

YOUR LOCAL advertiser

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TALKING PETS

For those who are not 'born free' and dependant on their owners for quality of life lets think about our pets.

You've been locked down for months, with just household members, including, perhaps, some pets for company. Now the restrictions are slowly easing, with you perhaps getting back to work, and your children back to school, suddenly, life is beginning to become more normal, which is great for you, but what about your pets? You will have had time to have fun with them 24/7, and now you will need to find ways of filling up their much emptier hours spent without you. In the case of dogs, they are social 'pack' animals, needing interaction, and without it can start to display symptoms of separation anxiety.

A puppy purchasing bonanza over the lockdown period, has been reported. It has seemed for many, a logical time to introduce a new member of the family to the fold. After all, there is time to settle him/her, in, but a dog's need for socialising, playing, exercising and training continue indefinitely. Hopefully, there are plans in place for the longer term with all members of the family, playing a part in ensuring your dog's needs are met. However, when this is not organised, and the dog is left for hours at a time, there will be many owners dismayed to find, on coming home, chewed furniture and clothing, puddles, and more, on the carpet, biscuit tins raided and a soulful looking to be told that he is 'naughty'. He will not respond to you as before, and this is where problems start to arise.

On occasions, when he goes a bit off the rails, it is because he is feeling anxious, lonely and bored. He has not been naughty. To help in times of imminent change, build up to them gradually. When your dog asks for attention, do not always give it straight away - just say 'Good boy. Not now'. Give him a toy or treat and go back to him in a little while. That way, he will learn being on your own is OK. It is not a rejection. There are other things you might want to consider doing:-

1:- Take your dog to work with you if allowed.

2:- Ask a reliable friend if they will spend

time with your dog on a regular basis.

3:- Seek the involvement of a dog walker/ pet carer. They are experienced, professional people, who specialise in these situations, and can be found on the internet, advertisements and best of all, through recommendations.

4:- Leave the radio on, tuned to Classic FM or something soothing.

5:- Leave an article of clothing, smelling of you, around for him to snuggle up to.

6:- Reward toys/puzzles/ hiding food/treats, are a good idea, but activity toys, like balls, are not much use to him, without someone to play with.

When leaving and returning, don't make a big fuss. Keep the atmosphere calm with 'no big deal'. If you are still having problems, speak to your vet, who will probably put you in touch with a behaviourist.

Kittens too, need plenty of your time and attention. Some people take on two kittens, to keep each other company. They can cope with some time on their own, if left with plenty to do, but will soon get sad left to their own devices for too long. Adult cats are more solitary by nature, than kittens and canines. Provided with a cat flap, they will do their own thing, but will need plenty of fun and love when you get home. Make sure you keep them in at night.

Indoor cats obviously need more stimulus to keep them happy, otherwise they can get bored and develop behavioural symptoms, in the same way as a dog is apt to do.

Pets are wonderful to have in a family, but for them to blend in happily, you need to use your imagination, and think how they are feeling in given situations, especially 'change'. Put yourself in their place, and you will not go far wrong. Take advice from vets, behaviourists, dog walkers and pet carers. Always deal with an issue before it becomes a problem.

PS Don't forget your little furry friends like rabbits! They will miss you too!!

Sue Stoyell

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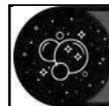
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if you would like to donate please see church website. Display your
scarecrow from 15th August, as we plan to have a map with a
downloadable trail, available for the bank holiday weekend.

If you would like your scarecrow to take part in the trail,
take a photo with or without it's creators, and send to
sealchurchevents@gmail.com as all photos, with your permission,
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this year. For further information please contact
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COUNTRY MATTERS

August brings pure drama. When the earth needs cooling nature puts on a spectacular fireworks display. Lightening rips open the skies paving the way to sounds of cannon like thunder which grumbles on until the sun dares to make its return.

Nature in all its moods has inspired artists, composers, writers and poets down the ages. Through their work they have given us glimpses of how our environment has been and how changed it has become. Much thinking at this time is concentrated on retracing our steps so as to recreate the habits of the past that were more sustaining of flora and fauna. Today we mourn the loss of so many species and wonder what happened to them. Where were we when they disappeared? Much can be learned from what text books but to get a feel for the past there are authors and poets like Richard Jeffries and John Clare who will give you a countryman's insight into what it was like to walk country lanes full of wild flowers and explore hedgerows dripping in berries and fruits. They describe species of birds and animals in numbers we can only dream of today. It is encouraging to see so much

successful conservation work being attempted to put the clock back and bring us closer to the natural world.

We too can help reclaim our inheritance by the way we choose to design and work our gardens. Gardens are important to the conservation effort as every metre of it potentially is useful habitat for wildlife. By refraining from using chemical pesticides and by cutting grass less often, you will be welcoming back the inconspicuous micro-organisms and invertebrates like worms, that inhabit the soil and enrich it. They are a food source too for many amphibians, birds and mammals, so you will begin to see them return in greater numbers as well.

Gardeners should make no apologies for wild flowers turning up in unexpected places. It is part of the joy of wildlife gardening. If a flower has pollen, it is valuable to bees and all the other pollinators that in turn, are essential to us.

It is during stormy weather that ants take to the air in a mating flight, and many birds will enjoy a feast. If you have ever seen a green woodpecker pecking at the ground, it will be mostly ants he is after. Green wood-peckers can eat 2,000 ants in a day.

Thinking of other colourful birds, a piece in the Folly Hospital newsletter, about a jay, amused me. Like all corvids (members of the crow family), jays are great mimics. During his time at the hospital, his repertoire included impersonations of a buzzard, hooting owl, starling chatter, cooing collar doves and the cockadoodle doing of a cockerel. Not only have these birds got talent, they are extremely intelligent on a level that confounds experts. Pleasing to read, he made a full recovery, and is now probably performing to, and confusing his wildlife neighbours.

With all the talk of 'build, build, build', let us hope that the huge infrastructure projects planned, will contain corridors, by way of tunnels, and bridges for the benefit of wildlife, so animals can cross roads and rails safely. Hopefully, this will lead to fewer accidents and significantly reduce road kill. We can hope then, that this new build policy will not reduce habitat, but rather link habitats together, so to allow wildlife more freedom to move around and increase their territories. That way, we protect those that have been 'born free', and with whom we share this planet. *Sue Stoyell.*

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Community Safety News Issue 49
Addressing ASM & Nitrous Oxide across the District

Since the beginning of May, the CSU has seen an increase in reports across the district of anti-social behaviour and the use of Nitrous Oxide (commonly known as Laughing Gas).

The areas that have been raised by local residents are mainly parks and local beauty hotspots. We have a weekly meeting with KCC Community Wardens, Police, KFRS, SAYT (Sevenoaks Area Youth Team), Kenward Trust (Substance Misuse Team), WK extra Youth and KCC Youth Team to address the issues. We are currently looking at over 15 locations where we have been working with land owners and agencies to address situations. Some areas have added hazards as they are swimming in lakes and open water on private land. Some of the areas we are regularly visiting are :- Riverside, Eynsford : Lullingstone Castle : Chipstead Lakes : Longford Meadow & Millbank, Dunton Green (leading to Chipstead Lakes) : Swanley Park : Poundsbridge Road, Penshurst : Enfield Road, Leigh : The Vine : Seal Rec. : Greatness Park : Holly Bush Rec. : Offord Cemetery & Car Park : Lingfield Road, Edenbridge : Darent Car Park, Westerham : Knole Park : Bradbourne Wildlife Park : Gamecock Meadow, West Kingsdown.

Actions we have taken so far are:- Some site meetings with landowners to take forward actions. Virtual meetings around issues in Eynsford. Kenward Trust visiting locations engaging with young people. Police regularly patrolling and nights of action. KCC Wardens patrolling their areas. KFRS patrolling areas. PCSO Youth Officer linking in with schools. Detached youth work from SAYT and West Kent Extra. Developing an educational package for Schools/Parents. Police have arranged "all out evenings" where everyone on duty attends the sites on top of daily patrolling. If you have any concerns please contact us 01732 227000 or community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Talk to Frank about Nitrous Oxide

This is a psychoactive drug and is covered by the 2016 Psychoactive Substances Act, which means it is illegal to give away or sell. There's no penalty for possession, unless you're in prison. Supply and production can get you up to 7 years in prison, an

unlimited fine or both. Like drink driving, driving when high is dangerous and illegal. If you're caught driving under the influence, you may receive a heavy fine, driving ban, or prison sentence. It is very dangerous to inhale nitrous oxide from the canister, and it doing it in an enclosed space is also very dangerous. If you take too much nitrous oxide you risk falling unconscious and/or suffocating from the lack of oxygen. Regular use can stop you forming white blood cells properly. It can be hard to judge the amount to use safely. If you have too much you can end up fainting, having an accident or worse. If you are worried about your use or someone you knows use, you can call FRANK on 0300 1336600 for friendly, confidential advice

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Drowning is a leading cause of accidental death in the UK and together with partner agencies, KFRS are committed to ensuring everyone in Kent equipped with the information they need to stay safe around water. Most people don't think of the fire service when it comes to water rescue, but it's an important part of their work. They have specialist water rescue crews ready to respond to emergencies across Kent 24/7. If you decide to swim in a lake, river or the sea, make sure you keep yourself as safe as possible.

Take any warning or safety signs such as 'Private Property Keep Out' seriously. Don't jump or dive in, you don't know how deep the water is and there are unseen hazards. Never swim near weirs or locks as there are often dangerous currents. Always make sure someone on land nearby knows you are swimming. Sometimes the water is not as safe as it looks, and is full of dangers you can't see: It's very cold, and can quickly cause cramp and breathing difficulties. It may contain hidden rubbish and debris such as shopping trolleys and broken glass which can cause injuries. Sometimes it can be polluted and can make you very ill. If you find yourself unexpectedly in water, try to relax and float on your back to catch your breath. This will help you calm down and preserve energy before calling out for help or swimming to safety if possible. For more information visit www.kent.fire-uk.org



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FARMER MARKET AUGUST

These are very strange times. Normally we would expect quite a few foreign visitors stopping at the market as they drove past. Now they would not even find us hidden away by Shipbourne Village Hall and then only be able to buy anything if it is pre ordered !!. If you haven't tried the on line market go to www.shipbournefm.co.uk

We have been looking into options for re-opening the market taking social distancing into account. Those markets which have managed to re-open first determine the maximum number of customers permitted to enter the market at one time and then impose a strict one way system, as well as leaving sufficient space for queues to be formed at stalls (and again social distancing must be adhered to). We not only have very limited space but as the Church Approach is a public right of way we have to allow for walkers to pass through the area !! So at present we have not found a practical way of ensuring everyone can be kept safe.

Another alternative is to set up the market close to and in the Village Hall. This solution has more potential especially if we could continue with the Drive Thru concept (which would reduce the numbers actually browsing the stalls). If anyone else has any ideas please contact bob@lodgeoast.co.uk

August is peak harvest time so make the most of the abundance of goodies. Plan some preserving time so that you can continue to enjoy great ingredients through the colder months. Make your own jams, chutneys and pickles now and then leave them to mature in a cool dark place to allow the flavours to meld and develop. They will be at their best just in time for Christmas and make perfect presents.

Tomatoes, in all kinds of varieties, are in abundance and taste superb right now, as do shallots, onions, French and runner beans, courgettes, aubergine, peppers, cucumber. Corn on the cob is an August highlight and should be cooked and eaten as fresh as possible before the natural sugars turn to starch - cook the cobs protected by their leaves directly on the barbecue and serve with a lime and chilli butter. Early marrows and squashes should also be available, along with main crop potatoes.

The soft fruit season is still in full swing for raspberries, plums, blueberries and blackberries, and cherries will be still available. Convert soft fruit into jams, ice cream, or store in the freezer to bring a taste of the summer to the winter months. Better still, preserve the best quality fruit in alcohol such as eau de vie, or brandy (which we also have at the market !!).

Summer fish is plentiful this month. Salmon and sea trout are always a treat. Cook as simply as possible to preserve their flavour. Sole, sea bass and plaice are also excellent now. Continue to enjoy mackerel and sardines on the barbecue where their oily flesh keeps its wonderful texture so well.

A barbecue is the perfect way to make the most of many of the meat products that you can find at the market. Try a butterflied leg of lamb, cooked whole on the barbecue. Marinate overnight in yogurt and spices then barbecue and served piled into flat bread with barbecued vegetables. You will find some interesting

sausage recipe combinations too - try wild boar and apple, venison, and the many pork flavoured ones. Finish off with local cheese board and good sour dough bread.

And finally don't forget that the Glorious 12th marks the start of the new game season so look out for venison, wild duck, wood pigeon and rabbit later in the month

To find out more about our Farmers Markets go to www.shipbourne.co.uk

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Serves 4 /Prep 10 minutes /Cook 15 minutes

- 4 rump or sirloin or venison steaks
- 1 tsp black peppercorns, lightly crushed
- 3 - 4 tbsp garlic flavoured rape seed oil
- 4 plum tomatoes, halved
- 450g new potatoes, cooked and halved
- 1 large bunch watercress, washed
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cucumber, peeled and sliced
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- salt
- Rub the black pepper into the steaks and season with salt. If cooking over charcoal it is essential that the coals are just right i.e. turned grey with minimum flame and that you have a resting area away from the heat.
- Cook the steaks over a high heat on both sides for 4 - 8 minutes (depending on how you like your steak cooked), turning once until well browned on the outside but still very pink in the middle. Cook the tomatoes alongside the steak cut sides at the same time. Remove the steak and tomatoes and leave to rest for 5 minutes.
- Cut the potatoes into chunks if large. Add to a pan and fry over a medium high heat for 5 minutes until crisp and golden.
- Arrange the watercress in a salad bowl and add the onion, cucumber and tomatoes with juices, and potato.
- Whisk the remaining oil with the vinegar and seasoning.
- Slice the steak on the diagonal and add to the salad. Pour over the dressing and toss together. Serve.

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St LAWRENCE VILLAGE HALL

Please call 01732 760552. See website: www.stlvh.org.uk

9th Sevenoaks Seal, Beavers and Cubs Group.

Contact Group Manager - Caroline O'Mahoney - 07889 251800

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SEAL KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Hello All,

Here's hoping this week's email finds you all well, and enjoying some sunshine (should it still be with us)!

We still have little to report from our local organisations, though we have heard that Seal Cubs and Scouts, are planning a grand litter pick up soon, and sadly, this is badly needed. I see many people, from my kitchen window, filling carrier bags of rubbish whilst on their daily walks, and, of course, this makes a huge difference. However, sadly, it does not counteract the behaviour of other, less thoughtful people, who clearly use Seal High Street as their dumping ground. So, well done to all those who are helping to keep our environment pleasant.

SEAL CHURCH NEWS AND EVENTS.

You may have been wondering how our churches are managing to keep paying their bills during this time. Well, we can only speak for our own, St Peter and St Paul, Seal.

We have been unable to arrange our usual fund raising events, or let our hall during this period of lockdown, so funds are very low, along with the general morale of many in our community right now.

SO - we have three ideas to raise some funds, and peoples' spirits, with these projects:-

Firstly, we have decided to bring our scarecrow event forward, to put smiles on faces all around our village and beyond. It will be slightly different this year, but here is our plan:-

SEAL SCARECROW FESTIVAL

Make and create your own scarecrow and display outside your home, or any other position agreed with Home/business owner. There will be no prizes this year, so no entry fee will be charged but please email a photograph of you and family members involved in construction, together with your scarecrow, and these will be displayed in our **LOCKDOWN EXHIBITION** later in the year. Your scarecrows can be put out from August 15th, and a trail will be organised, to take place over the August Bank Holiday weekend. To have your scarecrow added to the trail, please contact sealchurchevents@gmail.com as soon as you know the identity of him or her!

Then, we are hoping to encourage you to help, by inviting some friends to your gardens, to host one of our **GLORIOUS LITTLE GARDEN GATHERINGS**. The idea is to invite a small group of friends (maximum 6 and socially distancing observed), for a coffee morning, tea party, lunchtime sandwiches, or whatever you would like, and ask for donations to be paid to Seal Church. If you are interested, please contact us at sealchurchevents@gmail.com, or call Chris on 01732 763585 or Rosemary on 01959 524914 and you will be sent an invitation pack with details of what to do. Anything you can do will be much appreciated.

Finally, during this strange time at home, we have all been baking and cooking more. Sometimes, especially in the early days of lockdown, we were unable to get hold of ingredients we might normally use, and were needing to find alternatives. Sometimes, these were quite interesting, with some successful results. We have decided to put together a **TASTES OF LOCKDOWN** recipe book. This will consist of recipes of food you have been making more often, and maybe, have become quite fond of. We need you to send the recipe, with a photo of the outcome and a sentence or two of how, or why, it was a success with you and your families. If you have such a recipe and an explanation, please send to sealchurchevents@gmail.com

Clearly, some will not make it into the book (depending on numbers of entries), but all will make it to the lockdown exhibition.

If you wish to make a donation, please see the St Peter and St Paul Church Seal website, to see how you can go about this.

FOR THOSE STILL SHIELDING OR SELF ISOLATING

We are still here, both at **KYN AND SEAL CHURCH**, to assist you if you are needing anything. Please contact either of us if we can be of help.

VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

Please remember to send me any information regarding your organisations, you wish to share. Now we are starting to return to some normality, it might be time to think about how your group is going forward.

Meanwhile, stay safe, and call or email for help if needed, marionjgilchrist@gmail.com or call 01732 763727.

Marion.

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