an active and incredibly impressive matriarch who is still involved with the business to this day. Doris went on to marry Terry Brown and it was then that they started farming with Nick's grandfather and called the business 'Maddocks & Brown'. Terry and Doris started the butcher's side of the business in the 80's.



In the meantime, Chris Burgess, a parishioner of the village, had bought the village shop but eventually Mr. Burgess and his family moved to America. A popular local landmark now, the village shop merged with Maddocks & Brown to become the MB Farms we all know and love today. *"We thought that we'll merge both the businesses to make one bigger business and still keep the Post Office going"* said Mr. Brown, reminiscing. Back in the late 90's and early 2000's many Post Offices were closing. Despite a number of government changes, the Stockbury Post Office, one of the first village farm Post Offices, endured. *"We're one of the few villages with a shop, a post office, a church and its own pub left, aren't we?"* Nick asked. The two families have stayed in touch. *"They're (The Burgess family) back in the Medway Towns now. They lived in America for several years but now they've come back to live in Rainham. I expect I see Chris and Heather when they come in once a month - at least"*.

Sitting in the Brown residence with the family, while the watchful Mackey, their fourteen year old blue parrot, looks on, you can't help but feel the press of history. Antique fixtures, a lovely set of vintage plates proudly displayed and a cast iron cooking range set in a massive fireplace all set the tone. It's a busy, warm and happy kitchen, just like the family. Jackie, Nick's wife, arrived with some groceries and the house settled into a comfortable low thrum as everyone bustled about. An integral part of the business, Jackie Brown manages the feeding of the calves and lambs and the ever increasing stock management amongst other things. MB Farms is truly a family farm: Nick, Jackie, their son Matt and his girlfriend Kiri all work the farm together. They all also all live together with Doris in their family home near the shop, Terry having recently passed away.

Zeina: *"So the original key individual to found the business was Maddocks senior in 1926?"*

Nick: *"Yes, he traded as Maddocks for years!"*

Zeina: *"The company is going to be a hundred years old in five years! Any plans for the 100 year mark?"*

Nick: (laughed) *"Oh I don't know yet, let's get there first! We've got a few more years yet!"*

We then spoke about changes in the business. The most significant recent change was when they started the shop in 1999. *"We went from solely a family farm to a retail enterprise"*. On discussing other people wanting to learn his trade, Nick, one of the most successful businessmen in Kent, spoke of the necessity for dedication. *"You do need a high level of commitment. It's 24-7, and with the new shop we have opened in Faversham, we've now added a whole new aspect to the job"*. Talk about the agriculture industry inevitably turned to Brexit and its effect on the industry. In Nick's view, coming out of the common market has resulted in a welcome price hike to retailers' goods. However, it has also led to production costs rising. *"Farmers are obviously going to miss the subsidies. When you get down to basics, the farming vote is not very strong in the UK. No government is going to give money away to farmers to grow crops. They'll only give farmers money for public access to the land and environmental benefits... [however] a lot of these farmers need that money to survive on."*

On the website, they have spoken of 'Responsible stewardship of the countryside':

Nick: *"Everything we have comes from the countryside. We grow the crops, we raise the animals. You can't farm like you did a hundred years ago because it's not viable, you'd soon go out of business. So you have to adapt with modern ways but you also have got to be mindful of what damage you're doing."*

Zeina: *"Damage?"*

Nick: *"Yes. Because at the end of the day, agriculture creates monocultures, whether that be a field of grass where you don't want thistles or wildflowers, or a field of cereals where all you want is a crop of cereals. This is what's called a 'monoculture', and it goes against nature. If you look at ground that's left to grow wild, there're all different species and as a farmer you're always going to be at odds with that."*

Zeina: *"So how do you manage?"*



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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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Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon

National Lottery Now Available

www.mbfarms.co.uk

MB Farms: Origin & Legacy cont'd ...

Nick: *“Bees and all insects are essential to our survival. So we’ve turned to a more rotational or traditional type of farming. We’re trying to have overwintered stubbles where there is something for the birds and insects during winter. We’re putting in catch crops to reestablish fertility and to remove our reliance on chemicals and man-made fertilisers. For instance, every year we bring in the rotation mustard plants, it grows and puts organic fibre back into the ground and also produces a field of lovely yellow flowers late in the season. You’ve also probably noticed the spiders in the area?”*

Zeina: *“I most certainly have, yes...”*

Nick: *“Responsible farmers let spiders build a web on top of the plant stubbles to protect the crops from aphids. So there’s no need for aphid pesticides”. (This author reserves judgment on spiders being involved in any type farming.)*

On how Covid has affected MB Farms and Stockbury as a whole, we spoke of the paradox in how lockdown made MB Farms busier. MBF has had more and more customers despite lockdown, surprisingly. The village has struggled. *“It’s been good and bad. At the end of it, hopefully it’s brought some positives in the community in how we all have been helping each other and making sure our neighbours all have food/necessities etc”* said Nick.

It’s important to note that MB Farms is a significant cultural spot for the entire area, not simply the North Downs. The Maddocks-Brown family have tried to always help the community. *“We have always tried to be in the centre of things and to help people with their problems. We do like to do what we can”*. With a long history of supporting local small businesses, the family firmly believes in supporting the community and that the community will in turn support you. They feel particularly strongly about Stockbury and the countryside and all we have to do is look at their responsible practices and the sense of community we all feel when we step in to our local shop to see evidence of that. I for one as an author, imagine that in five years’ time, with this caring legacy, we will be celebrating the hundred year mark and looking forward to MB Farms being part of our families’ generations to come.

Zeina Toric-Azad

How Things Have Changed

Part Three

One of the biggest changes I’ve seen over the last 60 years relates to our village shop. When I first came here it was situated in Hill Green Road next to the Old Vicarage. The garden was a bit of a jungle and in those days stretched down to The Harrow’s large car park, surrounded by a rickety paling fence. It was very rural and the building quite Victorian with murky windows and a dingy brown interior and resembled, now I come to think of it, a film set Ebenezer Scrooge would have been happy to inhabit!

The choice of goods was meagre and not particularly appetising. There were the usual condiments, sauces, a few sweets, newspapers, cigarettes, a little ham or cheese and not much more. Everything was rather dusty and dimly lit and was sold to customers by a chap called Percy I remember. He had rather long fingernails; now why did I think of that?!

Anyway, time passed and various proprietors followed changing and improving things along the way. First the range of produce improved and then more space was created with an extension; the interior began to look more like a mini supermarket. The Post Office was part of the set-up, which always meant the shop became busy on pension day and as ever, if you wanted to know what was going on in Stockbury this definitely presented the opportunity to chat! It really was a social hub of the village. The local postman invariably spent time in there for ‘elevensies’. On one occasion a chubby, jolly, regular postie helpfully offered to change a light bulb and put his foot through the rickety counter, nearly ending up through the floorboards! Needless to say that prompted some improvements. Fewer people had landlines in the 60’s and they found it convenient to use the public phone box which stood outside the shop. Sometimes that caused a queue to form.

Just to digress from my theme for a minute. One incident should be recorded here, simply to sound a note of caution. On a sunny September morning in 2003, at around eleven o’clock, the Post Office alarm went off. It was an unmistakable siren so we knew the source. Some of us raised our heads and surmised the shop was testing its system, it being a ‘normal’ morning why not? Fortunately others took the proper view that it was an emergency and went to investigate, only to find that the shop owner and her assistant had been held up at a rather large knife point. Although no one was hurt this traumatic occurrence remained on the ladies’ minds for some time. The culprit escaped and was never found.

As car ownership increased so did the congestion outside the shop which was a contributing factor to the next phase of development. But in a way I cannot go on to that part of the story without skipping, metaphorically, up to M B Farm, because until this time the farm had gone about its traditional activities of ploughing, planting, raising cattle and sheep. However in around about the late 1990’s the farmer decided to diversify and opened up a small, excellent and very popular butchery ... in the pigsties! Okay, they were converted and properly sanitised! Anyway this enterprise grew and developed successfully; at which point an amalgamation between the farm and the shop owners was discussed. Of course planning permission for the transference of trading and venue had to be agreed and there followed lengthy negotiations and hearings with MBC. Finally after probably eighteen months all the legalities were completed and the butchery, shop and Post Office moved under one roof (2004) into the building we see today and the old shop premises became the Post House.

And what a difference from 1960! Stockbury is so lucky to have a shop where you can not only post your parcels, avoiding town-centre queues but your dry-cleaning or laundry can be collected and at the same time you can buy everything you need for Sunday lunch. Free parking too. What’s not to love ?

Ann Rich

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- (Inc. Microdermabrasion, Dermaplaning etc)
prices from £25 - £75
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- Back and Shoulder Massage - £25
- Wash and Blow dry from £15
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 - Lash Lift and Tint - £30
- MICROBLADING – eyebrow tattooing, enquire for prices

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The Working Life of ... Shellina Prendergast

Dear Stockbury Resident

I am often asked what made me stand for public office and how I spend my time working on your behalf at Kent County Council. The Editor of The Stockbury Observer recently asked me the same question – thanks Fiona! – and never being one to forego a challenge, I thought I would give you a flavour of the work I do.

From the very start, the driving force for me has been about speaking up for local people. Fifteen years of living, working and raising a family in one of the best parts of rural Kent has given me a strong sense of community and a desire to improve the quality of life for all who live and work in the area. Many local concerns are already my concerns and championing local feeling at County Hall has always been and will continue to be, my priority.

Whilst the pandemic has changed many aspects of our lives, my work representing a large rural area with 17 distinctive communities and parishes remains as varied and challenging as ever. In any given week, I will hear from families seeking help with schooling for their child or an elderly or vulnerable relative needing support, a community group or parish council fighting unsustainable development or from a local business seeking guidance on the help and support available to them. On the odd occasion I even get to spar with a barrister – as I did last year, supporting residents and the Parish Council during the Public Inquiry for Highways England's proposed scheme at M2 J5. Several evenings are spent attending virtual parish council meetings – hopefully not for too much longer - sharing information and responding to local concerns. I am confident that residents know they can approach me and I will listen and do whatever I can to help – a willingness to challenge decision makers and make tough decisions myself helps considerably!

I have been very fortunate in being on the Cabinet at Kent County Council since being elected in 2017 – first as a Deputy for Children, Young People and Education, more latterly as the lead on Communications, Engagement and People. Following the recent election on 6th May, I was honoured to be appointed as the new Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

Having a leadership role in the development of strategies and policies to improve services and quality of life for residents in a county the size of Kent is a big challenge at the best of times and even more so over the last year and into the foreseeable future as we come out of the pandemic. Covid-19 has had a considerable impact on council finances, the Kent economy and heightened the demand on some services for our more vulnerable residents. Working in partnership with local communities and the voluntary, public, and private sectors, much work is being done every single day to address these problems and improve our lives and wellbeing.

The last sixteen months have been very difficult for so many but I remain confident that we will come through this. Working together, we have much to overcome but I have no doubt we will do just that – your resolve and resilience so far has been incredible and I am very proud

to be part of this great community in Maidstone Rural East.

I wish you and your families all the very best.

Shellina Prendergast
Shellina.Prendergast@kent.gov.uk
07970 461160

Patrik Says ...

Dear Residents,

First of all a **MEGA BIG THANK YOU** to all of you who put their trust in me to run for a second term as your Maidstone Borough Councillor. Your votes mean a lot to me.

What is clear however, a vast number of residents in the North Downs are of the opinion that my convictions and abilities are better suited to a proper professional career. While I returned almost the identical number of votes as I did in 2016, this election has shown that there is a huge number of disenfranchised residents who, normally silent, went out this time and lodged a strong protest vote. This outcome is not unique to the North Downs Ward but replicated throughout Maidstone. **For too long Maidstone has been governed by a weak coalition of Liberals, Labour and Independents in an ineffective Committee system of government.**

As a result of the recent elections the **Conservatives will take control of Maidstone Borough Council**. We believe in fundamental reform of the council's decision-making process and government arrangements. This will include a decision to revert from the current Committee system to a **Cabinet based form of government**, to take effect from the Council's 2022 Annual General Meeting.

Last week our leader notified the Chief Executive of our planned programme:

Planning this is one of the council's most high-profile activities and must be fully resourced. We would like a review of the planning service to ensure that it is capable of delivering the local plan review on time together with a stringent set of development management policies.

Conservation and enforcement is currently not adequately resourced and a sufficient number of officers need to be employed to deal with the tasks in hand.

The correct **balance between member decisions and delegated decisions** needs to be attained. Planning enforcement must be effective and provide a credible deterrent against unauthorised works and breaches of planning conditions.

Whilst we agree with provision for travel choices, this should **no longer extend to the dogma of "modal shift"** as a professed solution to congestion from over-development. We retain our long held view that a **Leeds / Langley Relief Road** is necessary in helping to resolve congestion. A plan is needed for the entire southern and western area. Other traffic-related blights require increased attention too, - such as inappropriate HGV routes and speeding in residential streets and villages.

Traffic congestion is also a contributory factor in unacceptable **air quality** locally. We want to see increased action to deliver clean air from initiatives to encourage large-scale tree planting through to **cont'd ...**

Puzzle Page

Wordsearch - One Word Films

E	N	H	A	E	N	A	E	I	M	I	P	W	A	K	T	N	O	E	M
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S	L	T	D	E	N	H	H	B	N	A	P	N	I	D	T	E	E	F	A
A	T	A	H	L	B	A	R	M	A	G	E	D	D	O	N	H	G	O	R
S	L	N	V	C	R	A	A	I	I	O	C	R	T	A	O	E	H	T	F
G	R	O	R	A	W	A	J	U	M	A	N	J	I	T	E	A	O	N	A
E	T	D	F	E	T	P	H	D	S	R	I	O	G	S	I	R	S	S	C
R	T	N	O	M	H	A	W	A	U	H	Y	S	P	S	O	T	T	E	E
E	T	U	E	A	N	G	R	E	M	I	L	I	N	S	O	L	B	E	W
N	H	R	X	N	D	T	M	T	W	I	L	I	G	H	T	E	U	E	S
D	R	E	I	E	U	B	N	E	A	T	W	Y	C	E	E	P	S	S	I
A	L	B	S	E	A	S	U	O	T	T	Y	Y	S	T	D	I	T	N	T
N	A	S	W	T	T	H	P	O	R	S	S	H	R	E	R	R	E	B	R
L	B	O	S	T	E	L	M	H	H	P	P	U	N	H	T	A	R	T	R
S	E	O	R	U	O	E	L	A	L	I	E	N	I	N	T	P	S	F	D

ALIEN	GHOSTBUSTERS	INCEPTION	PSYCHO	TITANIC
ARMAGEDDON	GLADIATOR	JAWS	ROCKY	TWILIGHT
AVATAR	GREMILINS	JUMANJI	SCARFACE	TWINS
BRAVEHEART	HANNIBAL	PLATOON	SEVEN	WATCHMEN

Sudoku

	1	8					3	
9					2		4	5
7					6			
					7	1	2	
				5				
	8	4	3					
			7					6
8	2		6					9
	3					5	8	

Patrik Says ...cont'd

promoting much greater use of electric vehicles. A move towards electric vehicles should not only be encouraged privately but should also include the council's own fleet, when vehicles are up for replacement.

Conservative members had an active part in the Council's Climate Change & Biodiversity Working Group: The Council's Declaration of Biodiversity & Climate Emergency was adopted with Conservatives' support in April 2019.

We want our Borough to be the cleanest place in Kent. We would like to see an increase in the frequency of street cleaning and we are seeking firm enforcement against **littering and fly-tipping**.

Over the past years, our group has made its position clear on **anti-social behaviour** and community safety. We favour a greater use of public spaces protection orders and community protection notices and we will be seeking a review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the community safety unit.

The council's work on early **prevention of homelessness** is to continue and our members have been keen on the development of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Strategy. Increased direct contact of elected members with registered housing providers will allow us to be more proactive in insuring standards of affordable housing. We want the council to work with housing associations and social landlords, using enforcement powers where necessary, to ensure that repairs get done and that properties and estates are maintained to protect residents from anti-social behaviour and nuisance neighbours.

The Conservative Group has in recent months demonstrated its commitment to maintaining the **Hazlitt Theatre**. We view it as key to life in the Borough and to the economic well being of the town. We are also committed to **the museum** but we wish to explore further options for its sustainability and consider a more commercial approach to its offering.

The provision of culture and leisure activities must not be seen as just a town centre issue. Culture and leisure is vitally important for the Borough, ... especially in **rural areas**, and further investment is much needed.

Finally, we would like to continue to champion the work of **parish councils** and support the establishment of residents association particularly in un-parished areas together with increased participation in neighbourhood watch schemes.

And on that note, let me roll up my sleeves: for the next three years (yes, this term is only three years) I will be YOUR voice at MBC. My door / phone-line /email is always open for you, whether you voted for me or not.

PATRIK GARTEN

MBC Councillor for North Downs Ward (Conservative)

Phone: 01622-807907

patrikgarten@maidstone.gov.uk

Stockbury & Hartlip Cricket Club

So the summer game resumes. It was just a shame that for our first game against Woodcombe the weather was unaware of the fact.

Suitably enveloped in multiple layers of clothing we took to the field in a mini gale and as is our usual tactic we suggested they bat first in the hopes of holding out for the draw. This appeared to be the right decision as they put on 130 without loss with our bowlers going wicketless for 23 overs until Keith once again proved to be an inspired bowling change by getting a wicket in his first over. Having bowled four ordinary overs for 23, Damian had obviously warmed up and proceeded to snaffle 7 wickets for a miserly 23 more and a run out left only 1 for Colby to grab. Compared to last season our catching was outstanding with Mark taking 2, John, Oscar and Paul one apiece and with a stumping from Paul and a run out by Enrique we were well satisfied with our performance.

DOES ANYONE KNOW IF STOCKBURY HAD A BOWLER WITH BETTER FIGURES THAN 7 FOR 46?

They finished on 172 and with the weather getting colder and with an iffy pitch we started our reply with no great hopes. However our batsmen had other ideas as they proceeded to hit the ball to all "corners" of the ground. Our openers Oscar and Paul built a fine base with 21 and 29 respectively and then Henry unleashed some power hitting with a 51 that included 11 boundaries. He was ably supported by John 29 not out and Mark with 8 saw us home.

So for the first time in at least 4 seasons we arrived at our opponents ground UNDEFEATED.

As Holborough Anchorians professed to be weak and only had 10 men, we agreed we would bat first. Because we were without Oscar and Henry, I decided on a new batting order to enable the players who did not get a bat the previous week a chance to shine and if they failed the batsmen more able to stick around could then do what the situation required. Paul played his usual reliable knock and at 36 for 1 [Mark 11] we were in a reasonable position but with John falling for 7, Paul was left to partner the new order.

Unfortunately Enrique was out for a duck and in strode Colby, not one for the forward defensive game he proceeded to show us what can be done when you have 100% confidence in your ability to hit every ball to the boundary. Two fours and four singles off the edge gave him 12 before a high edge saw him caught. Meanwhile Paul had fallen for 31 and the two at the wicket were now Wesley our new recruit, playing his first game of cricket, and Mima [the most talented of the Ratcliffe brood] They played beautifully with Wesley making 12 and Mima 11 so now it was the task of the "reliables" to move the score on. The bowler having taken a wicket with his first ball, it was the Captain to face him, 2nd ball straight, forward defensive, third ball straight, forward defensive, 4th ball straight, oops missed. Big Andy strides to the wicket and knocks the 5th ball for 4 but unfortunately on the way to the ball his bat slices the off bail in two. The next lamb to the slaughter is Keith who decides he

S&HCC cont'd ...

is not going to get bowled and sticks his pads in front of the last ball of the over and is out LBW. That is hopefully the last time we lose 4 wickets in an over! Damian was not out 0 as we finished with 117.

Unfortunately not all of the Holborough side were weak, even though their numbers two to seven only made 42 between them, they had an opener of class who made 61 before being dismissed by a brilliant Enrique catch. Andy was the bowler and he also got a rabbit to finish with 2 for 19. Damian continued his good form taking 3 for 31 whilst our younger opening bowlers were unfortunate to have to face a class batsman. Andy took a catch and Paul stumped another one off of Damian. So courtesy of their opener they reached the winning total in only 24 overs.

Roger Milton

Roger Scissorhands

The dedication of this man to his cricket pitch was witnessed recently on a walk in the park.

While standing having a natter with Gill, we observed Roger walk across to the pitch, what we didn't expect was seeing him sit down in the middle of the pitch!!

Now ... I know that this pandemic has certainly caused everyone to be and think a little bit differently but we were not expecting this! We both looked at one another with concern for his mental or physical health, perhaps he had fallen (again)? Perhaps he wasn't well? But he seemed his chirpy self sitting doing something with his grass!! Every seed is sacred came to mind, perhaps planting them in regimental precision cutting the environmental greenhouse gasses???

On closer inspection I noticed he had a pair of scissors and continued to trim his grass with great effort.

Perhaps he was making a stand due to his many lawnmowers being in service? Perhaps he was counting the blades of grass left after the birds had eaten the seed? Or, making sure every blade was precisely the right length ... who are we to judge!

Roger, my hat goes off to you for your dedication in reviving the old traditions of grass cutting.

Irene, my hat goes off to you; this pandemic has had a lot to answer for and I can see it has effected some more than others ... has he been doing this to his own lawn??

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR BUSHES ... WILL THEY BE THE NEXT TO BE SCULPTED WITHIN THE VILLAGE??
Nessa Town



Stockbury Gardeners

Were back!!!! The first meeting of the Stockbury Gardeners since the Covid-19 pandemic is on Thursday 3rd June at 8pm.

It will make a change and be great to catch up on gardening issues, indeed its now 16 months since our last meeting.

While sitting under the shade, NO, read shelter, of the log cabin I was intrigued to see a large bumble bee fly into the entrance of a tit box, clearly no tit was in the box however, over the next few minutes I noted around 5 or six smaller bumbles flying in and out. It was an amazing observation and I must photograph the occasion for the record once the rain stops.

As I browsed around one of our garden centres and being on the look out for different varieties, I picked up a packet of "Tree Spinach" marketed by King's Seed Company. Apparently once planted out the stem is up to 8 feet tall. Wow! That is different; I will let you know how we get on with that. The Heritage tomatoes are growing on, I just wish that the rain would stop and the sun would shine and give our gardens a big leg up.

I always like to share my tips with others, so here is one which you can all practice; once your tomato plants have flowered, every day gently tap the stem of the plant, it has the effect of pollinating the flower and ensures a high fruit production. Similarly on hot days spray runner beans with water; you must wait until the sun is setting so as not to burn the leaves. This again pollinates the bean flower ensuring a good "set".

At the end of the month, I would recommend a second sowing of runner beans and dwarf French beans. If you are a fan of pointed cabbage, sow Durham Early.

One thing I admire about the French is their courage of conviction, whether right or wrong. It is said that in the late 18th Century the French nation would not eat potatoes, for they believed that the potato was poison and gave them Leprosy. I ask you? I find that a little strong given that they eat horses, frog's legs, and snails.

The photograph was taken on Sunday 23rd May when my wife pointed out the rainbow.



Nature is a wonderful thing

Chris Spree

Domestic Abuse

If you or someone else is suffering from domestic abuse please visit a Domestic Abuse webpage for advice and more information:

www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primaryservices/housing/tier-2-additional-areas/domestic-abuse

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

www.womensaid.org.uk

www.mensadviceline.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

There are also helplines available if you would rather speak to someone:

- Choices Domestic Abuse Services
0800 917 9948
- National Domestic Violence Helpline
0808 2000 247
- Refuge freephone National Domestic Abuse
0808 2000 247
- The Men's Advice Line for male domestic abuse survivors
0808 808 4994
- National LGBT+ Abuse Helpline
0800 999 54428
- Childline
0800 1111

Housing helplines

There are helplines available if you need help with housing:

- Shelter -**0808 800 4444**
- Choices -**0800 917 9948**
- Victim Support -**0808 168 9111**

Mobile Library Dates:

The mobile library will be at the Village Hall on

**Thursday June 17th
from 9.10am - 9.40am**

Observer Deadline!

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

MONDAY 21st June

Please email your contributions to
stockburyobserver@gmail.com

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 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 within 5 days of the meeting at which they are approved.

Useful Contact Information

Church Matters St. Mary Magdalene		01795 227329
Community Bus	Booking Line	07551 454702
Cricket Club	Roger Milton - rogerandirene@btinternet.com	01795 844642
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 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	Ann Rich - ann.stockbury@btinternet.com	07718 070807
South East Water	Emergency Only Non-Emergency	0333 000 0365 0333 000 3330
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