

Community Newsletter

Summer 2019



*For and from residents of Bleadon-Hillside
neighbourhood and beyond*

*Ashford Drive • Barry Close • Beechmount Close •
Beechmount Drive • Copse Close • Faversham Drive •
Hamwood Close • Haywood Close • Haywood Gardens •
Oldmixon Road • Penarth Drive • Rochester Close •
St Mary's Court • Totterdown Lane (lower) • Walnut Close •
Winterstoke Road from Broadway to Oldmixon Road •
and others •*

A message from Cllr. Pete Fox to residents of Bleadon Hillside.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of Bleadon and Uphill who voted me in for the third time at the recent Council elections.

This has been a tough time for the Conservative Party due in part to the Brexit debacle, so your support is all the more appreciated.

It is my intention to continue to support the interests of the residents of this ward going forward. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Tel. 07582678488 or phyllandpete@btinternet.com

Best regards,

Pete Fox
Cllr. Weston Town Council

We congratulate Cllr Fox on his re-election and take this opportunity to thank him for his years of willing help and knowledgeable service to our area, which is appreciated by so many.

We also congratulate North Somerset Councillors John Ley-Morgan and Peter Bryant upon their re-election.

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Patrice here...

The picture of an extra large cat and two neighbours chatting is back! We now have another delightful Maine Coon who will probably be even larger than our original Rufus. This one is also Rufus as he is red-haired (well, ginger really!) and at nine months old already measures 37 inches from nose to tip of tail, walks on a harness and lead, and will grow until he is about 2 stone. I mention all this in case you call, as he is very affectionate!



I.T.M.A.....It's That Meeting Again

Plans for our meeting for residents of Beechmount Close to learn more about The Copse hospital, which have been ongoing for a long time, continue to develop and are definitely on! Please watch this space for details of the date and venue which can be confirmed now that Cllr Bryant is back from his convalescence. You will have noted from his recent circular that he has spent much time corresponding with the Care Quality Commission, (CQC), Social Services, the Health Minister and our MP John Penrose on the matter, but was halted by the refusal of the CQC to attend our meeting. However the purpose of the meeting, as agreed with Charity Dube, Medical Director of The Copse, is basically unchanged and will go ahead later this summer. The police have become involved in Beechmount Close recently, but this is not in connection with our meeting and does not affect the planning.

It is widely hoped that some of the misunderstandings about The Copse and its patients will be resolved at this meeting. It is anticipated that it will be held at the Cricket Club and, when all details are confirmed, notices will go to all Beechmount Close residents. We will be circulating a report on the meeting afterwards but please attend if you can, it's important..

Out & About

Anti-knife crime school lessons.



Schoolchildren across England are to receive extra lessons on the dangers of carrying knives. 200 thousand teachers will receive new lesson plans to further equip them to challenge myths and emphasise the dangers. The special hour-long lessons will be given ahead of the summer holidays to 11-16 year olds.

This action follows the recent re-launch of the #knifefree campaign and a £200million Youth Endowment Fund, to be used to help prevent young people being drawn into crime and violence.

Free Bike Check offered.

Halfords in Marchfield Way are offering to check the brakes, tyres and gears of bicycles free of charge, to ensure the bikes are roadworthy. They also offer a swift repair service to any problems found but suggest going to them soon, before the school holidays start. To book in, visit our local Halfords or go to halfords.com

Cheap paint!

Sponsored by Dulux and supported by numerous local councils, Community RePaint is a scheme that aims to re-use people's unwanted paint at a fraction of the original cost, for example If planning to decorate you could get an unopened tin of paint half price. More information of the scheme at www.communityrepaint.org.uk

Out & About

Fun challenges!

It's a Hospice Knockout' will return on July 14 and is keenly anticipated by those competing, we are told. 24 teams of 10 people have entered this year, to compete in a series of fun challenges at Weston Cricket Club in Devonshire Road from noon to 5pm. Great fun to watch, we commented last time, so why not plan to come this time around to cheer on one of the spirited teams raising funds for our excellent and valued local charity, Weston Hospicecare.

Car Boot sales at Weston General Hospital.

Weekly car boot sales to raise money for new equipment at Weston Hospital will run from 7th July to 25th August. They will be held at the hospital's academy car park, off Grange Road from 10am - 4pm. Would-be sellers should contact Robert Blackmore on 07734 244804 for further information.

Recycling matters...continued.

In our last issue, details of a few charities accepting unwanted items for scrap, repair or re-use were given. We planned to follow up with more charities and their sought-after donations, but have instead been side-tracked by an interesting question.: *"Where can I recycle crisp packets? They are not the right material for our recycling bin we were told, and I am not sure what kind of plastic they are, in any case". (cont. over)*

Out & About

We did our research and can advise that Walker's Crisps aims to make all its packaging recyclable, compostable or biodegradable by year 2025. In the meanwhile it has set up a partnership with Terracycle to turn any of their branded crisp packets into plastic pellets that could end up as watering cans, park benches or even cool bags.

Visit www.walkers.co.uk/recycle to find your nearest crisp packet collection point.

1066 and all that.

The original Bayeaux Tapestry will be loaned to the UK in 2022, it has just been announced, though where it will be displayed has not yet been decided. The original embroidery depicting the Battle of Hastings is an incredible 231 feet long, and is usually housed in Bayeaux, Normandy.

Did you know there is a full-size replica, stitched in the Victorian era and lodged in Reading Museum? The replica can also be viewed scene by scene at www.bayeauxtapestry.org.uk. There will doubtless be visits by history buffs and much written about this remarkable artefact, though we doubt it will attract the crowds London experienced for the Tutankhamun exhibition.

Watch out for subsidence!

After the long hot summer last year, Insurance claims for subsidence reached a ten-year high, we are told by the

Association of British Insurers, with ten thousand people making a claim between July-September 2018.

Subsidence, where the properties foundations move because the soil dries out, causes large cracks in walls. These can also be caused by large trees being planted too close to a property. The cracks appear suddenly, are often wider at the top than at the bottom, and are thicker than a ten-pence coin. The advice received is that if your home is affected after this year's promised hot weather, call your insurer immediately.

Driving abroad.

Last year's reminders about some of the unexpected driving regulations in Europe were well received - so here is an update for this year's holiday. The regulations apply whether you are driving your own vehicle or a hire car. This year's reminders come from Paul Birkhead of Halifax Motor Insurance, who reminds us that reading up on local driving rules before going away means that you stay safe (and free of unexpected fines) on the road.

Many European countries now require drivers by law to carry a first-aid kit, fire extinguisher, warning triangle, reflective jacket, headlamp beam reflectors and spare bulbs. Also check you have adequate car insurance and breakdown cover of course, as some policies don't offer like-for-like cover outside the UK. Did you know that, if you wear glasses, you're legally obliged to carry a second pair with you in Spain and Switzerland? Or that in France, if you want to use your mobile while parked, you must first switch off the engine? Or that in Italy you are only allowed to park in the direction of the traffic flow? Well now you know the rules, HAPPY HOLIDAY!

Making a Beeline

The buzz of bumblebees collecting nectar from flowers in the garden or the hillside's wild flowers is a sure sign that the warmer weather is here - but for how much longer will we hear that evocative sound? The bees are under threat - they have in fact been in decline for fifty years, we hear, with two of the UK's 25 species of wild bees recorded as extinct within the last decade.

There are a number of causes, primarily the lack of natural habitats. As meadows and other green spaces are commandeered for new buildings, the flowering plants on which bees depend have become dramatically fewer in number - of particular concern for bumblebees as nectar is their only food source. It is of concern not only to conservationists and nature lovers, of course, or just a matter of helping wild flowers to survive. Bees are thought to contribute more than £600million each year to our economy through their pollination of commercial crops. Loss of the bees could be a considerable blow to our food growers and farmers.

Some parts of the UK have a healthier bee population than more industrial areas - Somerset is high on the list - but bees do not stray too far from their hive or nest so strategies were sought to encourage the bees to seek new habitats and explore further afield. One solution was the creation of B-lines, insect pathways across the country, a project launched in 2014.

A network of linked habitats, rich in wildflowers, is being cultivated and mapped out, in the hope that the UK's bee population will be able to spread out, nest and thrive as they discover more flowers and nectar. The project is encouraging

local councils, gardeners, schools and large estates to develop bee-friendly areas. Bee-Lines it is hoped, will lead to the repopulation of the UK with bees, to the benefit of us all.

"It is not just about developing bee-friendly sites" says Paul Hetherington from Buglife, part of the Bee Roads project. "It is the links between the sites that are important, and meadow management to ensure a good supply of nectar from March through to October. We have some great sites but there is no way the bees can get from site A to site B because the distance is too great. With B-Lines we aim to create a network of connecting roads with stepping stones of rest and feed areas - the equivalent of service areas on motorways!" Wales and N. Ireland are now completely mapped, and two-thirds of England covered so far.



What can we do? It is suggested we spread wildflowers seeds in quiet rural areas, and grow flowers in our gardens that bees love. Plants that provide flowers from Spring through to Autumn help, and native flowers are best. It will all help to get our countryside buzzing again.

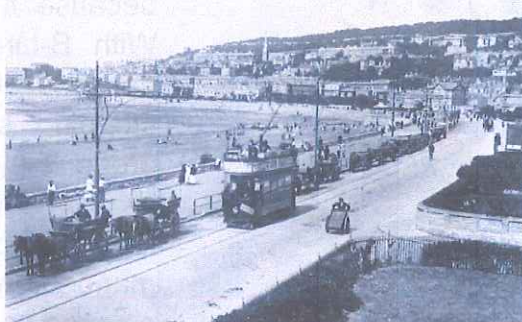
"Your face isn't old for a granny" said my grandson aged five. I felt so flattered and gave him a hug, but then he added,

"your neck's old though!"

The Folk who lived on the Hill: On Holiday

The folk on the hill travelled very little until carriers and stage coaches were around. This was mostly because, as a community of fishermen and farmers, with very little money and much to do, visiting other places wasn't easy and, in any case, they couldn't see the need when everything they wanted was close to hand. They had traditional festivals and amusements, good food, a wise woman for healing, the priest to guide them, the squire to protect them, and easy access to the sea, so why go anywhere else in their limited free time?

Life for the folk on the hill continued its steady way until the end of the 18th century when seaside holidays caught the city-dwellers' imagination. They may only have lived up the road a step, but our hillside certainly enjoyed



the attractions of Weston from the beginning of its growth from a small fishing villages of 30 families (with a hint of smuggling) to the town we know today.

By the early 1800's, Weston had begun to find fame as a spa and health resort, with a number of medical men recommending sea bathing, boat rides and healthy exercise to the wealthy, who came to rejuvenate and drink sea water. The Royal Hotel was opened in 1810 and a spa on Knightstone Island in 1820 with hot and cold seawater baths, accommodation for invalids, a tea-room and a reading room. Many farmers on Bleadon Hillside made good money by providing much of the extra fruit and vegetables needed for the holiday visitors, with local cheese much in demand.

By early Victorian times Weston was also popular with workers from the larger cities who came in groups from London or from the Midlands for Wakes Weeks holidays, as the factories closed down for maintenance. The railway had reached Weston in 1841, and even more visitors came by steamer from Wales when Birnbeck Pier was built in 1867. We are told that over



15,000 day-trippers came by boats on a typical Bank Holiday.

The folk on the hill would have shared all the excitement of the shooting gallery, the Theatre of Wonders, and fairground attractions.

They may even have used the bathing machines, but they were expensive and usually left for the 'posh' visitors to enjoy. However, a walk on the newly built Grand Pier was free of charge when it opened in 1904 and extended a few years later. Free of charge also was listening to the military bands playing in Clarence Park. I wonder if any folk from our hill were among the crowds of spectators packing the seafront to watch Bentfield Hucks become the first to fly a monoplane across the Bristol Channel from Weston to Cardiff in 1911, does anyone know?



Life went on in a gentle fashion on the hill, even through the Crimean and First World Wars on which we will comment later. It was not until the Second World War that Weston and the Folk on the Hill came under actual attack, and life was no longer a holiday.

Increased police funding.

The police, following wide consultation, now receive an extra £2.00 a month - more or less- from each Council Tax paying household.

Sue Mountstevens, Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon & Somerset, writes: " It was not an easy decision but I had to balance the challenges facing policing, the increased threat from criminality and the safety of residents.

I am committed, with the Chief Constable, to intensify our fight against serious violence on our streets with further high-profile disruption activity against burglary, drugs and other crime. This additional money will not fix everything but it is the first investment we have seen since austerity began in 2010 and it's a big step in the right direction."

These are the spending plans -



I have left orders to be awakened at any time in case of national emergency...even if I'm in a Cabinet meeting.

- Ronald Reagan, Former US President.

The Copse.

We are pleased to learn more about the Copse. They write:

Information about The Copse Hospital, Beechmount Close.

This is the first article for The Copse in Community Newsletter, so we would like to give you a brief overview of what services we offer at The Copse and the work we do:

The Copse is part of Elysium Healthcare. It is a locked rehabilitation mental health hospital. We care for patients with a wide range of mental health issues supporting each person to recover. Our environment enables patients to maximise their life opportunities and prepare them to live independently in the community.

We are proud to have had so many success stories, with some of our patients moving on and living independently in the community and some of our patients giving something back to the community in terms of real work opportunities.

Over the last year, our patients and staff have been involved in charitable events with a lot of success.

We are committed to making families and friends an active part in each patient's recovery process and helping all reach the end goal of more independent living. A regular newsletter on The Copse will be circulated to all families and friends keeping them updated on news and events.

[Editor: Please also see page 3]

Age is something that doesn't matter unless you happen to be a cheese.

Summer Holiday Pay

Something less exciting. Are you holiday pay savvy? Did you know that all workers are legally entitled to earn holiday pay for every hour they work, whether the work is part-time, shifts or irregular hours? The government thinks workers could be missing out on £1.8 billion every year in the UK, in unpaid holiday pay. It can be difficult to work out holiday pay, especially for people on zero hours contracts, for temporary staff or those on irregular hours. For straightforward guidance on your holiday pay rights check www.gov.uk/holidaypay

New Crackdown on 'rogue landlords'.

We are advised by the Department for Communities and Local Government that a further crackdown on 'rogue landlords' is to take place, with a raft of new powers for councils. These will mostly affect houses of multiple occupancy, though other improvements to standards for those renting in the private sector have also been published. Housing Minister Alok Sharma says: "Every tenant has a right to a secure and decent home, but far too many are being exploited by unscrupulous landlords who profit by providing overcrowded, squalid and sometimes dangerous accommodation".

The Government has also set out details of criminal offences that will preclude those convicted of offences such as burglary and stalking from becoming landlords. There are provisions for fining rogue landlords up to £30,000 for malpractice and extra protection to prevent 'revenge evictions'. Landlords will become legally responsible for ensuring local council rules on refuse, recycling and anti-social behaviour are complied with also, a move which will have a good effect on neighbourhoods in general, it is felt.

Cheaper calls to the police

The Home Secretary announced on 28 May that he is scrapping charges for 101 non-emergency telephone calls to the police. The move will make calls to 101 free for everyone from April 2020. Annually, around 30 million calls are charged 15p a time. To balance this, the Home Office will invest £5 million a year to fund the service. We are reminded that 999 is still the number to dial for emergencies.

Silent calls to the police

The Independent Office for Police Conduct has launched a campaign aimed at debunking the myth that if anyone dials 999 but remains silent (either from fear or loss of voice), their silent call will automatically bring help. The 'Make Yourself Heard' campaign is being backed by a number of Women's charities and the National Police Chiefs Council. If you feel yourself in imminent danger **1.** Dial 999 **2.** Listen to the 999 operator. **3.** Regional Director, Catrin Evans, advises: "It is always best to speak to the emergency call handler if you can, even by whispering, but if you are putting yourself or someone else in danger by making a sound, make yourself heard by tapping the handset or, when prompted by the system, by dialling 55. This lets the 999 call operator know it is a genuine emergency and the police will quickly be advised of your urgent call"

Remarkable calls to the police

However, not all calls are bona fide emergencies! In the early days of the service, someone called 999 to complain about noisy bagpipes, while more recent calls featured a plea for help to find an escaped rabbit, a stolen snowman, to complain about a cold kebab and a desperate husband whose wife refused to make him a sandwich.

Pets' Corner

Carrots are bad for rabbits, did you know?

A circular from the British Veterinary Association, just received, advises pet rabbit owners to take particular care with their diet as five of the top rabbit health problems seen by vets are down to wrong feeding.

Thanks to Bugs Bunny, they say, rabbits and carrots are inextricably linked in our minds, but are too high in sugar so each carrot is the equivalent of a chocolate bar, and lettuce can be even more harmful as it acts as a sedative. They ask that rabbits are not given apples or muesli, but say they will enjoy dandelion leaves, basil, mint, thyme and apple leaves.



Surgeons warn over dog lead injuries

Too many people could be at risk of seriously injuring their hands because they wrap their dog's lead around their fingers, say surgeons. Problems can arise if a dog becomes distracted and runs off, pulling the lead off over the fingers and potentially causing lacerations, friction burns, fractures and ligament injuries. Surgeons say such injuries may require long-term treatment and can mean fingers do not fully return to normal.



A Helping Paw

Founded in 1983, Pets as Therapy (PAT) is a national charity that enhances the health and wellbeing of people of all ages in

the community. Volunteers work with their own pets in hospitals, hospices, care homes, schools and day care centres. They bring joy, companionship and comfort to many who appreciate being able to stroke a friendly animal. The therapeutic visits are also known to improve the lives of people suffering from debilitating mental and physical conditions and raise literacy levels in children by developing their confidence.



To find out how you and your pet can become PAT volunteers see www.petsastherapy.org. PAT is reliant on voluntary help and donations to deliver its services.

Rip-off Callout Charges

Recently, we've received several comments about call-out charges. Many on-call tradespeople charge them and typically they are intended to cover the cost of getting to the job and the first hour or half hour of work. They don't include materials.

Sometimes, they really seem to work against customers, with—for example—one tradesman turning up and putting one screw into a door; for which the charge was over £100. Some have charged but not even fixed the problem. It's vital that we find out if there is a call-out charge and what it includes before booking. As soon as a tradesman crosses the threshold, they have the legal right to charge the fee they stated. Businesses that deal with emergency callouts may quote higher call-out fees from time to time. This is when they are busy and they want to get the most out of every job. If you ever feel you have been over-charged, then Trading Standards may be of help. Their service-line, run by Citizen's Advice is on 03454 040506

Health Matters

Dementia in the news: Last year the advice was to eat turmeric, perhaps adding it to a curry dish. This year we learn that the active ingredient, curcumin, could soon be used as an early indication of dementia. Scientists have found that a drop of turmeric solution in the eye can help detect Alzheimer's years before any symptoms of the disease fully appear, because the curcumin clings to abnormal proteins, making them more easily visible. The team at Imperial College, London, which is conducting the studies, believes we will be looking for signs of brain disease as part of every standard eye test within five years.



Is your tetanus booster up to date? A local GP has written of his concern about the lack of protection against tetanus within the population in general. Tetanus is caused by certain bacteria found in soil which, after entering the body through any wound, even a scratch, releases a toxin that affects the nerves, painful spasms, breathing difficulties and rigid neck muscles (hence "lockjaw").

Children are protected by routine vaccination, the last being a booster at 14 which should protect them until their mid-20's. Thereafter there are no routine arrangements for adults and tetanus protection is only given if or when we receive medical care for an injury in which the skin is broken. Mind you, some people will have an anti-tetanus booster as part of their travel vaccinations. The doctor strongly advises us to keep our protection against tetanus up to date, with booster injections every ten years. These are easily obtained through our G.P. and, he assures us, he is absolutely up to date with his!

Tax Fraud

What you need to know

Fraudsters are spoofing genuine Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) telephone numbers to deceive their victims over the phone. The fraudsters state that as a result of the victim's non-payment of tax or other duty, the victim is liable for prosecution or other legal proceedings in order to settle the balance. The fraudsters suggest victims can avoid this, by arranging payment to be made immediately by methods such as bank transfer or by purchasing iTunes gift cards.

They may threaten immediate arrest, deportation or to send bailiffs to the victim's address.

In genuine cases, HMRC will initially make direct contact with you via post/letter and potentially follow up that letter with a phone call at a later date.

If HMRC contact you via telephone they will quote the reference number on the initial letter you should have received. HMRC will not discuss something you are not already aware of, like a tax investigation, and will NOT demand immediate payment—particularly by 'gift cards'.

What you need to do

Always question unsolicited requests for your personal or financial information. Just because someone knows your basic details (such as your name and contact details), it doesn't mean they are genuine.

Don't be rushed or pressured into making a decision.

Remember: Under no circumstances would a genuine bank or some other trusted organisation force you to make a financial transaction on the spot.

Would you believe it!!?

- One third of Britain's toddlers have their own smartphone, tablet or laptop
- One in five dogs refuse to go out when it is pouring with rain, and, even when owners manage to coax their pooches to take a stroll, 90% of the dogs will cut it short.
- A quarter of primary school children are, as revealed by a recent survey, unable to identify well known birds, failing to recognise a robin or a blackbird. and nearly half do not know what a sparrow looks like.
- 8 days is how long, on average, we will put up with toothache before going to the dentist.
- 32% of grown-ups still have their favourite toy from when they were a child.
- 39% of Britain's self-employed workers are over sixty-five.
- 87% of British people regularly have nights when they cannot get to sleep, no matter how many sheep they count!
- 88% of teenagers do chores at home, with some of them earning up to £30 a week for their efforts.
- 245 bones are in a cat's skeleton, while a human skeleton has only 206.
- £531.35 is the average household spending in the UK every week, a rise of £7.40 since April 2018.
- 21,000 pieces of junk bigger than 10 cm are currently orbiting Earth, including a tool bag, a glove and a camera left in space by. forgetful astronauts.