

ISSUE 49 | SUMMER 2020



DELAMERE
& OAKMERE

NEWS

IN THIS ISSUE

LOCKDOWN STORIES

VIEWS OF THE PARISH IN LOCKDOWN

THE BIRDS AND THE BEES



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Milestone on Station Road

This photo may look almost as old as the milestone, but it isn't.
It was taken by Ray Downham during the lockdown ([facebook.com/raydphoto/](https://www.facebook.com/raydphoto/))



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ANSWERS TO QUIZ AND CROSSWORD

Answers to crossword

Across: 1. rabbit on; 5. aga; 8. event; 9. America; 10. level; 11. Dane; 14. rumpus; 15. famous; 18. sled; 19. topic; 21. origami; 22. irate; 23. pal; 24. tomorrow
Down: 2. apex; 3. butter up; 4. trader; 5. agitator; 6. agave; 7. letter; 12. imperial; 13. familiar; 16. summer; 17. podium; 18. scoop; 20. sago

Answers to quiz

1. Madeira
2. Adriatic Sea
3. The Four Tops
4. Rio de Janeiro
5. Costa Dorada
6. Saint Lucia
7. Cyclades
8. Thailand
9. California (Disneyworld is in Florida)
10. Sicily

The last issue of the newsletter went to press on 10th March, just two days before the government announced its first safeguarding measures for the growing coronavirus pandemic, Covid-19 (if you've got a nasty cough, stay at home; if you are over 70, don't go on a cruise...).

It soon became apparent that more was needed, and that this issue of the newsletter would have a strong focus on the crisis. So it has proved. Many residents of the parish have shared their experiences with us, some heartwarming, some tougher.

We have been extremely fortunate living where we do, with a sparse population and beautiful countryside on our doorstep. While the death toll has climbed in densely packed cities, we have been relatively unscathed.

The Office for National Statistics doesn't provide data for individual parishes, but it does for larger local areas. These break the parish in two, with Delamere grouped with Tarporley, and Oakmere with Sandiway. Up to the end of May, when the national mortality rate was already well past its peak, only one death was recorded in the Tarporley area. In the Sandiway area, which has

several care homes, it was eight. This includes just one Oakmere resident that we know of.

Otherwise, the hardest hit in the parish have tended to be those who live alone and had to self-isolate, as well as some of our small businesses. A large part of this issue of the newsletter is devoted to stories of how they have coped, and how the community has come together to help wherever it can. We also hear how the school had to re-invent itself.

We've got lots of lockdown pictures too! Ray Dowham and Bridget Austin have both been out and about in the parish when they might otherwise have been exploring further afield. Don Wilson has been doing much the same, exploring the archaeology of his own back yard.

For the most part the world of nature has carried on regardless, though not entirely, as we hear from David Wright, Jack Helsby and Kay George. A big thank you goes to all of them, and to all our other contributors, advertisers and distributors.

Clive George
Editor

Forthcoming events - suspended

THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Meetings are normally held at 7.30pm, every second Tuesday in the month except for August, at Delamere Community Centre.

delamereandoakmere.co.uk/delamere-womens-institute/,

twitter.com/delamerewi,

www.facebook.com/DelamereWI

DELAMERE AND DISTRICT GOLDEN CLUB

We normally meet every fortnight on Wednesday afternoons, except August, at the Community Centre. No upper or lower age limit!

For further information, including a copy of the programme as originally planned, please contact Gloria Ackerley

tel: 01829 752723

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ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

Delamere and Oakmere News is published three times a year with the support of the Parish Council. The next issue is due at the end of November, in the run up to Christmas.

ADVERTISE WITH D&O NEWS!

Articles, ideas for articles, news of recent events or forthcoming ones, advertisements, photographs and any other contributions relevant to Delamere and/or Oakmere are all very welcome (inclusion subject to editorial discretion).

The newsletter is available to view on the Delamere and Oakmere Community website and you can also get a PDF file by email (contact us if you would like a copy).

CONTACT

Editorial: do_newseditor@yahoo.co.uk

Advertising: do_newseditor@yahoo.co.uk

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All proceeds from advertisements go into the printing of the newsletter, so we really couldn't do this without you. Thank you!

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LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Well, no-one would have imagined in the Spring that we would have spent the last few months in a pandemic. Life has changed, no matter who you are, the way in which we live is significantly different. These are unprecedented times, we sail uncharted waters. I have learned a lot about myself during the last few months, to take one day at a time, to give thanks for things I often took for granted. I have found time to read stories to my grandchildren, I have helped with home schooling as my overstretched daughter-in-law took care of two of my grandchildren - albeit over the internet.

As a community, I have watched as people pulled together, selflessly looking out and caring for one another. Celebrations for Mother's Day, Easter, VE day and Pentecost, may not have been celebrated in church buildings, but we clapped for carers, church became virtual, including recently our online coffee sessions via Zoom. God is with us, love is all around us, you have become my inspiration, the litter pickers and plant growers, teachers, volunteer shoppers, key workers and cake bakers.

Weddings and baptisms may have had to be put on hold, funerals may be limited to graveside burials and smaller gatherings in crematoriums; but even in your grief, I have encountered the Spirit of God, reminding me of the love that is the glue that keeps us all together. I look forward to meeting you face to face, of ringing our church bells, to mark the end of Covid19. I hope and pray that you are coping, I pray for your job security, your health and wellbeing, I pray for a day when we will once again meet collectively without social distancing or fear of the virus.

There are days when I find myself praying psalms of lament, lament for those we have lost, for social justice and an end to inequality, for our economy and our children's education. I lament, the rights of passage that our young people have had to sacrifice, the balls, the leavers' services, the exams they couldn't sit having worked so hard towards. Throughout all of this, I cannot deny I have met God in 'other', in you and your ability to care and share and to be the community God would want you to be, and I give thanks!

Rev'd Angela Askwith

OAKMERE METHODIST CHURCH

From September 2019 The Chester and Delamere Forest Circuit was joined by the Runcorn Circuit and is now called North Cheshire Methodist Circuit.

In September 2019 Oakmere welcomed a new Minister: Rev Joanna M Brown. Jo has pastoral care for Oakmere, Kelsall, Tarvin, Bunbury/.Tiverton. Christleton.

Rowton and Mickle Trafford. A large area to cover!

Rev Jo Brown can be contacted on 01829 741022 or E Mail jo.brown@methodist.org.uk

As with other places of worship Oakmere are awaiting news of when normal services can resume. In the meantime the Circuit is streaming services on YouTube.

St. Peter's Notice Board

REGULAR SERVICES

Every Sunday
8 am - Holy Communion

Every 1st Sunday
10:30 am - Holy Communion

Every 3rd Sunday
10:30 am - Family Service

Every 2nd, 4th & 5th Sunday
10:30 am - Morning Worship

RESUMPTION OF SERVICES

Services resumed on 5th July with a one way system for entry and exit. Alternate pews are cordoned off with social distancing. Singing is not permitted, but the congregation is encouraged to hum along to the organ!

If anyone would like to access the church for private prayer or for updates on current services, please contact Rev Angela on 07429075283. We are now opening for funerals and weddings, but restrictions apply, in line with government advice.

The Opening of St Peter's Church for Public Worship

When Her Majesty the Queen gave her consent to the appointment of the Rev Angela Askwith as the new Rector of Delamere in January 2020, no-one could have imagined that the first public service the Rev Angela would be able to take would be on July 5th. Due to the Covid-19 virus Angela was faced with a daunting task; she was unable to enter her Church, unable to move into the Rectory and she didn't know her congregation! However, she rose to the challenge and on the first Sunday after her Induction on March 17th Mothering Sunday, posies of flowers (made by Pat Wheeler) and chocolates were delivered to the ladies of the Parish. Angela contacted every person on the Electoral Roll, held 2 services a week online, being Compline every Thursday evening and Morning Service Sunday morning. Recently, we enjoyed Zoom coffee mornings following Morning Service. On the 75th Anniversary of VE Day delicious afternoon teas were delivered to the members of the congregation. Angela has done an amazing job in the most difficult of circumstances and the congregation of St Peter's are extremely grateful for all her hard work, dedication and imagination.

The congregation gave Angela a clap of welcome and thanks and she was presented with a bouquet of flowers, made by Lyn Withinslaw, from the congregation.

*Pat Tyson-Jones
Churchwarden*

ST. PETER'S DELAMERE 100 CLUB LOTTERY FUND *By Ian Howarth*

In the last issue of Delamere and Oakmere News, we announced the intention to establish a 100-Club Lottery scheme in order to generate additional funds for the maintenance and general running of St Peter's. The scheme is now up and running and we have just held our first monthly draw - courtesy of our new Rector The Rev. Angela Askwith.

Our target is to recruit 100 members and with this level of support, and for a monthly investment of £5, prizes will be £100, £50 and £25 each month with

additional draws around Christmas. Prizes will be set on a pro-rata basis during the build-up phase and whilst we have made a very encouraging start, we would dearly like to welcome additional members.

If you are able to and would like to support St Peter's during this difficult time, please contact Ian Howarth (ianh33@btinternet.com or 01606 883451) or any member of the PCC for further details, a set of rules and an application form.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWS

News from the Community Centre is rather flexible at the moment and will probably have changed by the time you read this! The Centre was closed from mid-March until mid-July due to the coronavirus but the Management Committee were due to meet on 6th July to agree how and when we could reopen. Updates will be posted on the Parish Council website and Delamere & Oakmere Facebook page and we look forward to welcoming you all back to the Centre as soon as it is safe to do so.

In the meantime, the Post Office remains open on Wednesday and Friday mornings. We know it has been busier than usual since lockdown started;

thank you for following the social distancing guidelines when using it.

The Clothing Bank is also in action. The Community Centre receive payment from the Salvation Army for every kilo donated so please continue to support this excellent cause when they are particularly needed, as well as making a contribution to a local charity – us!!

Delamere Community Association is delighted to welcome Reverend Angela Askwith as a trustee of the Association; this position has been vacant since Reverend Elaine left the parish last year.

Stay safe

Paul Dean, Chairman DCA
Steve Lacey, Treasurer DCA

Fortunately we just managed to hold our March meeting before the start of lockdown. Two of our members, Michaela and Melanie, gave a fascinating insight to their time in Iraq as nurses with the Territorial Army. It was interesting to hear about how quickly field hospitals could be set up, dismantled and then set up again when and where needed. The conditions and temperatures they had to work in didn't make life easy for them and I feel very proud to have them in our WI!

Then, of course, lockdown arrived and so no more meetings for the foreseeable future. Not only have we had to cancel our meetings but lots of Cheshire Federation events have been postponed. 2020 is the centenary of CFWI so it is very sad that we cannot celebrate in the way planned.

However, it is only a number and I am sure all the WIs in Cheshire will make up for it when able. We are good at

celebrating! Hopefully there will be lots of cake ...

WI members all over the country have been helping people, volunteering in different ways and even making PPE. It is wonderful to see such kindness and good come out of these strange and stressful times.

Unfortunately, not all news is good and we were saddened to hear of the passing of Elsy Nicholas, who was a long time member of our WI. She served on the committee for many years, until she and husband John moved to Tarporley. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

I do hope that the next time you hear from me it will be happy news of the resumption of meetings and we would be pleased to welcome you whenever that is. We always meet on the second Tuesday of each month, 7.30 p.m. in the Delamere Community Centre.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY NEWS

Earlsbrook

With the growing coronavirus pandemic the site was closed on 27th March. After further government advice work started again towards the end of June, with a range of safety measures in accordance with the procedures of the Construction Leadership Council. At the time of going to press details of the new work programme were still being finalised.

Oakmere Courthouse and Police Station

Building work has proceeded rapidly since the lockdown was eased. Several of the houses to the rear of the courthouse are already occupied. Work on the remaining houses and the courthouse itself is expected to be complete by the end of July.

The Golden Club is here for you!

We might not be meeting at the time of writing this, but we are still keeping in touch with each other, waiting to meet once more as soon as it is advisable.

The Delamere and District Golden Club usually meets every fortnight and offers an opportunity to meet together in a social atmosphere. Founded in 1973 for members of retirement age the club is now open to anybody of any age who wishes friendly company. Some of our members also belong to other activities at the Community Centre, such as whist, keep fit, WI, snooker, badminton and bowls.

Our own activities are varied and include lunches, outings and speakers, seasonal activities, music and our own in house activities, including a raffle, but most importantly an excellent cup of tea and a warm welcome. We even have our own mascot, Becky, the young black labrador, who usually performs tricks at the end of meetings. It is a chance to learn what is going on in the village and locally. We offer lifts and keep in touch if it is difficult to come to meetings.

The Golden Club is sorry to announce the passing of John Moore who died of Coronavirus on the 6th April. He lived in Chrimess Drive with his wife Patti. After her death John found great support at the Golden Club and in turn supported us in our activities and brought real pleasure to all. He also reached out into the surrounding community. He came from Dorset and until recently still managed to drive down to his family in Southampton and Poole and once on holiday with them he drove all the way to Cornwall. A well known figure he



Jill and Joan give a warm welcome

Visitors are welcome, but the annual subscription is only £4 (plus £3 subscription to the Community Centre.) The entrance fee of £1 covers refreshments. Posters round the village announce meetings. Though we cannot meet at the moment, if you would like to see our programme for this year please contact me on 01829 752723 / 0759444 4480 or call at The Paddock, top of Stoney Lane and I'll make sure you receive a copy. See you at the Golden Club!

Gloria Ackerley (Secretary)

loved Delamere and will be greatly missed by so many of us including Lee, staff and customers at Delamere Stores.



Dear Residents and Friends of Delamere and Oakmere

It has been particularly challenging for all of us over these last few months due to COVID-19, and as a community we have all had to adapt to many changes. The Parish Council are continuing to hold virtual meetings and keep in regular contact with the PCSO and Cheshire West for essential updates.

We are aware that there have been a number of concerns with regards to litter and BBQ's in the forest during the long spell of hot weather. We are liaising with Forestry England to help try and improve the signage and raise public awareness about the dangers of BBQ's during hot weather. A small group of residents have also been voluntarily litter picking throughout the community and a big thank you to all those who are doing this on a regular basis.

Understandably there are yet to be any updates relating to Earlsbrook and the New Visitors Centre/Cabins, and it is hoped to provide some updates in time for the next edition of the magazine.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the local businesses who have made such a positive contribution to the community over these last few months, in particular Lee and Suzanne Cartwright at Delamere Stores and their team of staff and volunteers, the Buckley Family at Coronation Farm, and Ryan Cartwright and the team at Delamere Events.

A special mention must go to Rev Angela Asquith who has done an amazing job in doing regular updates and virtual broadcasts from St Peter's, and been a source of advice and support for so many people, and not forgetting a huge thank you to the Key Workers and NHS staff who live in the area for everything they do.

Over the coming months I do hope that we are able to safely return to normal life (with some adjustments), but in the meantime I hope that you all keep well and stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Bell
Chair, Delamere and Oakmere
Parish Council

Our local food bank

Sadly the problem of people requiring food and being unable to afford it never goes away - it can be a real struggle for many, and things we take for granted and think nothing of can mean the world to a family in need. The need has risen even more during the lockdown, with food banks throughout the country experiencing a huge increase in demand.

I am a volunteer for the Runcorn and District food bank. Every week we get an email which tells us how much has been donated, how much has gone out to those in need, and items that have been identified as being required. For example the latest Newsletter has identified a particular need for shower gel, deodorant, toothbrushes and tinned tomatoes.

The food banks are managed around the UK by the Trussell Trust and run locally by volunteers. I am more than happy to act as a donation point. If you would like to drop off any supplies please contact:

Fiona Goodier
07962 025979
8 Frith Avenue

We can only accept tinned goods, toiletries, packet goods like cereals, pasta and rice but NO formula milk for babies.

People in need are able to access the food bank by getting a voucher from their GP, social worker or Citizens Advice Bureau. Anyone who is in desperate need will never be turned away.

Litter picking in the village

Litter picking will be a never-ending task, and 20 local people have kindly

offered to help out. Special thanks go to Lee Cartwright, John Edwards, Claire Darlington, Ian Wharmby and Nathan Head, who have all purchased pickers to allow the volunteers to collect rubbish safely.

We have found many discarded gloves and masks due to the recent pandemic, so it is reassuring that the volunteers don't need to physically touch the rubbish. Anyone identifying an area in need of litter picking is welcome to borrow a picker from those mentioned above, and I have several that John Edwards has lent me.

Safeguarding the forest

There has been a surge of activity in the forest since the lockdown has eased, not all of it welcome. Cheshire Fire and Rescue have had to put out several fires caused by people using BBQs. They have been using social media to educate people about the dangers, and urging them not use barbecues or light fires in the forest.

The police have had a notable presence in the forest trying to catch people on off- road motorbikes, educating those coming to the forest, and also coming out after numerous complaints from residents about parking. British Transport Police were also present for several days monitoring traffic parking in the Station Car Parks.

The Forest Rangers have been busy picking up rubbish around the forest, and with the help of Cheshire Police have been moving on people who have tried to camp in it.

Isolation hasn't meant inactivity for children at Delamere Academy, who have stayed in shape thanks to a daily PE challenge set by their teachers.

With school closed to everyone aside Reception, Year 1, Year 6, and the children of key workers because of the coronavirus crisis, inventive teachers have been delivering virtual lessons to children's homes. Using the latest technology, lessons are beamed direct to kitchens, sitting rooms and bedrooms several times a day to make sure pupils see familiar faces and maintain morale.



In addition to the core subjects, children have been cooking, producing art masterpieces, entering competitions and learning to ride a bike without stabilisers.

A big part of the quarantine curriculum has been daily PE challenges. Members of staff post videos of themselves taking on running, jumping, throwing and skills tests to encourage children to get active.

Deputy Headteacher Ricky Huddart says: "Staff have been working really hard to give lots of learning opportunities for the children. Parents and children have responded really well to the online learning platforms, and daily videos from staff are a lovely way to demonstrate specific lessons, read bedtime stories, show experiments and even

have a joke together! We have loved seeing what the children have been up to at home and how they are looking after their mental health and wellbeing. An integral part of it is keeping children active, and a few of us have set challenges for the children. It's been great to see them take on the tasks, and they usually beat us!"



PE teacher Tom Freeman adds: "For my PE Challenges I film myself, for example seeing how many continuous catches I make with a tennis ball against a wall. Or how many speed bounces I can do in 30 seconds. The children are encouraged to practice the skill, and aim to set personal bests. Anyone who wants to can post their videos to Twitter, which really helps to keep motivation up."

The school's activities during lockdown reflect its overall approach to student wellbeing. Last year it was one of under 20 schools in the UK to be given the National Children's Bureau's Wellbeing Award for Schools. It has done just as well academically. It was the top performing school in Cheshire West in the latest SATs results, and was named by Tatler magazine as one of the top 10 non-fee-paying primary schools in the country.

For more information about Delamere CofE Academy, email: admin@delamere.cheshire.sch.uk or tel: 01829 707 979.

For everyone of us, the Coronavirus has been a source of worry and distress. The 'new normal' is a huge change for us all and we certainly felt that here at Delamere Farm Shop.

The way many of us shop has changed, and many of us prefer to shop locally rather than visit the big supermarkets where there are long queues and difficulty with social distancing..

Here at Delamere Farm Shop, like other local businesses, we became extremely busy and had to adapt very quickly. We needed to keep everyone safe as well as ourselves and so we decided we could only allow one person in our shop at any time, and contactless card payment for purchases.



We thank all our customers for all their patience and support during these difficult times. Supporting local businesses is vital and we are grateful.



The asparagus season was rapidly approaching and we were concerned as to whether we would be able to find pickers, and whether anyone would want to call to buy asparagus. However, we didn't need to be quite so worried. We had a fantastic team of hard working asparagus pickers, locals Jacob and Sam Moseley and Henry Young. Asparagus was more popular than ever as people treated themselves to something special to eat.

If nothing else, this time has given us the opportunity to remember to appreciate and enjoy the simple things such as food, family and the beautiful area we live in.

Stay safe everyone, and we look forward to continuing serving and supporting our community.

From all at Delamere Farm Shop

DELIVERING THE GOODS DURING LOCKDOWN

Lee and Suzanne Cartwright and the rest of the team at Delamere Stores have been doing a fantastic job for our community during the Covid-19 crisis, along with their splendid band of volunteers. Those of us who have reaped the benefit are not the only ones to applaud

them. The Chester Chronicle ran a story about their 'fabulous community spirit', and better still, Lee and Suzanne have received a letter of thanks from the Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire, on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen!



Mr and Mrs Lee Cartwright
Delamere Store
23 Station Road
Delamere
Northwich CW8 2HU

Dear Mr and Mrs Cartwright,

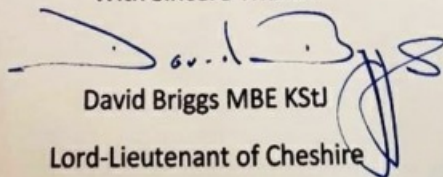
I write as The Queen's representative in Cheshire, on her behalf, to thank you for all you are doing to help the elderly and vulnerable in your community.

I understand that you have introduced a home delivery service for those who are isolated to make sure that those who are vulnerable are prioritised and that you have galvanised the local community so that you now have a team of volunteers to deliver essential shopping to those in need.

In Her Majesty's recent speech she said – "I hope in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge."

Both of you and each member of your team should take great pride in what you have done and in what you continue to do to help those most in need in our community.

With Sincere Thanks


David Briggs MBE KStJ
Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire

My Little Platter Co.

At Delamere Stores

Bring this voucher
into store to receive

20% off

This voucher applies to our fabulous sandwich platters, business lunches, party food, afternoon cream teas and anything from our platter menus.



Please email us at hello@mylittleplatterco.co.uk to discuss your requirements further or to book your order. Alternativley you can call us on 01606 882226 and ask to speak to a member of our catering team



This voucher cannot be redeemed against items of stock sold
by the shop and is only valid until 01/10/20

Postings on the shop's Facebook page give a fair account of what the team have been up to, including a huge number of plaudits from delighted customers. They leapt into action in the middle of March, within hours of the government announcing its plans for self-isolation of elderly and/or vulnerable people. Free deliveries were offered for anyone who was isolating, and for the most vulnerable the team promised to do their very best to deliver a daily hot meal. As the response from those in need took off, so did offers from local volunteers to help with the deliveries.

The community spirit fostered by the shop's staff and volunteers has been reciprocated by customers. When an elderly and vulnerable gentleman was trying to place an order by phone and his payment card details wouldn't go through, a customer in the queue pulled out his own card to pay for the goods himself! Another customer very kindly paid for two cream teas to be delivered to anyone who might need cheering up. Lee and Suzanne chose two elderly people living on their own, one aged 87 and the other 93, both of whom were utterly thrilled. And then there are all the rainbow posters that brighten up the shop window, all produced by local children.



In many ways our little local shop has out-performed the supermarkets. When the supermarkets ran out of toilet rolls and then pasta, Lee and Suzanne managed to get hold of both, and posted a

wicked plea on their Facebook page saying that if we really must panic buy, panic buy locally!



When the supermarkets ran out of hand sanitiser they offered free refills from the supply they had bought for filling the dispenser in the shop. The dispenser was installed at the shop door for use on the way in, along with a full set of social distancing markers and customer screens. The business obviously takes these things seriously, having been awarded a top 5-star rating for hygiene by the Food Standards Agency.

The shop's monthly takeaway nights were not compatible with government guidelines and had to end, but with the help of Lee's brother Ryan they were soon replaced with drive-through takeaways in the forest. However, the family's catering business and its café at Fourways both had to close for the duration of the lockdown. The catering arm will need support if it is to survive a lack of business meetings, and though the Fourways café stands a good chance of getting back to normal as the lockdown eases, by then the supermarkets will be back to normal too. When that happens we will need to remember that our little local shops will still need us as much as we have needed them.

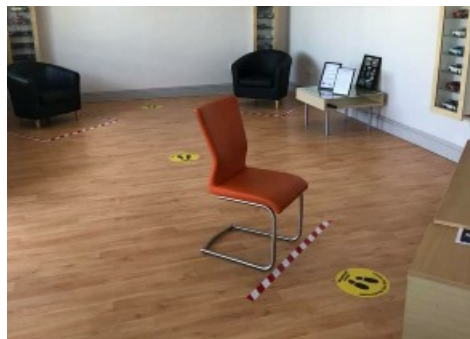
SAFE SERVICING AT NICK TOMLIN CARS

By Becky Tomlin

Here at Nick Tomlin Cars we have put strict measures in place to comply with the Covid guidelines, including all types of covering for the cars whilst the mechanics are working.



When they have finished the inside of the car is sanitised as well as its keys. We have hand sanitiser in the office, along with markers for all the restrictions for a 2 metre social distance.



The workshop has also been fenced off with social distance markers, and its floor has been freshly painted to help keep it clean.



Things have been taking a little longer than usual while we get used to our new way of working, but that's only to be expected. Meanwhile, Holly has made use of the forecourt to thank the NHS!



We would like to thank the people of Delamere and Oakmere for their continued support while waiting for us to re-open. A few have delayed their MoT tests, but on the whole people are still getting them done as well as servicing. We are now very busy so please book ahead.

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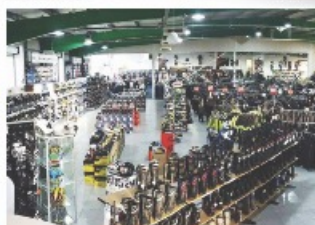
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SAFE SHOPPING AT J&S MOTORCYCLE STORE *By Alex Sheeran*

In response to government advice J&S Accessories closed it's Oakmere store on 23 March...



...and then as the lockdown eased we re-opened on 1st June, with a strict set of social distancing measures in place. The cafe was eventually able to re-open on 4th July.

We have a strict rule on the number of customers allowed in the store at any one time, with a queuing system set up with spaces distanced 2 metres apart, screens between customers and staff, and also PPE for all the staff. There are cleaning stations for customers to clean their hands when they come in, disposable balaclavas for trying on helmets. and protocols for trying on kit. Fitting rooms can be used where necessary, and are cleaned between fittings by staff.

We are accepting returns of faulty products, but hold them for 72-hours before processing the return or repair. We have also extended warranties by at least two months for goods that were purchased prior to the pandemic.

With all these measures in place we are very much back in business, and wish our customers safe shopping and safe motorcycling!.

SAFE SHOPPING FROM STONYFORD NURSERY *By Tony Overland*

In common with similar businesses we had to close our nursery and gardens to all visitors. This was very worrying, as we had a large amount of stock ready for the start of the gardening season. However, we decided to set up local delivery with a click and collect service. This has gone very well and has been a real help, as the nursery, gardens and tearoom had to close.

We have since extended this to be nationwide, and now provide a UK

mainland mail delivery service for plants and giftware.

However due to social distancing and hygiene issues we have decided to keep all our facilities closed for the time being. The exception to this is for click and collect customers as they have a an agreed pickup time and may visit the nursery when they call to collect their plants.

Mind Body & Fitness with Claire

Claire Darlington

Back in March when all the Pilates classes I teach came to a halt I panicked, not only because I was worried for COVID-19, but also because of the fact that our group would not have that social interaction, or continue with the benefits associated with taking part in Pilates.

So I decided to set up the classes online via Zoom, and I've honestly never been busier with the classes. Only accepting people who I had previously taught in class, I have been delivering 3 classes a day for 12 weeks. The feedback has been tremendous, and I believe that moving forward there is a market for a combination of both.

The sessions I've been delivering have just been 30 minutes which people have said they feel has been just the right



mindbodyfitnesswithclaire.co.uk

time as they would get too distracted if it was for an hour.

I cannot thank everyone enough for continuing to support the business, and it's been a great way for everyone to see each other, to say hello and to have a quick chat, before the class starts and at the end! We've had dogs, cats, and even a lamb joining in!

Thank you everyone x

When lock down becomes your lift up!

Emma Wilson

If you'd suggested to me this time last year, that I should work from my garage, in a 10ft x 7ft space, with no windows, a temperature at the extremities from really cold to boiling hot, and be enjoying all of that, I'd have thought you'd have gone mad!

At Emma Wilson Fitness life in lockdown has been liberating. With many clients self-isolating to protect themselves and their loved ones, and understandable fears for safety as the crisis unfolded, I was faced with dwindling class numbers. I found myself having to step

outside my own comfort zone to consider a future without face-to-face personal contact, and having to embrace technology!

The wellbeing, nutrition & health arm to my business (My Time for Change) has always been an online service, but with the world facing a new wake-up call to health, wellbeing and immunity, the programme has thrived. Those who have been on the programme during the crisis have not accumulated lockdown lard, nor had a lockdown low!

For several months, everyone has lived without things they love, places they love and people they love. They have had to make huge adjustments in their

work life, school life, personal and home life, causing stress & anxiety. But there is a flipside of positivity to this; life without a commute and a busy social diary can be quite enjoyable!

Initially you'd think that life in lockdown wouldn't be appealing to the human psyche, but thanks to technology it has been possible for many. I pivoted my fitness business quickly, taking my classes online the week before lockdown, and from there on the Zoom Room was created. Thanks to my business partner Mindy Cowap, I was encouraged to enter into a cyber room, that has been a life saver, not only for my business but for the health & wellbeing of my clients. They have had uninterrupted easy access to my fitness classes.

My philosophy for lockdown life has been sanity over vanity, and I felt it hugely important that clients could still not only have structure to their lives, but also a taste of normality. Seeing familiar faces, exercising amongst their friends - and if they weren't friends before, they are now! Having a virtual place to go, a date in the diary, routine, and, most importantly, still looking after their wellbeing.

I asked if anyone wanted to buy or rent any stock of kit, so that they didn't have to pay the extortionate prices online, and delivered them to their doorsteps fully sanitised. I did test calls with those less sure of how simple this new way could actually be, and within 24 hours a class in a village hall had become a class from my garage, where I could still see, chat and monitor technique and

make adjustments on an individual basis.

That was almost 15 weeks ago – this complete U turn from face-to-face to screen-to-screen has been more successful than I could have imagined. Daunting at first for clients and myself, I too worried that I may not have a business once Covid-19 had disappeared. With no way of knowing when that could be, we've all adjusted to a whole new way of thinking when it comes to fitting fitness into our life.

Lockdown has highlighted just how important our mental and emotional wellbeing is, and I'm lucky to have been able to have given a boost to my local clients. What's even better is that they've been able to bring friends and family who don't live locally to my classes, as they are now accessible from anywhere.

Because so many of my clients are reluctant to go back to old ways, the majority of my classes remain online. What they thought they would miss from being at a physical class, actually doesn't outweigh what they gain from working-out at home in their online class.

Gyms re-opening is still uncertain. The logistics of kit hygiene, social distancing, sanitisation, flooring, class changeover and toilets is all mind boggling.

Meanwhile, online workouts take all of that away! There are lots of different classes suited to different needs, so if you are tempted to join in, you can see what's available at:

www.emmawilsonfitness.co.uk

STATION HOUSE CAFE IN LOCKDOWN

By Claire Darlington

We closed our doors on 23rd March, and it's given us some much needed breathing space to re charge and think about the business! We have smartened up outside and the telephone box looks brand new! Please come down and visit it and have your picture taken with it.

We are investing in an outside wooden canopy that can help provide customers with safe outdoor area to sit where they feel comfortable social distancing or indeed if they are walking dogs on a wet day. We are expanding our take out with a weekend "take away or eat in" fresh home baked

Pizza service. We are opening our ice cream hatch to allow this service to take place and this will also give us another space to sell hot and cold drinks and sandwiches and baguettes.

We will open when the government tell us it's safe to do so and have installed Perspex screens at our serving areas and operate a one way system! We've moved chairs from inside to allow more space!

Please continue to support us. It's been a tough year so far but with your support we hope to keep going



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As a Delamere resident studying journalism at De Montfort University in Leicester I have seen how economically and socially damaging the virus has been throughout the city, and in the university itself. Thousands have lost jobs or businesses, and above all, many family members have been lost to the virus. However, through all the dark times came many national heroes, especially NHS workers, who deserve an enormous amount of respect for the work they have done at such a dangerous, life-threatening time.

Before the pandemic hit, students suffered two weeks of union strikes by lecturers. As a result we received only three full weeks of face-to-face teaching following the onset of the virus. In our final year, and deep into our dissertations, there was more pressure on deadlines than I had ever experienced in my time at university. Not only were there no face-to-face lectures or seminars, but all libraries were closed. This meant sourcing all our reading online, where it was not all fully available.

Many students have struggled with paying their rent due to losing their jobs, or their hours being cut short. I was working in a restaurant in the centre of the city before it closed due to the virus, so I moved back home and worked part-time at Delamere Farm Shop.



Staff at the university did their utmost to support students as much as they possibly could, but we still felt huge frustration at having paid for a full term of teaching and receiving next to none.

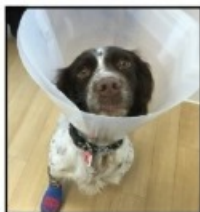
Another restraint we have had to face in the past couple of months has been the lack of jobs for recent graduates to enter. I was hoping to move from Delamere to a city where opportunities should be in abundance, but economic strains have caused many journalistic practices to tighten their belts in terms of recruitment.

In what seems to be the long-awaited road back to normality, I, like the rest of the country, have been able to reflect on the events and adaptations we have all had to make due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Even though many students may feel unlucky that it struck when it did, taking away our last months at university, I've tried to keep a positive outlook. I just feel blessed that my family and I are safe and well.

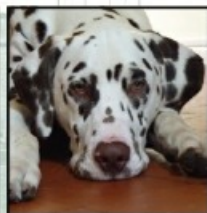


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2020 will certainly not be a year any of us forget in a hurry. In March, the way we live and work changed, perhaps forever. Some businesses had to close their doors and are yet to re-open. Others continued, providing food or essential services. Here at Hollybank Veterinary Centre, we perhaps fell somewhere between the two and that has given us a lot of challenges over the last three months. Hollybank opened in March 2009, just as we entered a recession, so we are no stranger to economic uncertainty. Thankfully, eleven years on, we are hopefully more resilient, but nothing could have prepared us for a pandemic.

When the Prime Minister announced the lockdown we had some quick decisions to make. We knew we wanted to stay open and provide the service our clients and patients rely on, but at the same time we needed to keep our staff and clients safe and we needed to weather the storm financially. We took guidance from our governing and advice bodies – the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), the British Veterinary Association (BVA) and the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) and set about making a plan. This plan was to change many times (just in the first 24 hours alone!) because no-one knew exactly what they were dealing with.

For the first part of lockdown the advice was clear – emergencies only. No clients were allowed in the practice which meant our whole way of working had to alter. Instead of our normal

face to face consults we would use telephone consultation to triage cases and decide who needed to be seen and who we could treat remotely. Normally our guidelines state we must examine all patients in order to provide prescription medication but the RCVS granted temporary measures to allow us to prescribe remotely, reducing the number of people who would need to come to the hospital. For those that did need to come we had to take pets from their owner into the practice as safely as we could. Cats in baskets were quite straight forward but dogs on leads proved a little trickier!

Social distancing within the practice was another challenge. Whilst it was possible to keep clinical (vets and nurses) and non-clinical (receptionists) staff two metres apart, vets and nurses examining and treating the same patient could not socially distance.

Two teams were formed, each made up of two vets and two nurses that would work 4 days on, 4 days off each, thus minimising interactions as much as possible and allowing one team to remain operational should any member of the other team become unwell. Of course regular handwashing is second nature in our job anyway!

Although we would have liked to keep all our staff working, that was just not an option. We had a markedly reduced workload as all routine and preventative healthcare appointments and procedures had to be cancelled. We furloughed several staff. They would remain in reserve if any of the working members of staff became unwell.

We provided a daily delivery service for medications and food orders. We hoped this would be helpful to our clients, some of whom had to self-isolate or shield, as well as reducing the number of people needing to come into contact with our staff. Using the ambulance we provided daily deliveries every week day right up until the end of May.

Once it became clear that we were going to have to get used to a new 'normal', the advice on what we could do gradually altered. Some vaccinations were allowed - whilst we did not want to compromise public health, nor did we want an outbreak of disease in our cat and dog populations. Over time, the advice from RCVS, BVA and BSAVA has evolved to the point that we are now allowed to do the vast majority of our normal workload. Strict social distancing measures of course have to be maintained and that has provided new challenges. Our reception remains closed and we now have an intercom system in order to conduct consultations at a distance. We have also erected a gazebo to

provide outside cover (we cannot rely on the lovely weather continuing!).

We have now made the decision to start bringing back our furloughed staff. Our consultations take longer than they would normally and we are getting busy enough to be able to return to our full staff capacity. However, we continue to work in teams to ensure that should anyone become unwell, we can both protect other people and continue to staff the hospital appropriately to provide ongoing 24 hour care.

The changes we have had to undertake during the last three months have been challenging and of course there will likely be many more before things start to look more like life used to. However, there have been some wonderful moments. Being able to lend some of our monitoring equipment to the NHS helped us feel we were playing our part too. We are so proud of how the team have responded to the difficult times – those that have worked long hours and unusual shifts without complaint and those that have not been able to work and have supported their colleagues from home.

FOREST HOLIDAY COTTAGES AT LINMERE *By John and Stacey Edwards*

Forest Holiday Cottages has been hit hard by the lockdown, but we'll be back! We decided to close our luxury cottages in the Forest from March through to the end of July, and refund all guests we were expecting in this time. We're delighted that many have chosen to rebook at a later date, especially those who regularly bring their horses on holiday with them to

take advantage of the excellent hacking in the Forest.

We're hoping that from August we can return to welcoming guests, while ensuring to take all necessary precautions to keep guests and our family safe. Until then, keep smiling.

John and Stacey.

Covid has been a pain at Kelsall Hill. We had to close during lockdown for facility hire, and also for the builders, who couldn't deliver the proposed scheme in the time proposed due to social distancing and so on.

To make matters worse I was skiing in Italy when the Italians closed their resorts, and developed Covid symptoms within 7 days of returning.

We are back open now but can't run competitions at the moment. However, we can run training days, so we are trying to increase facility hire by creating a schedule of training days for the different disciplines of dressage, eventing and show jumping.



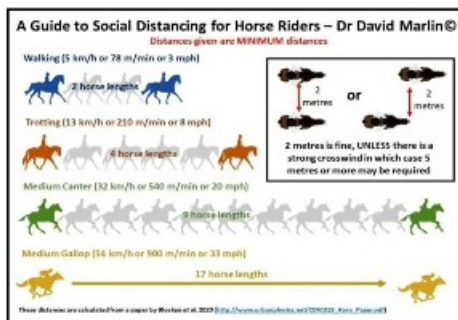
To achieve the government guidelines we do all the gate opening and closing for visitors, there are hand sanitiser stations both sides of our gates. We've had to chain up the hand sanitiser to stop the containers being adulterated! There is a portaloo to separate the

visitors from the onsite staff in the rental units.

We have separated access into the car parks for liveryes and visitors, so they use different gates too.

We are cashless now, so all payments are contactless. We no longer run our loyalty card schemes, so fewer unnecessary bits of paper change hands. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own pens to sign in and out with.

Parking is done at a distance so visitors are quite some distance apart, and based on the latest research for socially distant riding we have printed out guidance for the lengths horses need to be apart.



With a bit of luck we'll see competitions start again sometime in July, but at this stage I think it's unlikely we'll run our normal British eventing event in September. If the rules change we might, but at this stage, given the number of new restrictions, it looks financially challenging!

Coronavirus. Mid-March, the week before things got serious, and I was on a photo trip to the Scottish Borders. I prepared to return in anticipation of further expeditions to the Isle of Skye, South Wales, and Somerset in April, May, and June respectively. So much for that. All now postponed until 2021.

So, how to keep occupied in lockdown?? Read? Jigsaws? DIY? All well and good but photography is what I do these days. I have a limited attention span for anything else. Withdrawal symptoms tend to set in when shutter buttons are not pressed regularly, even if the results are indifferent. Yes, amazingly, I'm capable of my fair share of dross.

Having moved to Delamere in 2006 I spent the early days getting to know the area - as you do - often with a camera in hand. Parochial wanderings reduced with time as, I suppose, I unconsciously assumed I had seen what there was to see. Not one to cover old ground don't you know.

Well, it was a case of having to now! The restrictions played well in some respects. I am no longer strong or sure footed. Extended yomps with heavy photo gear are a thing of the past. I subscribe to photographer Edward Weston's maxim - "anything more than 500 yards from the car just isn't photogenic".

So, what had I missed first time around? A lot! I found I did not lack for subject matter. In fact, I took the opportunity to take on types of photography quite new to me. Flower and still

life photos anyone? Next stop portraits.

I put some of the resulting early images on my website and sent a link to the Editor in case he would be interested. He suggested this article. Now I had something of a project. To record and share the diversity and beauty of our Parish in lockdown.

Consulting the Parish map I realised I still hadn't covered anything like all of the ground. Based on Eddisbury Hill I had tended to roam almost exclusively to the West and North. So, what about South and East? I corrected that, and in doing so came upon other discoveries.

Clive has selected some images to accompany this article. I do hope you find something to enjoy. Confession. A couple of images were made outside the Parish - but only just.

A photographer's frustrations arising from pandemic restrictions are trifling compared to the devastating traumas many are experiencing. No doubt the world will change post pandemic - certainly not for the better economically when the bills comes in. But, there are examples of positive change in individuals and communities. We have learnt that we are adaptable and that we can be caring and appreciative of each other.

For myself my little project has opened my eyes anew to my home place and to new photographic possibilities. The most positive take away is confirmation, if any were needed, that I live in a really rather lovely part of the world.



RAILINGS, CORNER A556/STONEY LANE



LOGGING, SANDSTONE TRAIL AT DELAMERE LODGE



BLUEBELLS & NETTLES, STONEY LANE



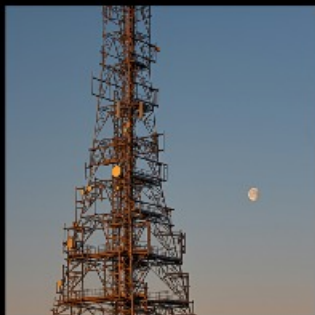
WEATHERVANE, EDDISBURY HILL



SUNRISE, DARK ARK LANE, MOULDSWORTH



PRIMROSEHILL WOOD



THE HEIGHTS



SETTING SUN. SANDSTONE TRAIL IN PRIMROSEHILL WOOD



HONEYSUCKLE. QUARRY WALL, DELAMERE GROVE



ST PETER'S



SUNRISE AT THE STONES



STEPS. WHITEGATE WAY TO A556



SUNSET. KELSALL HILL EQUESTRIAN CENTRE



SUNLIGHT THROUGH THE TREES. ABBEYWOOD



BIRDBOX. BELOW HANGINGSTONE HILL



SUNLIGHT & SHADOW. NETTLEFORD WOOD



BUCOLIC. HEATHS LN TOWARDS KNIGHTS LN

When I put together my 'Walking Out in Delamere and Oakmere' 2020 Calendar I could never have dreamt that at the end of March 2020, all our lives would turn upside down in a way we had never experienced before.

Never have I felt so lucky to be able to live here! The beauty we have on our doorstep. The fact that we can step out into it at the end of our 'virtual' day has helped keep me sane and spin my plates! To tread the familiar paths in the fields and forest near-by. To clear the head; calm the mind; exercise the body with either a walk, a bike ride or a run. Sometimes with my family, sometimes alone, it was a delight to have the forest to ourselves like never before. To take time to experience the seasons; the bright warm sun returning day after day like it knew we needed it; the bluebells, the wood anemones, the summer roses.

The sounds and sights of nature became bold and bright as the dawn and evening chorus rang out. Wherever we walked the woodpecker could be heard; the lowing of the cattle (that seemed to move overnight miraculously from one pasture to another) reached out into the evening air. I saw buzzards being chased by crows after attacking nests; a grass snake of not inconsiderable length basking on our garden path; pheasant hens and their chicks moving through the grasslands on Old Pale; Greylag Geese alongside lambs and their mothers enjoying the evening sunshine.

I have explored new and somewhat adventurous bike trails with my son;

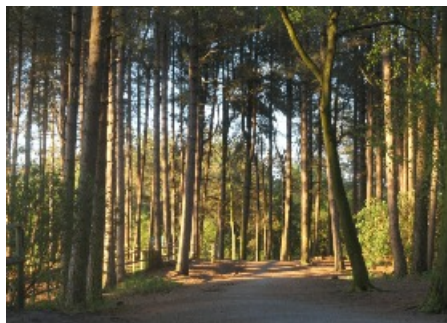
been on our regular 'loop' family walk up Old Pale returning via the Roman Road – 'hide and seek', tree climbs and 'stick duels' featuring en-route. Also, my daughter and I have returned home in almost darkness after amazing sunsets; supermoons behind wild cherry blossoms; rainbows over Blakemere Moss on a Thursday night; clapping for the NHS by the forget-me-nots in the woods.

We also saw our natural landscape changing during lockdown, with the forest harvesting altering old views forever and opening new views on a daily basis.

Seeing friends and neighbours, feeling connected to our community has been so important.

I hope you like some of the amateur lockdown pictures Clive has kindly given me the opportunity to share with you. I was looking for a quote to finish off with about photography. I found one, which seemed apt somehow, as we are experiencing new and different things in our community as we ease out of lockdown. Its source is unknown:

'Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, kill nothing but time.'



Near Go Ape



Sunset on Old Pale



Blakemere Moss, clap for the NHS evening



Sunset over Blakemere Moss



Sunset towards the Visitor Centre



Forest harvesting above Station Cottages



The Roman Road, from Hangingstone Hill



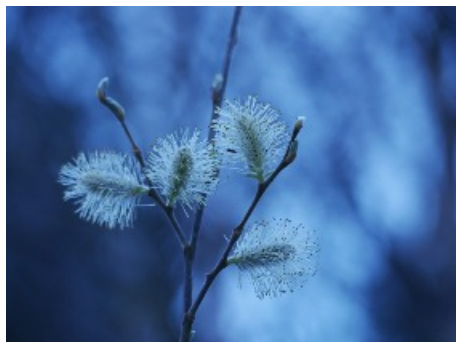
Forget-me-nots in the forestry woods



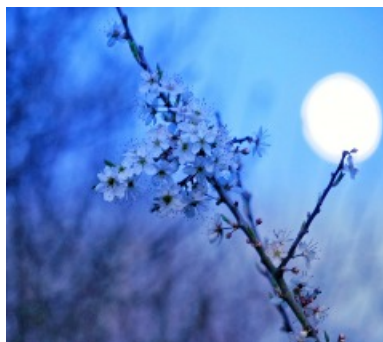
Forest bluebells



Wild cherry at Old Pale



New growth on Blakemere Moss



Blossom in a supermoon



Forest path



Nettleford Wood



Deserted forest paths in March



Cattle at Eddisbury hillfort



Curious cattle at Nettleford Wood



April forest clearance

In recent years I have been learning archaeology, and what better time to have the opportunity to investigate features in our garden which go back hundreds of years.

Our garden backs onto the Iron/Bronze age Eddisbury Hillfort, and to the medieval Chamber in the Forest. Our garden is separated from these by a tumbledown wall of large sandstone blocks, some of which had fallen into our garden way before we came here some 36 years ago. There has always been a ridge of sandstone, poking through our “wild” area of long grass and brambles. Around 10 years ago, I was told by archaeologists from the Habitats and Hillforts project that we had an old floor of a possible agricultural building associated with the Medieval Chamber in the Forest.

So ten years later, with time on our hands, with trowel, spade, secateurs and good weather I began our investigation. I started by attacking the long grass and brambles, and was surprised how easy it was. The vegetation peeled off to reveal a large sandstone floor with a possible wall leading off.



I then investigated the tumbledown boundary wall, and soon established this was lying on sandstone bedrock,

which also revealed some interesting features open to interpretation.

By now I had piles of weeds, nettles and brambles, the resident robins were having a field day. I really needed to tidy up and dispose of, which took around 10 days.

Now much of the area has been cleared up, large loose boulders from the tumbledown wall removed and more detail has emerged. I now have 2 post holes carved out of the bedrock, a possible step below the surface of the sandstone floor, which therefore must predate that, and also toolmarks in the sandstone, showing human activity.



Finds are limited to old discarded rubbish thrown over the wall for the past 200 years, which have fallen into our garden. Lots of broken Victorian

pottery, including a chamber pot and fire grate, bits of bottles and bottle tops, fragments of clay pipe and modern rubbish.



Star finds include part of a bottle with thin blue bubbly glass, the broken edge

of which is smooth, showing its age. The main find is a shattered granite stone, brought down by the last Ice Age. Stones like this were used in Iron Age times to heat water. They were heated in a fire and plunged into cold water in skin buckets, and after repeated use, they fractured. Lots of these were found by archaeologists during the excavations ten years ago.

To conclude, there is still much to do, but we do have features from antiquity, open to investigation, and I look forward to a visit from my archaeological friends for their expert guidance and interpretation.

NJG AND EASYLIFE

The husband and wife team of Simon Gibson from Easylife Garden Machinery and Nicola Gibson of NJG Design would like to thank everyone for their patience and support during this crazy time.

Nicola is mastering the zoom call, enjoying outdoor meetings in the sunshine etc and working hard to keep on top of all the home changes and extensions people are considering during the enforced time at home.

Easylife Garden Machinery staff are working with the new normal of social distancing and continuous disinfecting of surfaces and working hard to keep on top of all the garden equipment repairs and sales during the enforced time at home!

A big thanks to their children Ella and Alex for their help and maturity during home-schooling.

nicola gibson

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All drawings prepared for and submitted to the Planning and Building Control departments on your behalf, including Listed Building and Conservation Area consent where necessary.



Tel: 01606 301171 Mobile: 07813 034552
Email: nicola@njgdesign.co.uk www.njgdesign.co.uk

THE FISHPOOL AND THE ABBEY ARMS

The Fishpool Inn and the Abbey Arms both re-opened on 4th July with a full set of social distancing measures in place. The lockdown didn't put paid to the Abbey Arms' celebration of the 75th anniversary of VE Day..



WILDLIFE IN THE PARISH *By David Wright*

Wildlife was spared no respite from human activities and disturbance during the recent Corona Virus lockdown.

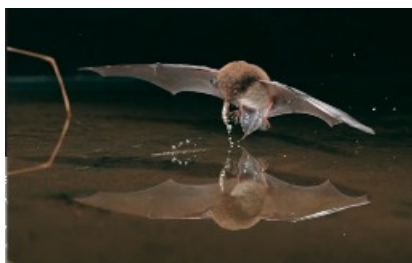
Local nature reserves were closed, along with other local outdoor amenities, and my local peregrine watch did not take place.

It was different in 2001 when the countryside was closed due to the Foot and Mouth outbreak. This did make a difference with public footpaths closed throughout England and Wales by an Act of Parliament, which prevented access and disturbance to farmland.

Our work as Rangers, looking after wildlife sites, carried on with an abundance of sightings of species. Snakes and lizards basked in the sun; fox cubs played out in the open in broad daylight; and barn owls hunted

open spaces at dusk where normally dogs would be seen running and people would be shouting. During this May and June, I think there were more people out walking on The Old Pale and Primrose Hill woodland areas than I have ever seen.

A walk around Great Blakemere Lake saw several Daubentons Water Bats, flying just above the water, catching insects. This is a medium sized bat



Daubenton's water bat © Dietmar Nill

with a 10in wingspan. One was seen in good light two hours before dusk.

A Noctule bat was also seen in this watery area. This is a high flying bat with a distinctive flight pattern and is one of our largest bats, with a 14in wingspan. The Noctule is a tree dwelling species and must be living in larger broadleaf trees in the nearby forest.



Noctule, Findingnature.co.uk

Closer to home and near houses in Stoney Lane is the hunting ground to several Pipistrelle bats. A single Brown Long-Eared bat was seen flying along the woodland edge in Watling Drive.

Most of these bats will be tending to nursery roosts in the roof spaces or cavities provided in the buildings nearby.

Bats in the UK are mostly in decline due to human activities. Causes include the felling of broadleaf trees which are replaced with conifers, converting farm buildings, pesticides and habitat destruction to name but a few.

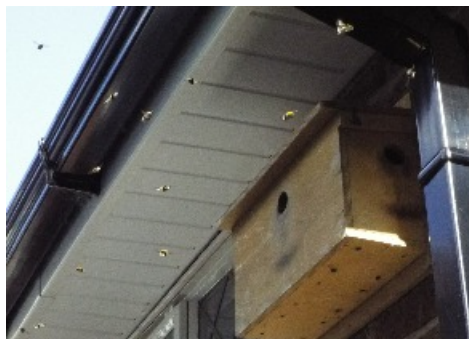


Brown Long-Eared bat, Woodland Trust

The tree bumblebee, or *Bombus hypnorum*, is a relative newcomer to Great Britain. It was first recorded in 2001, in Wiltshire, having spread widely in Europe in preceding years. It seems not to be a threat to existing species of bumblebees in this country, but to be a welcome additional pollinator. It forages on a wide range of plants, particularly those with drooping flowers, and is now an important pollinator of soft fruit. It spread rapidly northwards through England and Wales and is now colonising Scotland. In the wild, it nests in holes in trees, but gardens resemble its open woodland habitat and in them it finds nest boxes and roof spaces much to its liking. A few years ago they took over a terrace of three sparrow nest boxes on our patio, and this year they are back, confining themselves to two this time.

The previously mated queens hibernate over winter and emerge in February or early March and look for a suitable nest site. For about six weeks they forage, lay eggs and raise young. Then the new workers emerge and this may be the first time you notice that you have a nest. The queens, workers and drones all have the same coloration and markings: a tawny/orange thorax, black abdomen and white tail, though they actually look quite dark till you see them with the sun on them. The queen is of course larger than the others and the workers who forage tend to be bigger than the 'house' workers. The drones which are slightly larger than the foragers and a bit chunky, are assumed to leave the nest on emerging. In May and June,

especially in sunny weather like we had in May this year, the nest becomes much more active, emitting loud humming, and an apparent swarm of bees buzz around the entrance. These are drones, presumably from other nests, doing 'nest surveillance' or 'lekking' during which they are apparently all facing the nest, for obvious reasons as it turns out. It can seem quite threatening, but the drones have no sting! They are waiting to mate with emerging young queens and seem to have infinite patience.



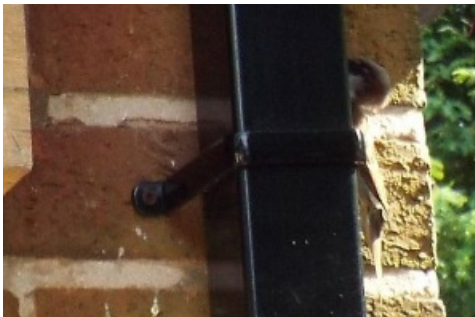
One particularly warm day we watched several queens emerge. They are spotted almost immediately and some drop straight to the ground with the successful male. Others fly off with them. Most queens then feed up for the rest of the year to be ready to hibernate. A few create secondary colonies and we think that is what happened in our second box to be colonised. Whereas the first nest will probably die off in July, the secondary ones continue till the autumn, though one wonders how successful any young queens produced then will be in surviving the winter. If it is a good late summer and mild winter, no doubt

some of them will. The queens hibernate in a small hole dug in a north facing slope, or in leaf litter or similar.

As the first nest has got bigger the material inside has nearly closed the hole. I've read that nest material protruding is indicative of the tree bumblebee, as also the yellow waxy bee faeces outside the entrance to the box.



Before our second colony got active, a pair of sparrows decided to risk nesting next door. The first bee nest was in the left hand hole of the terrace, the secondary one in the middle and the sparrows in no. 3 on the right. During the hot weather when the drones were really active, one sparrow would often hide behind the drainpipe, then sneak in when there was a bit of a lull.



That tended to be the male, the female sparrow seemed to be bolder!

As sparrows usually raise three or even four broods in those nest boxes, they've really missed out this year! However, they have been successful in the one 'bumblebee box' they managed to occupy. The parents were encouraging this chick to fledge, cheeping loudly from a nearby bush. They were unsuccessful at first, fortunately, as there was a thunderstorm shortly afterwards!



Don't be alarmed if tree bumblebees spend a season with you. We have often sat eating on our patio with them at close quarters, and although rather noisy, they take no notice of us at all.

It almost feels a cliché at this point to say that 2020 has been a strange year. Uniquely we have all been in the same boat but experienced this in very different ways. For many people including myself, nature and their local patch has been a reliable escape from the whirlwind of sad news over the last few months.

There was a real sense of optimism forming around the initial stages of lockdown - carbon emissions were down, wildlife was flourishing and most people's lives had slowed down significantly enough to appreciate the natural world around them. It felt that despite the horrors the pandemic had brought along with it, we would all at least come out of this with a silver lining in the form of lasting change.

The easing of lockdown measures was a flood gate opening for beauty spots, nature reserves and public parks. It became hard to retain an optimistic outlook as we witnessed news of big jumps in litter, fires and a disrespect for the environment nationally. These pressures can have deadly long lasting consequences for our wildlife and habitats, especially for certain sensitive habitats such as the wetlands and peat basins in and around the Delamere area.

It is not all bad news however, we still have a great opportunity to celebrate local wildlife through the peak of summer and keep that spark of optimism alive. Cuckoos have been calling throughout June in Hatchmere, wildflowers are fully in bloom across Cheshire, fledging birds of all species

can be seen throughout our gardens, butterflies and dragonflies can be seen on the wind. There is a vast array of wildlife to be seen at this time of year, it really is the best time to dust off the identification guide and learn a couple new species.

Look out for white tufts of cotton grasses across the mosses throughout Delamere Forest especially Doolittle Moss near Barnsbridge car park.



During the peak of summer this moss can be a carpet of cotton grass.



Cotton grass in Doolittle Moss – Jack Helsby

If you happen to visit on a bright warm sunny day you will also be greeted by a flurry of dragonflies including Four-spotted chasers and the much rarer reintroduced White-faced darter. It is not uncommon to see Greater-spotted woodpeckers here taking advantage of

the bounty of insect life and the odd goose nesting amongst the soft rushes. If you are really lucky here you might just hear the noisy call of Crossbills passing through the canopy.

Just down the road in Oakmere the wildflower rich banks of Crown Farm Quarry are in full bloom. The reserve is not open to the public but it can be seen up close from the ever popular Oakmere way. Recently part of the active sand quarry, the reserve now plays host to a wide variety of species; amongst a large variety of wildflowers large mosaics of Knapweed and Oxeye daisy can be seen along the banks interrupted by the occasional towering Viper's bugloss.

The calming tones of Skylark are abruptly broken up by piercing Green woodpeckers' calls overhead with accompanying broadcasts from Little grebe in the lakes below. This site

offers up a whole host of summer spectacles and these can be seen and heard throughout the surrounding area, I myself have been fortunate enough to see Linnets and Crossbills along the Oakmere way.

I can't express how worthwhile it is getting out there and learning more about local wildlife, if we want to live in a world where our natural environment is respected and cared for universally we must understand and treasure it. On top of all this getting out into nature has been proven to boost both mental and physical health. Learn, enjoy and discover as much as you can and share it with those around you. We just might see that lasting change yet. Meanwhile we will be looking to restart our volunteering days soon and continue bringing wildlife back to Cheshire.



Meadow featuring an impressive Viper's bugloss – Jack Helsby

GROWING RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE PARISH?

Almost all the farmland in the parish is eligible for a grant from United Utilities to grow biomass crops for renewable energy. The grant covers 70 per cent of the start-up costs, including purchase and planting. The scheme has a triple purpose: to produce a profitable crop; to help tackle climate change; and to help protect groundwater and public water supplies from nitrate contamination.

The plant to be grown is a hybrid variety of *Miscanthus*, also known as Chinese silver grass. It gives very high yields with no need for fertiliser, other than a small amount to help it establish. It is planted in spring and produces a commercially viable crop the following spring, after which it produces new growth every year for the next ten to fifteen years.

The leaves of the plant fall off providing nutrients for the soil and suppressing weed growth, leaving bamboo-like canes that are harvested. All



propagation, maintenance and harvesting can be done with conventional farm machinery.

United Utilities are currently running a trial on 10 hectares of catchment land, and grants will be offered to any Cheshire farmer in its safeguard zones (which include almost all of the parish to the west of Oak Mere).

If you fancy turning your garden into a farm, or turning your farm into a green coalmine, contact Clare Vincent of United Utilities on 07904 112484 or at clare.vincent@uuplc.co.uk

OLD BIRD NAMES *By David Keogh*

Ever wondered how birds got their names? Names given in the past were based on local custom and varied from county to county, even village to village. Depending where you lived a chaffinch was a flackie, an apple-bird or silverwing. The names were so different across the country it's a wonder how chaffinch emerged as a universal name! Nicknames were the most common way of naming a bird but imagine the variety! As the following list (drawn from various sources) suggests it hardly leads us to most of the names we know today.

Blue Tit: Pickcheese
Great Tit: Pridden-Prals
Long Tailed Tit: Hedge-Mumruffin
Starling: Sheep-stare
Wren: Stumpy-Toddy

Dunnock: Shufflewing
Magpie: Meg-Pie
Greenfinch: Bighead
Goldfinch: Thistlehead
Jay: Devil-Scratch
Nuthatch: Nut-Jobber
Swift: Longwing (Welsh)
Kestrel: Hoverhawk / Wind-Fanner

Country folk had names for their fields, the wild plants that grew there and the creatures in, on and above the land. These names date back centuries and can still be traced on maps, documents and in oral tradition. Even so, tracing the origins of names, whether it be birds, plants, animals, insects, etc., is another matter. Do old local names for living things still remain?



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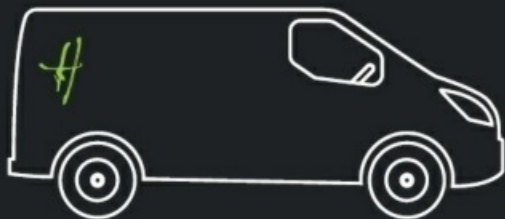
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01925 730 976

My name is Abbie Grainger. I am 14, live in Oakmere and go to Weaverham High School. I am setting up a new venture to raise funds for a trip I'm making to Borneo with Camps International in July 2021. The trip to Borneo is for 4 weeks, quite a long time, but I will be going with some friends from school. During my visit I will be working on different projects that will have a life changing impact on the local communities. The trip costs over £4000, with 38% of this money having a direct impact on the local area and used for things such as protecting wildlife and improving living standards.

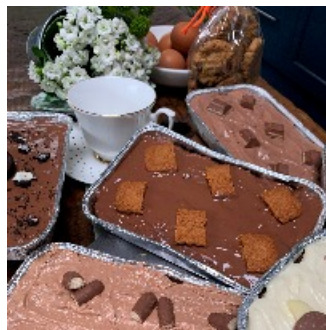
I've already raised some money for the trip by selling sweets, a car boot sale and selling some old toys. Covid 19 has really impacted my fundraising efforts so I've had to think of something else and this is why I've set up 'Down 'Ya' Cake Hole'.



I will be selling traybakes and biscuits which will be **delivered to your door free of charge** if you live within 5 miles of Oakmere.

I have registered my business with the local authorities and completed my food hygiene course so I'm ready for sales. I am starting with a small menu,

but hopefully it will be successful, and I will expand. Currently you can enjoy a brownie traybake, marble cake, Malteser cake or oat biscuits.



My contact details are below if you would like to place an order. I will update you on my return from Borneo, share my experiences of the trip - and hopefully tell you how successful my cakes have been.

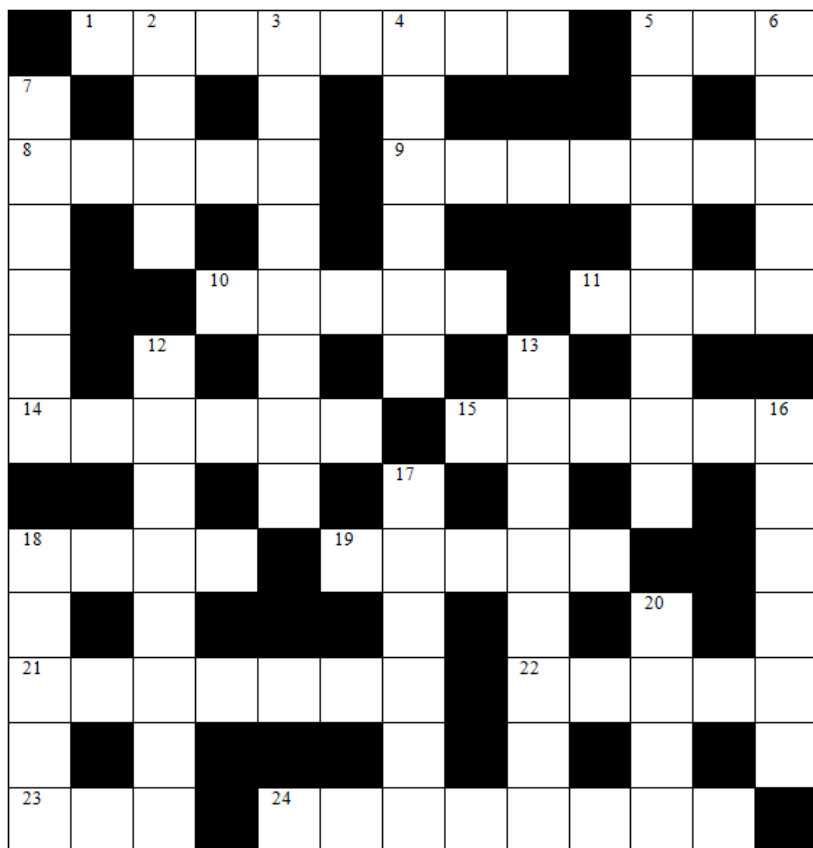


@Downyacakehole



@Downyacakehole

E-mail: sales@downyacakehole.co.uk



Across:

1. Religious teacher with weight will talk too much (6,2)
5. Muslim leader may cook in this (3)
8. Digital hole may be found in marquee (5)
9. Setter's heathland plant for continent (7)
10. Even goes either way (5)
11. Twisted dean is Scandinavian (4)
14. Uproar when America follows rear (6)
15. Footballing mouse meets early end but gains renown! (6)
18. Toboggan guided south to start with (4)
19. Subject for head in charge (5)

21. Initially on right in garden, French friend is doing craftwork (7)
22. Angry, I reckon (5)
23. Alpine half confused friend (3)
24. Alternative tiff follows little Thomas after today (8)

Down:

2. Top primate gets ten (4)
3. Goat rears – soft soap? (6,2)
4. Among the extra Dervishes is a merchant (6)
5. One soldier, rubbish or stirrer? (8)
6. Article donated is tropical plant (5)
7. Communication from leaseholder (6)

12. Confused Ariel follows mischievous fairy for emperor (8)
13. Football bosses took motorway going and train returning in usual way (8)
16. The season for an adder (6)
17. Stand with quiet hatred (6)
18. Southern shop exclusive (5)
20. Making pudding, start on air (4)

POETRY CORNER - CELEBRATING SPRING 2020 *By David Wilkinson*

I'm stuck inside
 But I look outside
 I see a butterfly on the wing
 What a glorious sight , it must be spring
 A bumble bee
 What a joy to see
 Buzzing around the flowers in a ring
 The signs of the season, the love of spring
 Robins abound
 Close to the ground
 Blackbirds and finches gather to sing

They climb on the feeder , they know its spring
 A buzzard on high
 King of the sky
 Woodpeckers knock although I don't see a thing
 More sounds that tell us we are in spring
 The farmer is sowing
 Food for the growing
 All around us we see life to bring
 When this virus is over, it will be a new spring

SUMMER QUIZ *by Steve Lacey*

(Answers on page 6)

As foreign holidays seem to be off this year (and who needs them when we have sunshine like this?), here are 10 questions about places you might have been visiting for a spot of foreign sun . . .

1. Which Portuguese resort gives its name to a fortified wine and a sponge cake?
2. On which sea will you find Dubrovnik, Rimini and Pula?
3. Who were 'Loco in Acapulco' in 1988?
4. In which city will you find the Copacabana, Ipanema and Flamengo beaches?
5. Which of these is the furthest north – Costa del Sol, Costa de la Luz, Costa Blanca, or Costa Dorada?
6. Which island is famous for its twin peaks known as the Pitons?
7. In which group of islands will you find Mykonos, Santorini, Naxos and Delos?
8. In which country do 100 satangs make a baht?
9. In which American state is Disneyland?
10. Which is the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea?



DELAMERE
& OAKMERE

NEWS

ISSUE 49 | SUMMER 2020

Cover Photo by Ray Downham:
View from Stoney Lane during the lockdown