

# Rural Links

with the Village Agents

Contact us: 01275 333 700 or [alison@wern.org.uk](mailto:alison@wern.org.uk)

## Welcome to our August issue

We hope you enjoyed our last newsletter and that this month's finds you safe and well. We start by bringing you a message from Denise..

*Hello,*

We are now starting our fifth month away from you all and that is something we never expected to be doing during our 10th anniversary year. All the Village Agents plus Alison and myself have been trying to keep in touch with as many of you as possible. You can also contact us by calling 01275 -333700 and I will ask your Village Agent to call you back.

In the last couple of weeks as more things start to open up we hear that rather than rushing out to the shops, many of you are continuing to stay

at home. Please be reassured that it's OK to do this whilst keeping aware of how your mood might have changed. Your mental wellbeing is as important as your physical health so do try to stay in touch with friends. Or give us a call particularly if you have any concerns or wish to check what the new rules are as they do keep changing.

Meanwhile we are thinking of new ways to bring people together safely - outdoors at first. Meeting in an open space or going for a walk in small groups; the numbers determined by whatever new rules apply. If you

would like to talk to someone in a group that you previously attended but don't have their number, please let us know. We will call that person on your behalf to ask if we can pass on their number. Or write a letter to us at WERN, Unit 2, The Barn, Lady Farm, Chelwood, Bristol, BS39 4NN. These are rather strange times and there is not yet a new normal, but we will get through this and hopefully celebrate together later this year.

Best wishes and keep safe,

*Denise Perrin*

## Bird watching

### BIG BIRD

Photo from Denise's first trip out and about - a heron at Shearwater Lake. She heard a noise and shouted to her sister who had her camera. It was pure luck that she captured this amazing bird.



These two are four weeks old and becoming very adventurous. They are a variety called Goldline and are prolific layers so by the time we meet up again you could be having their eggs for breakfast.

It's interesting to note that these two were hatched in an incubator with no contact with an adult hen. My Buff Orpington took them under her wing and is the best mother. She is teaching them

so much: where to forage, where to hide in case of danger, she is very fierce if she thinks they are under threat and she is teaching them how to speak Chicken. You would not believe the vocabulary of a chicken.

I would like to invite all of you to be honorary Aunts and Uncles and receive weekly updates of their progress.

Stay safe,

*Jane Boss*



### & LITTLE BIRDS

Jane Boss has kept chickens for ten years and keeps us supplied with fresh eggs when she visits Wellness Wednesdays. Here she updates us with news...

Hi everyone. In this time of uncertainty I thought I might talk about something that is constant, i.e. babies, and in this case: Chicks.

## Face coverings

You will know that face coverings are now compulsory both on public transport and when in a shop. Other indoor places may be added to the list, so it's recommended that you wear one in situations where social distancing (less than 2m) might be difficult.

Some people can't wear a face mask or covering because of a disability or severe distress. Various charities have designed explanation cards to be used to deal with public situations that might arise. If you would benefit from such a card, please get in touch and we can help you obtain one.

## What's the soundtrack of your life?



Playlist for Life is a charity that can help people build a personal playlist: songs, theme tunes and sounds that are special to us. Research shows that

listening to music can make living with dementia easier and happier, but anyone can make a playlist!

Their website is full of ideas and resources to find your own special tunes, as well as practical advice on how to get hold of music and methods of storing and

listening to your playlist.

Rural Links would love to encourage people to build their own playlist so if you need a bit of extra help, do let us know. Call Alison on 07919 006708 or email [alison@wern.org.uk](mailto:alison@wern.org.uk)

[www.playlistforlife.org.uk](http://www.playlistforlife.org.uk)



Members of the Farmborough group enjoying a socially distanced get-together recently.

## Keep Active!

Neck and shoulder movements and exercises are really important and a good way to keep the upper body flexible and help us to maintain a good posture. These exercises can also help to keep the joints warm and lubricated. We use these muscles countless times per day, often without noticing - for example just think about how many times you need to look over your shoulder whilst driving (if you drive), or when you're shopping or working in the garden? Or how many times you lift your arms up to reach something - I imagine it's fairly often!

For those that used to attend my Extend

sessions, you will be familiar with the exercises below but for anyone else, I hope you find the photos and descriptions easy to follow. I have identified the movements I feel will be of most benefit and I suggest you do the exercises at least once a day and hold each stretch for around 5 seconds.

You should only move as far as is comfortable, there is no need to force the movement. If you experience any pain or dizziness please stop immediately. (Please note some clicking or "crackling" sounds are normal whilst doing these exercises - this is the fluid which lubricate the joints popping).



### Exercise 1

Turn your head to look over your shoulder then repeat on the other side.

Tilt your head to your shoulder stretching the side of the neck.

Tilt your chin towards your chest stretching the back of the neck

Push your chin forwards "Like a tortoise"

### Exercise 2

Lift your shoulders up towards your ears and then release them (slowly)

Roll your shoulders backwards up and over (imagine your shoulder blades touching)

Take one arm at a time across your chest and pull gently to stretch the joint

Reach up as high as you can and stretch (both arms together or one at a time)

## A message from Bruce Laurence

Director of Public Health, Bath and North East Somerset Council



This has been a frightening and difficult time for so many people. The dangers of coronavirus have been obvious so it is understandable that some people are still worried about restarting such simple activities as shopping, seeing friends and going out for meals.

But I would now like to encourage you to follow new national advice and take those first steps back to a more normal and satisfying life. I can reassure you that we have

had such good success in suppressing the outbreak, that in recent weeks we have had hardly any confirmed cases in Bath and North East Somerset. Indeed we have one of the lowest rates in England. So, if you take simple precautions, the risks of catching the coronavirus are currently very small.

But of course, to keep it all that way, we are still asking people to take basic sensible precautions when they do go out. These include:

- Keep two metres away from anyone not in your immediate household, and particularly avoid face to face contact.
- Keep your hands and face as clean as possible, using hand sanitiser wherever it is available when you are out.
- Avoid crowded places and use quieter ones where

you can, and particularly avoid any crowded indoor spaces where you can't keep apart from others.

- Use a face mask whenever you are in an indoor space such as a shop, unless you need to take it off to eat or drink.
- Avoid public transport, particularly when it is busy, and if you are on a bus or train use a face mask.
- Avoid shouting or singing in any public place.

As you read this, there are probably just a handful of people in the whole of Bath and North East Somerset who are actively positive for coronavirus, so as long as you take the precautions above, you can go out to meet friends, go to a pub or cafe, do your shopping and generally enjoy the summer without fear. And we promise to let you

know if the time comes when you need to be stricter again.

Finally I would also ask that if you are offered a flu jab please make sure you take it up. That is also so important.

### Flu jabs

It has recently been announced that people over 50 and those shielding (including those that live with them) will be added to the list of people being offered a free flu vaccination. Most surgeries will offer these from September and should contact you if you are eligible.

However, we would recommend calling your GP to check you are on the list as each surgery has a different procedure.

## Don't be a Couch Potato!



Rural Moves is a new project, running over 16 weeks, to help YOU to either start or maintain some level of exercise or activity on a regular basis. Funded by Sports England, this could be

in a group setting either online, or outdoors (in a small socially distanced group). I will also be available for one-to-one instruction and mentoring to keep you motivated. I want to help you maintain your

independence, mobility, flexibility and prevent any potential falls which can be very debilitating.

This does not have to seem daunting or difficult, everyone is valued as an individual and will be catered for accordingly. If you need help with building up confidence to try the exercises, I can help with that too! Or if it's been a while since you have done anything, it may be that just a few movements are all you need to begin with and we can build up to more from there. I can demonstrate a range of strengthening exercises along with a photographic leaflet which will keep you

on track and means you can do the exercises at home.

We want to offer the social side to these activities (for those that would like to participate) as we have all been deprived of seeing people for so long and it will be beneficial for us to ease ourselves back in the outside world - together! Hopefully we will also be able to offer some guided short walks in small groups (weather and lockdown measures permitting) in the near future.

I look forward to working with as many of you as possible - contact Ketyn in [ketyn@wern.org.uk](mailto:ketyn@wern.org.uk) or call 07534 186166

## Useful Numbers:

### VILLAGE AGENTS

Denise, Aly, Julie, Ketyn and Alison are available to help and support you. [denise@wern.org.uk](mailto:denise@wern.org.uk) or **01275 333700** (leave a message and we will get back to you)

### COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY HUB

Support with Health and Wellbeing [www.3SG.org.uk/wellbeing](http://www.3SG.org.uk/wellbeing) or **0300 247 0050**

As restrictions ease you may be looking for services to help take care of yourself and your surroundings. The following are some suggestions of services that come to you. If you would like to add a supplier or service that you think others might find useful, please let us know. Call Alison on **07919 006708** or email [alison@wern.org.uk](mailto:alison@wern.org.uk)

### NICOLETTE MCKEAN

Mobile hairdresser, based in West Harptree: **07976 831695**

### JANE BRANCH

Mobile hairdresser: **01761 415039**

### FEET FIRST MOBILE FOOT CLINIC

Professional footcare in the comfort of your own home – visits to South Bristol and the Chew Valley.

[www.feetfirstclinic.co.uk](http://www.feetfirstclinic.co.uk) or **01275 790437**

### CAROLINE PEMBRO

Mobile chiropodist/podiatrist covering Wells, Shepton Mallet, Midsomer Norton and surrounding villages.

[www.carolinepembro.co.uk](http://www.carolinepembro.co.uk) or **0800 612 4871**

### HAPPYSORT

A new local service to help free your home from clutter or tackle those unwanted possessions. Taking bookings for September onwards, the initial visit is free with no obligation.

Email [reedcaathome@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:reedcaathome@yahoo.co.uk) or **07934 955690**

### ROBERTS & DENCH BESPOKE CATERING

Picnic boxes or Afternoon tea delivered to your door – or as a gift for friends or family. [robertsaddench@gmail.com](mailto:robertsaddench@gmail.com) or **07878 040767**

### LIBRARY NEWS

Unfortunately, the mobile library service is still suspended. However, Bath Central, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton libraries have reopened with a limited service. This includes a Grab and Go service where pre-selected books can be borrowed with minimal contact needed.

**Opening times: 10-4pm, Mon to Fri**

### TIMSBURY HUB LIBRARY

Good news for Timsbury residents: the Hub Library has also reopened, albeit with limited services. Users are welcome to return books with the contactless book drop and borrow up to three new books from the current stock. **Opening hours are Mon and Thurs, 2-4pm and Sat 10-12 noon.**

## Top up your tank!



West of England Rural Network's Community Oil Buying Scheme

If you rely on oil for your heating and, or hot water, there's no better time to top up your tank!

Demand for oil has dropped with the recent outbreak of Coronavirus. This, in turn, has led to a significant drop in oil prices. Kaz Adams, who runs the scheme for WERN, says "We would generally advise all our members to fill up their oil tanks anyway during the summer months (the time when most oil suppliers experience a

quieter period and are usually more willing to negotiate a lower price) but it would appear even more shrewd to do so now".

The scheme generally achieves a price that's roughly 5pence per litre less than the average high street price and is open to all residents of B&NES, North Somerset, South Glos and Bristol. Local community buildings (village halls, schools and churches) can also benefit from the scheme, as well as businesses such as farms, shops and offices. Fees apply, but thanks to a grant awarded by The Quartet Community Foundation, membership to the scheme is free for all domestic oil users aged 70+ who may be struggling to pay their heating bills.

Enquiries to: Kaz on 07825 202043, Email: [karen@wern.org.uk](mailto:karen@wern.org.uk) or visit <http://www.wern.org.uk/community-oil-buying-scheme/>

## Fancy a Sing-a-long?



Some of you are familiar with Goldies – the Sing and Smile Charity. They have been a regular feature of our Wellness Wednesday sessions for some years now and also run sessions in Timsbury. Of course, the current pandemic has seen sessions suspended for now, but the charity has been running free online sing-a-longs. You can watch either on Youtube or via their facebook page – they're live every Tuesday and Thursday at 11am or you can watch recorded sessions at your own convenience. See [www.golden-oldies.org.uk](http://www.golden-oldies.org.uk) for more details.

### West of England Rural Network

Registered charity 1146165  
Company number 7956 732

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