



BERKELEY FLYER

N^o. 306

'For and about the people of Berkeley'

April 2021

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Canon Park - LOT 2 - Play Area

Berkeley Town Council



Message from Cllr Joanne Sealey-Chair of the Canon Park Development Committee

Hello all,

I hope you have all noticed the new fitness equipment installed at the top of Canon Park field (by Station Road). Due to the current restrictions, and to stop temptation, the Heras fencing will stay up until the 29th March, when restrictions are lifted. The Council will be carrying out a Covid Risk Assessment before the 29th addressing the risks of Covid-19, using government guidance. There will be signs recommending that you follow the guidelines, for social distancing and hand washing, and that you bring your own towels and hand gel. Just to remind you the equipment is designed for teens and adults and there is a fabulous sign showing how to use the equipment and QR codes are also available. Phase 1 is complete!

Phase 2, will be the new play park facility, due to start on 26th April (it will take approx. 3 weeks). Below is the design, there have been a few minor tweaks (the path will now run alongside the equipment not through the middle), but the design below shows the equipment being installed alongside the Pavilion:

And finally Phase 3, the Multi Use Games Area/Artificial Grass Pitch. The Planning Application has been submitted, and we are waiting for a decision from the Local Planning Authority. Hopefully we will have an update on this for the next Flyer.

After a lengthy decision from our last meet the MUGA will stay in its original location as per the planning application.

And a path from the existing pavilion will be in place to the new play area and MUGA.

Many thanks

Joanne Sealey, Cllr Berkeley Town Council

Email clerk@berkeley-tc.gov.uk Tel: 01453 511964

Help protect your dogs:

- Keep an ID tag on your dog at all times (your surname and mobile number)
- Secure gates using bolts at the top and bottom, along with a heavy-duty padlock and gate alarm
- Never leave your pet in the garden unattended
- Purchase a driveway alarm so you are alerted to any intruders, these can also be used in rear gardens and yards
- Make sure your dog is microchipped and their details are updated so that they can be returned if they are stolen and subsequently found.
- Avoid leaving a dog tied up outside a shop or left alone in a car, even for a few minutes
- Take lots of photographs of your dog to prove ownership if it's stolen, pay particular attention to any distinguishing markings on your dog.

If you notice any suspicious activity, contact Gloucestershire Constabulary on 101.



Berkeley Town Council News



Message from Philip Stevenson, the Mayor

By the time you read this various restrictions should have been lifted on the Government's road map to recovery. However we are still going to keep the street outers in place so you can pass in the street comfortably for the time being or while you wait for your fish and chips. Above all try and stay sensible still.

Also the new fitness equipment at Canon Park should be in use. For those usual suspects new CCTV is in place and will be covering the equipment, so you have been warned, also please do report anyone who is abusing the new fitness equipment as it belongs to everyone in the town.

For those who live in Lantern Close, Stock Lane or Jumpers Lane it's not a race track so please slow down, this doesn't mean speeding everywhere else mind you.

Next month is the local elections along with Town Council elections. At the time of writing this, three additional people have added their names to the ballot, but if you wish to add your name you still have time, see Justine who will be happy to help with an application form. Berkeley has the potential to have a whole new council, but that is of course in your hands. The beauty of Berkeley & its Town Council is that it's a non-political Council, but has passionate Councillors wanting the best

for the town which I hope we do. The main Council meeting in May is also the Annual Meeting which I will Chair for the first half an hour or so.....as you will be also glad that after fifteen years on and off I will be definitely standing down as I can't stand the criticism from our ex-butcher.....Even though he still has access to the best sausages in the West Country....(for those who don't realise this isn't a dig but a long-running joke.)

This last month Justine has received various emails and messages regarding the greengrocers and the state of it outside the front. Gordon has promised that everything will be removed from the front of his shop except for the planters. Gordon is and continues to be an integral part of the town and at our last meeting various members of the town have offered to help get things cleared as well as helping get the shop exterior cleaned and painted and helping get the shop back into some order when he is better.

As a member of the Town Council we also sit on various other Committees within the council and sit on various other organisations as representatives of the town. Myself and Elizabeth Carter sit on Berkeley Burial Committee or the BBC. This is made up of Berkeley and the other four surrounding Councils. You would have seen in the press recently the criticism of the BBC about locals being able to access information of their own families. This is being rectified, it's going to be slow process

but it's starting, with all the records and site plans going digital for easy access. We are also going to make the Lynch Gate at the cemetery a visitors centre. Again this will take some time but it's a step in the right direction. They are also going to trial opening the gates off Howmead once a month for approximately six hours thus enabling those who have family at the bottom of the cemetery easier access to the graves (see the March edition of the Flyer for dates and times).

Annual Parish Assembly

Join us on Monday 19th April at 7pm via Zoom.

All residents are invited to the Annual Parish Assembly which this year will be held via the online platform Zoom. The log-in details will be available on our website or by emailing Justine, the Clerk. This meeting is intended for the residents and allows you to raise and have discussed any issues that you want to bring to the attention of the Council. You will hear reports from the Mayor and Committee Chairs, and learn more about what the Town Council does, and then have the opportunity to tell us about any issues within the town and any changes you would like to see. By having a virtual meeting this year we can accommodate all interested people without any restrictions. The Full Council Meeting will be held straight after.

Email clerk@berkeley-tc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01453 511964

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As we move into the Spring season, we are pleased to report that Berkeley and surrounds continue with a very low crime rate.

Covering the period 1st February through to the 14th March 2021 there is little of concern in the area. However, there have been two attempted breaks on businesses at Berkeley Heath.

In one of these, involving a local bus and coach business, offenders have visited the location on 3 separate occasions gaining entry into offices and on one visit on the 9th March siphoning £200 worth of diesel from a stationary vehicle.

Also, a visitor attraction on the B4066 had an attempted break on the 11th March where no entry was gained. However, we believe that the offenders may have been disturbed and made off.

As ever, if you're out and about and possibly driving through these locations and notice something which doesn't look right, please call it into us on 101.

We continue to be informed about scam calls claiming to be from either the Inland Revenue or HMRC. These calls are quite intimidating and often convincing in that they claim that

you owe money and will be arrested if no money is paid.

Police would never arrest anyone for unpaid tax!

Never engage with these people and put the phone down.

The biggest concern, however, in the area is the increase in crime relating to dog thefts, we've had three recent reports of actual visits from two males preparing to steal animals, one in the Fitzhardinge Way area on the 9th March, a further report from the Clapton area and another in Newtown.

One concerned resident managed to obtain an index plate which was being used by the two males O*11 PR*

We are also aware of markings being placed outside properties which may be a way of noting a property with a pet of interest.

If you have any concerns, please let us know.

Michael.trebbles@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk
07811292900 (not for incident reporting).

Melanie.campbell@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk
07813349225 (not for incident reporting).

Also follow Stroud Neighbourhood Team on Twitter
@StroudPolice



Volunteer to make a world of difference

WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre are looking to recruit volunteers to help support their visitor experience team. Whether you're looking to meet new people, learn new skills or spend time in an inspiring environment, there's a volunteer role for you at Slimbridge. Just a few hours spent volunteering can make a world of difference.

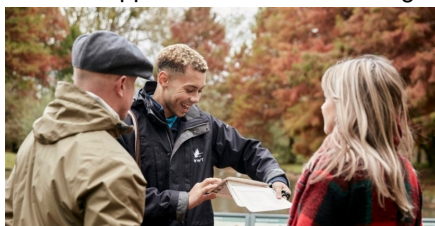
Thanks to support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Slimbridge have been developing nine new exciting and immersive wildlife experiences to help visitors get even closer to nature.

They are looking for volunteers to help

with a variety of engagement roles from welcoming visitors to the centre, leading tours of Scott House to guiding visitors through their new exhibits.

Fran Penny, Visitor Experience Manager said "We are recruiting volunteers to help bring our exhibits to life, engaging visitors in our conservation work and wonderful wetland species!"

Volunteers from all walks of life are welcome to apply, and the flexible volunteer opportunities available range



from regular commitments to just a few hours and can be adapted to suit your circumstances.

You are invited to attend a Volunteer Online Open Day on either 25, 30, 31 March, 8, 15 or 18 April. The online sessions will provide more information on Slimbridge Wetland Centre, the volunteering opportunities on offer, and how volunteering at Slimbridge can benefit you. Members of the volunteering team will be present and you can hear from existing volunteers too. There will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions and sessions last around 1 hour.

To find out more about the roles and to sign up for an Online Open Day, visit wwt.org.uk/getinvolved

REOPENING SOON



We are opening again

Hopefully, with the easing of government restrictions, we will be allowed to open the shop on April 12th.

Social distancing and mask rules will still apply, but we look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Alternatively you can still order online and choose delivery or collection.

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BERKELEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

The 8th March marked a significant and welcomed new beginning for the nation as we took the first step out of lockdown. It has been something which we have all been looking forward to in the hope that it signalled that some sense of normality is on the horizon.

During lockdown, many of us have had to learn to adapt and develop new skills to overcome not being able to carry out our regular work commitments. Zoom calls and viral meetings have provided us with the opportunity to become a little more IT savvy as well as build rapport with others virtually. Teachers and pupils at Berkeley Primary were able to stay connected with online classes, assemblies and daily afternoon story time with class teachers. Pupils, with the invaluable help of parents, adapted incredibly well to this new way of working; we're so proud of how quickly they were able to adjust to this different way of learning. This would not have been possible without the selfless

support of parents, who too had the challenge of juggling ongoing work commitments as well as supporting their children's learning. We applaud all our parents and carers in facilitating their children's learning through this challenging time. A big thank you to you all!

The week, before returning to school, the children were thrilled to have the opportunity to take a Reading Trail around the town and rediscover the classic story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle. A round trip of just over a mile, was long enough to find the different parts of the story and discover what an insatiable appetite the caterpillar had! The children read the story, drew the caterpillar's magnificent meals and got some exercise at the same time.

One of the coveted places to be in the school as a staff member is to be at the school gate welcoming the children; no more so than on the first day back after lockdown. It was lovely to see so many beaming smiles and a desire to find their place back in the classroom alongside

their peers.

The first step out of lockdown has enabled all our children to step back into school with their classmates. Many have repeatedly said how much they have missed being with their friends and teachers. Although virtual contact was okay, it did not satisfy their need to spend time physically together playing, chatting and doing all those things which children do best. As a school we have been mindful of this and facilitated various group activities, both indoor and outdoor, to enable the children to re-establish peer relationships such as Treasure Hunts in the school wood and Team Quiz Challenges.

In some way, the return to school feels like a new start - a September-kind-of-feeling. There is a greater sense in the school of how much we value each other - absence has made hearts grow fonder. It is with this awareness, that as we step into this new phase, our children will appreciate each other that little bit more and value the gift that they are to the whole school community.



This is a polite reminder on behalf of Berkeley Town FC that dogs are not permitted on the Canon Park Recreation field.

It has certainly been noticeable that during lockdown, there seems to have been an increase in dog walking activity and more people seem to be utilising the field to exercise their dogs. When challenged, people have been very receptive and said they were unaware of

this, recalled their dogs and walked on. The downside though, is that there is always an inconsiderate minority - there has also been a number of instances where faeces has been left on the football pitches.

With the end of lockdown approaching and outdoor sports returning, the only fouling we'd like to see on the pitch is a mistimed, two footed lunge !!!



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email: bandbweldon1@gmail.com
website: extend.org.uk

BERKELEY & SURROUNDING AREA COVID 19 COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR DEALING WITH THE CRISIS - We will continue providing practical help and emotional support for as long as it is needed, to everyone with any problem related to the pandemic. When you don't know who else to ask, we will always help.

- ♦ Call Lucy and the team on **01453 270067**
- ♦ Email us at rachelberkeleycovid@gmail.com
- ♦ Join our Facebook group for local information www.facebook.com/groups/berkeleycovid19/

If you are told to self isolate please ask us for help rather than ask older, vulnerable family members to go shopping.

STRUGGLING TO AFFORD FOOD? - Nobody should be going hungry. For delivery of a Stroud District Food Bank food parcel please contact Justine our Town Clerk on **01453 511964**. Food parcels provide nutritionally balanced, non-perishable food.

If you are unable to prepare food please call our helpline on **01453 270067**. We can arrange ready meals for you to reheat from Severn Vale Community Kitchen, or hot meals from Karen's Kitchen if you are unable to heat food up.

HARDSHIP FUNDS - Please contact Justine our Town Clerk on **01453 511964** who can help you access the right local grants for your needs, or Sue Watson on **01453 542208** for a Berkeley Parochial Trust grant.

FEELING ISOLATED? NEED A CHAT?

Berkeley Benefice welcome calls from the whole community, you don't need to be CofE on **01453 810752**

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE - Don't quietly worry, call these organisations for free help and advice. The 08 numbers are free from landlines and most mobiles, and redirect to local advisors.

P3 - 0808 168 2443 - Gloucestershire Community Based Support, flexible service working with people in crisis, including: Accessing financial support, Improving daily living skills, Accessing specialist services, Dealing with debt, Mental ill health, Education and employment, Addiction issues, Food Bank referrals.

Citizens Advice - 0808 800 0510 or 0808 800 0511
Mon to Fri 10am to 4pm. Advice on Benefits, Work, Debt and money, Consumer, Family, Housing, Law and courts, Immigration, Health, Food Bank referrals.

Stroud Employment Law - 01453 763384 - 30 minutes free advice on furlough and all employment related issues

Need signposting to something else? Call our helpline on **01453 270067**

Silverline 24/7 helpline for older people, also provides telephone friendship **08004 708090**

Ring our helpline on 01453 270067 and we'll put you in touch with someone

FACE COVERINGS - The virus is airborne. Infected people frequently have no symptoms whilst they breathe out the virus. It lingers in the air, particularly indoors, so wearing a face covering is vital. Reuseable, washable, fabric cloth masks are available for a donation of £2, or £5 for a 3 layer fitted one with filter pocket at

- Longfield Hospice Charity shop
- Waste Not, Want Not (in Canonbury St)
- Newtown Post Office
- or message the Glos Community Mask Trees facebook page.

STRUGGLING TO GET YOUR VACCINATION?

We have a team of volunteers able to drive you, just call Lucy on the helpline. Please don't miss your opportunity simply because of transport.

Please remember that by law you must wear a face covering in most indoor settings. Exceptions include medical or practical reasons, home, some workplaces. Full details can be found at www.gov.uk/coronavirus

FREE LOCAL DELIVERY SERVICES

Please ring our helpline **01453 270067** if you need food urgently, or if there is any item you can't get delivered from the following:

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Berkeley Co-op, 01453 810263, Order & pay over the phone by 1pm Tues/Wed/Thurs

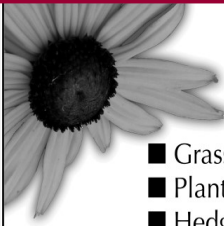
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APRIL IN THE GARDEN

It is thrilling to watch the garden finally wake up after a long cold and sodden Winter. It has started to show green shoots and Spring flowers and it is many gardeners' favourite season. It is ripe with growth and possibilities. It is also one of the busiest times of the year as the soil warms up and the days lengthen. Lots of seed sowing, dividing perennials, replacing damage done to the lawn, dead heading of daffodils all need doing this month. In the greenhouse there are dozens of seedlings jostling for space and cuttings taken last year need potting up. In fact sometimes you can be so busy you hardly have time to enjoy the garden itself! So whatever you do please make time to appreciate the delicious freshness of the garden – no other season is quite like it! So walk around your chilly dew drenched garden first thing in the morning as it is waking up to the sunshine. It is wonderful – enjoy it! The garden doesn't know anything about Covid 19 – it is just getting on with life.

So back to the work which needs to be done this month. If the Snowdrops in your garden have formed into large clumps now is the time to lift and divide them. They establish much better if still in leaf. Specialist nurseries will supply you with new stock in this condition so you can get new varieties this way. Growing crops from plug plants is a good way. Most seed companies supply them by mail order but you can also buy them from garden centres. It is a more limited way to grow them than

from seed as there is more limited choice in variety but it is easier than growing from seed. When the plug plants arrive open up the pack straight away and make sure they are moist. You can then plant them into 7cm pots using a general purpose compost and keep them watered until it is time to plant them out into their final position in the garden.

I am often asked why I grow Marigolds in my greenhouse in the Summer time. They are there to keep the whitefly away from my Tomatoes. This is called Companion Planting. Chives can be underplanted in the Rosebed. This helps to keep fungal diseases down such as Blackspot/ It is also said to increase the perfume of Roses. Parsley planted near to Carrots and Onions can mask the scent of the vegetables to keep root flies from attacking them. Leeks can also be planted next to Carrots to do the same job. The root fly is confused by the scent of the Leeks. A pot of Basil can be put on a kitchen windowsill to act as a trap plant to attract house flies. There are lots of plants that can act as Companion Plants to encourage Bees into the garden to help with pollination. Borage, Rosemary and Scabious are amongst the most popular.

More jobs that can be done now include the staking of young perennials. Tie in the new growth on climbers and finish putting mulch around the perennials too. Start to feed the lawn with a general fertilizer. Start to cut the grass more frequently now as well. If you have a pond with a pump check the

wiring and clean out the filters. Do this before you put the pump back in the water. Now is also the best time to put new plants in the pond. Include plants for different locations such as submerged and marginal. Include tall strappy leaved plants and ones that have floating leaves to give a range of habitats for the wildlife. The aim is to have about 50pc surface coverage with foliage for a wildlife pond.

Keep sowing seeds for the flower garden and the vegetable plot. Remember to open vents in the greenhouse on warmer days. Keep an open eye out for slugs and snails as they love to eat off the new growths on your precious plants. If the weather is poor and you cannot get outdoors why not plan your Summer displays whether it is for hanging baskets or containers for your patio or a new border. Consider tall Delphiniums with Achillea, Alstomeria and Aquilegia. There are some lovely new varieties to be chosen. I will leave you with that thought until next month.

Ann Legg



St Mary's Food Box

For local people from local people
A reminder that the food box is at the back of the church, and is there for anyone wishing to use it when the church is open.
Please do take some items if it would be helpful.

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Need a good chat? Someone to listen? Or just want to talk to somebody different?

Berkeley Benefice are here for you, offering support to the whole community. Throughout the Benefice we have people happy to help. Whether you are shielding, self isolating, or simply feeling alone at a difficult time, we can provide assistance, even if it's just someone to talk to. Our first points of contact are:
Berkeley, Jan on 01453 820752
Hill, Mark on 01454 260750
Stone, Naomi on 01454 260376
When you call, we'll match you up with the right person for you.

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Tyndale Photography Club

The speaker who was originally booked to talk to us was experiencing broadband problems and so unable to Zoom. A plea was put out via Facebook for a speaker; George Robertson DPAGB replied and volunteered to stand in at short notice. We were really lucky to be able to welcome George because as he is based in Kilmarnock an actual visit would have been almost impossible. Before he began his talk, he introduced himself as a mountain and landscape photographer, he has won Landscape Photographer of the Year and has had images printed in several publications. With the title of his talk being 'Into the Throne Room of the Mountain Gods' the club members waited with anticipation as to what the presentation was going to unveil.

His talk was actually about a mountaineering trek that he led through the Karakoram mountains of Northern Pakistan, a remote and scarcely visited region with a unique landscape. He explained that the photographic equipment he was able to take was bare minimum, just one camera body, one lens and six batteries, which, as a by the way, he had to sleep with in order to keep them warm!

With the introductions over, George then got down to talking us through his adventure from Islamabad to K2 and back again. The images accompanying his talk were varied in the fact that to begin with, whilst in towns, he was able to capture street life and portrait photographs of the people who live in these remote and probably never heard

of places. As the journey progressed, we were able to see the differing terrain and conditions that he and his group travelled in and the wonderful scenery they were able to enjoy. George explained that all his images were 'grab shots', because of time restrictions he was not able to wait for the right light and so he considered himself really lucky when there was good or dappled light, moody clouds over the mountains and gentle sunsets.

His images were absolutely stunning and took us to a spot in the world that many would never be able to get to. From a mosque in Islamabad, to his street photography in Skardu, from the 'road' and camp conditions on his journey to the scale of the Baltoro glacier and K2 mountain, George certainly kept us entertained.

Berkeley Vale Climate Action

Did you know?

Rural citizens are more likely to . . .

- ☐ recycle and reuse plastics
- ☐ switch to renewable energy
- ☐ shop locally

. . . than their urban counterparts.

Statistics show that almost all of us in rural areas are making changes to reduce our impact on the climate but could we do more as a community?

If you have ideas about how we can reduce our town's carbon footprint – don't keep them to yourselves!

Let us know at BVCAN, Berkeley's local climate group. By working

together, we can make changes. 75% of rural citizens believe that cutting carbon emissions provides an opportunity to create new jobs.

Contact us at . . .

.berkeleyvaleclimateaction@gmail.com

Best wishes from all at Berkeley Vale Climate Action Network

Berkeley Educational Swimming Trust

March Draw

Winner Jean Stanton Ball Number 49 £20

Runner up Margaret Buchanan Ball Number 46 £15

The draw was made by Theresa in the Co-op on Friday 5th of March. On behalf of BEST we would like to thank the Co-op for their support.

Unfortunately we have not been able to run the draw this year due to the Covid situation, so we would like to thank all those people who have supported us over the years and helped to keep us going including Gill Badsey. We hope to open the pool sometime in June this year and we are working towards that aim. Fingers crossed that we will be able to get back to normal soon!

Thankyou, Eugene Camper, Trustee

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Since our last newsletter many of you have had an opportunity to experience the new slick Culverhay Berkeley operation whilst having your Covid jab at "The Vale" and as we write this newsletter second jabs are in full swing. Back at the surgery it's the same smooth story, so if you have any medical concerns don't hesitate to pick up the phone. Why would you want to worry about something when you could have a chat with one of the very nice doctors we introduced to you in the last newsletter, without even leaving home and together decide what to do next?

We would like to introduce your nurses and so we asked each of them 3 questions to help you get to know them.

1. Why did you choose to become a nurse?

2. Do you specialise in any particular aspect of nursing?

3. What do you do to relax at home?
 Here's what they said!

Jenny Hughes – Lead Nurse

I have nursed all my life, so thinking why I wanted to be one was a very long time ago! Nursing is in my family, (my mother and Aunt), I have always enjoyed meeting and helping people so coupled with that I started my nursing training on leaving school.

I have gained lots of nursing experiences within my career. I am now the Lead Nurse here at Culverhay Berkeley and have a wide and varied role within the practice, from managing our lovely team of nurses, helping to organise flu immunisations as well as clinical. I specialise and enjoy Minor Illness and Contraception, I fit contraceptive implants. I am a nurse prescriber and also specialise in Chronic Diseases such as Diabetes, Asthma and COPD as well as Hypertension.

To relax, I enjoy running, cycling and walking which is helpful for weight control as I also enjoy cooking and baking!

Carol Fahy – Health Care Assistant

As a very young child I



wanted to be a nurse, I think this was due to my dad being paraplegic and seeing how dependant he was on the care from my mum and the district nursing team. I always remember a nurse called Mary Brooks and I wanted to be like her. I came to work at the surgery as a receptionist initially, but had the opportunity to become part of the clinical team as a HCA.

I don't have a particular speciality, I enjoy all aspects of my job especially phlebotomy and ear care.

Spending time walking my two Jacks and watching a good movie.

Nicky Fisher – Health Care Assistant (HCA)

I always wanted to go into nursing.

I enjoy wound care and also Phlebotomy.

I love to bake, walk my dogs and work on my allotment.



Kathy Perrin – Frailty Care Co-Ordinator

The reason I became an HCA was to give close/ direct care and support to adult patients, initially this was in a hospital setting on various wards needing a different set of skills depending on the care requirements of each patient.

Most of my years of nursing on wards were in Orthopaedics – including trauma, elective and also rehabilitation.

I gym/ run (a little!) when I can and also love spending time with my family. I enjoy a bit of baking (not good for the waistline!) and a few G & T's.



Pam Sharpe

The careers advisor at secondary school advised me to become a gardener! I fancied an air hostess, but at the time my best friend decided to go to Stroud General Hospital as a Blue Girl, this was a pre nursing course.....so I went too.

My mind was made up after just 2 weeks that it was nursing for me.

Not really "Jack of all trades master of none"

I specialised in Orthopaedics at Standish



Hospital before I did my general training at GRH (if that counts).

I enjoy gardening when I am not away in my caravan.

Music, reading, walking and going for bike rides (weather permitting).

Dixsa Purgas-O'Sullivan

I lost both my parents when I was in my teens and so from a very early age I felt regret that I never got the opportunity to care and look after my parents. This started me thinking what I could do so support and care for others and so when the time came I applied to studying nursing at University.

For 11 years I worked at Southmead Hospital as an Adult Nurse followed by a stint as a specialist diabetes nurse.

Thankfully I was able to land my dream job as a Practice Nurse and have been doing this for the past 4 years

I love Arts and Crafts and anything that involves creating something. I am a home bird and enjoy spending quality time with my husband and 2 children but when I do go out I enjoy going for long walks and cycling with my family. If I could I would love to live by the sea.



During the pandemic we have all heard a lot about mental health. I have to say that until I was associated with the PPG I hadn't realised the prevalence, the issues and even the impact mental health can have on physical health. It's only when you make that realisation that the lack of specialist support in this area across the whole country becomes apparent. So the great news is that Culverhay Berkeley is now recruiting for two members of staff with specialist training in this area.

We finish with exciting news that significant grant funding has been confirmed for a complete internal refurbishment of the surgery bringing it right up to date with the latest thinking and technology. Work will start as soon as Covid is brought under control.

AND FINALLY

Q. Is there life after Covid?

A. You bet there is and Culverhay Berkeley is here to support you!

Gordon Craig, Chair of Culverhay

Berkeley Forum

The Flyer reserves the right to edit and abridge letters submitted for publication. Anonymous letters will not be published, but we will withhold your name if requested

UNSUNG HEROES

I would like to start by thanking some unsung heroes of the pandemic. These heroes have been with us from the start, delivering our food, delivering our clothes our paint, our electronic equipment, our Birthday, Christmas and Mothers Day presents and lots more. There are lots of them, they arrive in vans or cars but I would particularly like to thank all the local people involved in this. Your happy smile and your merry greetings are so welcome on the duller days. You know who you are and you have helped to keep our community going. THANK YOU !

HIGHWAYS

Work or resurfacing Alkington Lane has been delayed, this was because Gigaclear submitted a plan to dig it up two weeks after the proposed resurfacing. The new date for resurfacing is starting on the 17th Sept. I have advised Brian Tipper our County Councillor, that is too long to wait and asked him to do his best to get a cancellation slot much earlier in the programme. I'll try to let you know when that will be in advance but as is the nature with cancellations, it may all be a bit sudden.

BRIDLEWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

The footpath people at the County Council undertook to come back and finish the job they started last year when the ground dries out in the Spring and we have not forgotten. I have asked Brian to start reminding them so they don't get a chance to go off the boil !

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

I just wanted to advise you that I have written to Siobhan Baillie our MP to ask for her help in requesting that Dr Jenner's House be made a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the back the important role vaccination is playing across the world right now. I'll keep you updated on progress with this.

NEW FUNDING SECURED

Gradually things will be opening up, local shops and businesses that have been closed for some time will be opening again but masks and visors will still be part of everyday life for some time yet. To support our local businesses to get the right PPE in place for opening, funds have been obtained and are currently held by the Berkeley Community Trust. Small local businesses should contact the treasurer Mike Studden on 01453 511131 to discuss any help needed.

CURRENT FUNDING PROJECT

As you know, funding is in place to enable the foodbank to have a permanent home in Berkeley hopefully at the Library. To tie in with that and create a really great community hub, Citizens Advice are keen to be part of it and applications have been made for funding to support them in this. You may or may not be aware that Citizens Advice is a national organisation of local charities, ours covers the Stroud and Cotswold districts.

I thought I would finish today with some feedback from a Citizens Advice debt client:- "I really can't thank you (both) enough, it really does mean the world. I've never in my life experienced the help and support I've received from you both in the last couple of years, apologies for getting upset and crying I'm just so overwhelmed by you at citizens advice. I truly believe that without your help and support things could have been very different to what they are today so I thank you from the bottom of my heart, you all do the most amazing job. I will be forever grateful x

Gordon Craig

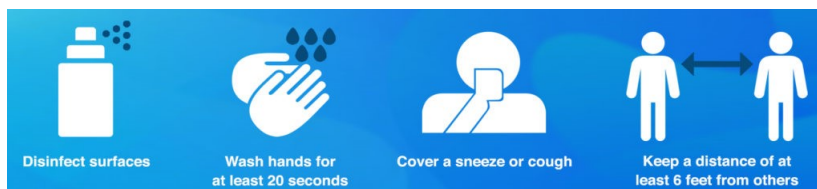
I would like to say what a delight it is to walk through St Mary's Churchyard recently.

The grass so green, the clumps of daffodils and primroses the carpet of celandines and some flowering shrubs etc.

The birds singing and even a squirrel or two scampering around. The Church and Tower looking so majestic - as ever.

Thank to all who keep the grounds looking so well cared for.

E J Price



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We are pleased to announce that there will be Sunday services in the three churches in our benefice from the beginning of this month as follows:

Sunday 2nd May, Informal Worship at St Mary's Berkeley at 10.30 am

In this way, you can stay in touch and find more information about St Mary's. Current information about services is also available on the notice board on the church tower.

- sports venues and facilities will be able to reopen)
- childcare and supervised activities will be allowed outdoors for all children
- formally organised parent and child groups will be able to take place outdoors for up to 15 attendees. (Children under 5 will not be counted in this number)

So keep an eye out for news of clubs and groups restarting.

by Heather Smith



www.newberkeleyharriers.com



Find us on Facebook Berkeley Toddlers
Music Group or call Nicola on
07754580669 for more info



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What's On Diary

PLEASE CONTACT THE ORGANISER TO CHECK THAT THESE EVENTS ARE GOING AHEAD IN THE CURRENT EPIDEMIC
For a regular entry in the What's On Diary please email editor@theberkeleyflyer.co.uk before 15th of the month

Saturday

Berkeley Community Library
9.30am - 12.30pm

Physio-Led Modified Pilates Class
Town Hall— Advance Booking essential
Contact Miranda 07813513516 10am -11am

Monday

Town Council Meeting
3rd Monday of the month 7.00pm Currently on Zoom

Stay & Play Kids - Sharpness Village Hall
9.45am - 12 noon contact Sue Boxall on 07526101287

Youth Club - Sharpness Village Hall 6.30pm - 8.30pm contact Darren Brown on 07799067237

Beavers/Scouts

Scout HQ., Park View
Scouts 10½ to 14 years old 7.00pm - 8.30pm

FitFix Exercise - Stinchcombe Village Hall
6.30pm with Sam 07793 755240
Fat burning & toning for all

Physio-Led Modified Pilates Class
Town Hall— Advance Booking essential
Contact Miranda 07813513516
Monday's 10am -11am , 11.15am-12.15am &

Tuesday

Community Bank - Town Hall,
Closed until further notice

Poetry Circle: 1st Tuesday of the month 2-3pm at Berkeley Library. Informal group for reading, writing and enjoying poetry. Bring your favourites along

Berkeley Community Library
Tuesdays 10.30am - 4.30pm
Telephone 810520

Line Dancing/Ballroom Dance Class
Hamfields Leisure 7.00pm - 9.00pm
Contact Daphne 01453 826034

Skylarks Community Choir
Town Hall, 7.10 - 9pm Term Time only.
All welcome

Cub Scouts - Scout HQ. Park View
8 to 10½ years old
6.00pm - 7.30pm

FitFix Exercise - Cam Memorial Hall
9.45am - 10.45am

Crochet Group - Berkeley Library
11.00am. £1 per session.
Everyone is welcome.
Just bring a crochet hook and some wool.

Berkeley Walking Group
Meet 10.a.m. The Library Car Park. (Free) Coffee optional afterwards in The Library.

Thornbury Macular & Low Vision Support Group

1st Tuesday of month, 10.30am to 12.30pm
Methodist Church Hall, Castle Court, Thornbury

Wednesday

Craft Club - Berkeley Arms
Last Wednesday of the month. 10.30am - 1.30pm.
All welcome

Dog Training - Sharpness Village Hall
from 7pm contact Mike Vine 01453 822134

Berkeley Under 5's
Town Hall Toddlers - 9.30am - 11.30am

Citizens Advice Bureau
Closed until further notice

Berkeley Gardening Club
3rd Wednesday of the month
Library 7.30pm

Past-Times Café
Marybrook Medical Centre
Chat, Crafts, and tea. 2.00pm

FitFix Exercise - Stinchcombe Village Hall
6.30pm with Sam 07793 755240
Fat burning & toning for all

Alcoholics Anonymous Berkeley Steps
Town hall, 7.30pm - 8.30pm, Town Hall

St Mary's Church
Open for private prayer 1.00 - 4.00pm

Thursday

Extend Exercise Classes for 60+ Scout Hut
From 10.30am Contact Barbara 01453 766421

Berkeley Union Church
The Church is closed for Coffee Mornings until further notice

Art Group
Berkeley Library . £3.00 per session
10.00am—1pm. Bring own materials

NatWest Mobile Bank
Salter Street 10.15am -12.30 pm

Beavers Scouts for 6 to 8 years old
Scout HQ, Park View, 4.30pm - 5.30pm

Berkeley Brownies
The Scout Hut 6.00pm - 7.30pm

New Berkeley Harriers Running Club
6.30pm at Canon Park Pavilion

Berkeley Players
Meet in the Town Hall
From 7pm—8.30 Young People
From 8.30 Adults

Friday

Berkeley Community Library
10.30am - 4.30pm

Berkeley Rainbows
The Scout Hut 4.15 - 5.30pm

FitFix Exercise - St Dominics Hall
9.30am with Sam 07793 755240
Fat burning & toning for all

Sunday

Roman Catholic Mass
Sundays 8.30am, 10.30am
St Dominic RC Church, Kingshill, Dursley

Berkeley Union Church
(also known as the Congregational Church)
Church Services start at 10am

St Mary's Church
Please check church website for details of services and open times for private prayer.

Due to Covid-19 groups and clubs are not running. They have been included so people have contact info and details of what clubs normally run so you can make plans for when restrictions are eased.

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Vale of Berkeley Railway

This week's picture is a particularly good one of the railway bridge which spanned the Severn from near Lydney to Sharpness. This is an unusual view taken from the North bank and shows where the bridge itself finished and the line entered a magnificent stone viaduct. It is interesting to see from the picture the extremely relaxed attitude that prevailed at the time with regards to the public's ability to get close to active railway lines.

It captures a significant and ironic moment in the history of the bridge. For much of its life the bridge itself was jointly owned by two of the main railway companies, the LMS and the GWR. In its early days it was seen by the GWR as a rival for the Welsh railway traffic which they wanted to be routed through their tunnel under the river. As a result, severe weight restrictions were placed on the bridge which restricted its usefulness. Once the railway companies had been amalgamated into British Railways, common sense prevailed. Tests were organised to verify just how strong the bridge was. The photo is of one of the trains taking part in the strength tests in 1956 and shows just how severe a test was arranged. 2 of the heaviest locomotives, GWR "Castle" class express engines, were coupled together and hauled a heavy train of 8 20 ton loaded ballast wagons across the bridge. The total weight of the train was approximately 480 tons.

The tests showed that the bridge itself, then more than 75 years old, was well up to carrying the heaviest of trains, but some minor strengthening work was commissioned. The irony is that this started in 1960, the same year that the bridge was struck by the barges Arkendate H and Wastdale H, demolishing one of the bridge pillars and ending the useful life of the bridge.

This was a sad end to one of the amazing projects that the Victorians executed. It epitomised the Victorian attitude to engineering projects. There was coal on the North of the Severn in the Forest of Dean, but the only deep-water harbour was on the South bank at Sharpness. How could the coal be got to Sharpness? No problem to the Victorians – just build a bridge across the river. Sadly, the only surviving parts of this magnificent structure are a tower and a

stone arch on the bank of the canal. They even built a station, "Severn Bridge Station", on the Northern shore though it was hardly ever used. It is interesting that 150 years later people are again discussing rebuilding a bridge in this location, but it seems to be too daunting a task for our modern engineers.

Various schemes had been proposed for a bridge across the Severn for many years, but it was 1875 before approval and the funding was in place to enable building to start, and what a project it was. The schedule of works included:

23 double pillars. This involved digging down into the muddy Severn until bed rock was found, digging 4 feet into the bed rock, and then building the pillars up from there. Because of the large tidal range and depth of water, much of the work was done below water level using early diving bells where air pressure kept the water at bay. The deepest of these pillars was embedded 75 feet below highwater level. One can only imagine the dreadful working conditions in the diving bell. The workmen emerged from



each shift exhausted and bleeding from their ears and nose due to the exposure to high air pressure.

24 individual metal bow bridge sections to span the area between the pillars.

A stone viaduct of 14 arches on the North bank to bridge the gap from the river to high ground and carry the railway over the Gloucester to Chepstow railway line.

A steam operated swing bridge to carry the railway over the Sharpness to Gloucester canal. This was to enable sailing vessels with tall masts to continue using the canal. The circular base of this is still in place on the canal bank.

A stone buttress on the South bank of the canal. This is still in place.

A pair of swing bridges in Sharpness docks to carry the line over the canal

entrance. These are still there and are still used to enable ships to travel from the Severn into the canal.

Because of the complexity of the environment work started to get behind schedule. To catch up, the builders pioneered the use of electric flood lighting to enable a night shift to operate.

The last span was completed in August 1879 and work started on laying the track. Although the formal opening of the bridge did not take place for another month, the first train to carry passengers ran over the full length of the railway from Lydney to Sharpness on Wednesday 3rd September 1879. The trip was of a private nature and was attended by local dignitaries and directors of the various contractors and railway and canal companies. By October, the bridge was complete enough for test trains to run over it. 8 steam locomotives were coupled together and driven across the bridge while the stresses were measured.

The scene was now set for the grand opening. During several weekends, the bridge was thrown open for public inspection. On the final weekend prior to the opening day more than 1000 people walked across the bridge. A banquet was held at the Pleasure Grounds in Sharpness.

The bridge opened with a great wave of optimism. It served well for 81 years until the tragic night in 1960 when it was damaged. A repair scheme was prepared, but at that time railways were perceived to be old technology.

Road transport was the future, and the political decision was made to demolish the bridge. The final irony was that tenders were put out for demolition of the bridge. Most of the tenders showed that it would have cheaper to repair the bridge. However, one company put in an incredibly low quote. This was accepted. The firm started on the demolition, realised that it was a much bigger job than they had estimated, and went bankrupt. The demolition ceased with a tangled mess in the river. Further contractors including the army were called in to complete the demolition and clear up the mess. This took another 4 years and cost well in excess of what it would have cost to repair.

A tragic end to a superb project.