

DECEMBER 2010



A bumper issue!

Our second issue is full to bursting thanks to the effort and contributions of Suckley villagers. Get inspired by these fascinating articles as diverse as the village you live in - from bees, to greyhounds and pigs as well as all the news about village events and services – and then get writing yourself!

You could be in the next issue writing about your interest, club or sport or perhaps you could be a regular contributor with features on gardening, cooking, handy household tips or internet websites that inspire or educate - just get in touch! We'd love to hear from you, even if it's only with your suggestions or feedback - it's the best way to get a newsletter that you'll want to read.

We have also made space for some local advertising to give you handy reminders next time you need a local service. It also means we can keep the newsletter free to all, and if there are any profits these will go to support Community Plan activities. If you would like your business to be included in the next issue in February, please let us know – see back page for details.

With Christmas very close, a reminder to think local - there are local shops with gift ideas, festive food and Christmas cards (even designed by a local artist available at the PO) as well as local events at our hostelrys and even a café for when you're all shopped out.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

FREE Newsletter for Suckley Residents

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Points of contact:

Newsletter Content: Hilary Pitt – 884355

Newsletter Advertising: Tilda Swabey – 07739 264495

Email: suckleynews@gmail.com

Next Issue: First week in February.

Content for newsletter to be submitted by **21st January 2011.**

Suckley Post Office: Roger & Barbara Blackburn - 884201.

Shop Open: Mon – Fri 7.00am – 6.00pm, Sat 7.00am – 1.00pm

Post Office Open: Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.30pm (till 1.00pm Weds)

Sat 9.00am – 12.30pm

Village websites – for up to date information on what is happening in the village as well as a list of businesses and trades: **www.suckleypo.co.uk & www.suckley.net**

Village Hall: Steve Boughton- 884210

Suckley School: Mr Matthew Meckin - 884283

Suckley Pre-School: Linda Negrin-Torres -884766

Church: Wardens: Dr Anne M Lewis – 884552

Parish Clerk: Mrs Diana Taylor - 01684 569430

Playing Fields: Bookings & Pitches Mr & Mrs Luton – 884558

Skateboard Arena: Mr P Beaumont – 884550

West Mercia Constabulary: Emergency 999. Other matters 0300 333 3000
PC3381 Sarah Ransome-Williams, CSO 6494 Tracey Caldwell,
CSO 5481 Collin Davies.

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A Tale of Two Greyhounds

On Tuesday 12th October our postman Will (aka Bill) and his wife Jayne visited Suckley Primary school with their two rescue greyhounds, Milo and Evie. They were there to talk to the children about the plight of greyhounds both during and after their racing career. Here is Jayne's report of their visit:

We arrived at 1.15pm to find over 50 children very excited about our visit. Milo and Evie were interested at the prospect of meeting so many childrenso much anticipated fuss and adoration!

I knew the children were doing a project on the Egyptian Pharaohs so I started our talk about the origins of Greyhounds and the similarities to Anubis, guardian of the tombs, and how they have changed little over thousands of years. We then went on to talk about the aerodynamics of their bodies and the speeds they can so effortlessly reach, as they are the Formula 1 cars of the canine world!

We explained to the children about the need for martingale collars and demonstrated their house coats and rain coats and why they need them in cold weather. The children also saw how well muzzles were accepted by the dogs, in fact, I think it's humans who have issues with muzzles!

After some interesting questions from the children, we went on to explain why the dogs are discarded at such a young age and the work that Greyhound Rescue Wales (GRW) does on their behalf. To give the children an insight into the life of a racing

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greyhound, I had already written two stories about Milo and Evie's past history (some fact and some fiction), called "A Tale of Two Greyhounds". We explained this was a fairy story, sad in places but with a happy ending. The children were fascinated and asked lots of intelligent questions afterwards. In the meantime, Milo decided that all the adulation was just 'tooo' exhausting and promptly fell asleep!

The children had a collection and raised a lovely £26.15 which we very gratefully received on behalf of GRW. All in all an interesting time was had by all, so much so that we have been invited back again next year and Will is now known at 'the greyhound man'. The children ask at least twice a week how Milo and Evie are! With luck some of these children may grow to be the 'Greyhound Rescuers' of the future.

It seems the visit was very popular with the children, there is more on this visit, including some photos of the children and the dogs on the 'school news' pages of the school website, www.mediawebz.co.uk/suckleyschool//index.php

Hester Hill, a pupil at the school said of Milo and Evie's visit,

'I really enjoyed Bill and his wife coming to school because I like dogs and know Bill well.

Bill's dogs were very friendly. He told us about them - how they used to race until they retired and came to live with Bill. They then became house dogs.

Bill showed us pictures and told stories, and we gave some money to help greyhound rescue.

It was great - much better than normal lessons!'

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If you'd like to visit Greyhound Rescue Wales website, you can see pictures of all the dogs that have been found new homes (including Milo and Evie) plus all the dogs that need new homes. www.greyhoundrescuewales.co.uk

Have YOU something to say?

We welcome all contributions to the newsletter and are very grateful to those who have written for this issue. If you would like to write something (or ask a question) for the newsletter, whether it is about a Suckley past or what the village needs for the future, please get in touch – call Hilary on 884355 or email suckleynews@gmail.com



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Suckley Village Hall

Suckley Village Hall upcoming events for you diary. Start time is 7.30pm unless otherwise noted. Tickets are normally available from Suckley post office or on the night if places remain available.

◆	<p>Suckley Village Hall Presents "PUDDINGS, PIES AND PASTRIES" Come along and enjoy an evening with us. Demos, origins of puddings, recipes and, of course, lots of tasting.</p> <p>SATURDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 2011 at 7.30 P.M. Cost: £6 per person.</p>
◆	<p>WHITE HOUSE TALK – 26th February</p>
◆	<p>QUIZ NIGHT – 11th March</p>
◆	<p>SUCKLEY PAINTING GROUP We would like to start a painting group in the Village Hall early in the New Year. It will be for all abilities, any medium - just like-minded people who enjoy painting in a social setting. If you are interested, please contact CAROL BOUGHTON, 884210 and we will arrange a meeting to discuss the possibilities and arrangements.</p>
◆	<p>PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP A proposed new group for enthusiastic amateur photographers to be held in the Village Hall. A chance to share your photographic endeavours over a glass of wine/beer or even a cuppa. If you are interested, please phone CAROL BOUGHTON, 884210.</p>

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Health and Well Being Group - Good Neighbour Scheme

“Every community has good-hearted people who automatically help their neighbours, but the aim of the Good Neighbour Scheme is to fill any gaps in this network of care in a community and to put help within reach of every resident of that community.”

The scheme identifies a team of volunteers who are willing to help others in our community. Volunteers can choose in which way or ways they would like to help so they don't feel over-burdened. For example visiting, shopping, pet care if their owner becomes incapacitated, light maintenance or emergency transport. The only service for which there is a charge is transport, for which the driver is paid directly by the client at up to 40 pence per mile as compensation for fuel and running costs.

The scheme revolves around a mobile phone, which is held in turn by a core group of volunteers who match the need of the caller to a volunteer who has offered to help in that particular way. It is a scheme that spreads the load and does not put pressure on any one volunteer to do everything on the list.

In some areas where mobile signals are poor, the scheme could use a landline that can be diverted on a rota basis. If you would like to volunteer or be involved in any way please contact: Marie Woodroff, Volunteer Co-ordinator: 01886 884562

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Suckley Allotments

We have been pleased with the response to our plans for making a field over to rented allotments. I think it's the excitement(?) of being offered free muck that has done the trick! Sadly only one of the 11 people who have signed up is from Suckley.

We hope for a few more 'locals' to come along, with £2 a week, to have the use of a plot when we get started in the spring. Our plan is to have the soil ploughed and rotovated ready for planting in early March. We have even bought a (very old) ride on mower to keep the paths and surrounds tidy. The allotment holders are keen, and we hope they will form a good community, comparing their vegetables and flowers, and forming friendships, even rivalry!

There seems to be a revival of interest in the media for all things 'grow and cook' at the moment, so please put the word around and we might even make another 12 plots if needed.

Book now to reserve an allotment for 2011. Call Jill Hammonds 01886 884221 or email john@pewcroft.fsnet.co.uk



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To Pig or Not to Pig.....that is the Question ?!

Claire McDonald from Suckley with a porcine tale of Honey and Apple (nothing to do with eating too much at Christmas!).

In the summer of 2008 we welcomed Honey and Apple into our old Orchard. Their mother was Blossom, a KuneKune pig born and bred in Bringsty.

Although not native to this country as a species, originating from New Zealand, they particularly enjoy fruit and are considered less destructive to the ground they are homed on than other types of pig...(although more on this later!) So, ideal for keeping the orchard clear.

This year, when mature enough, it was our hope to produce a first litter.....so off went Honey , with a great deal of bad grace , back to her original breeders and 3 months later, she returned to a very cool welcome from her neglected sister Apple.(Oh boy, can they huff !)

October 6th was D-day and although Honey didn't look particularly pregnant, being rather on the large side naturally, we were rather hoping that a small litter was imminent. This seemed to be supported by the fact she often could be seen taking herself off for an afternoon snooze...resting herself for Motherhood.

But October came and went with no piglets.....the Suckley Shires (our British KuneKune Pig members' breed name) are not on the increase this year. Poor Honey is currently being consoled by one

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of the spring lambs devotedly following her around the orchard and Apple is booked in for her visit to Bringsty in January! Maybe Spring piglets for us next year?

And so to my earlier adjunct.....should you consider adding pigs to your orchard/paddock, try to visit their breeders home. Whilst on paper the KuneKune is relatively non rooting, friends invested in two piglets who once mature enough, managed to completely re- landscape their land, levelling an entire garden hill-sculpture!!

Parish Council Notes November 2010

Just to remind Suckley residents of the opportunity of discounted thermal imaging surveys for detecting heat loss in homes. With electricity and gas prices on the rise, reducing heat loss from walls, windows and roof will help to keep the bills down. Thermal imaging is a means of discovering exactly where and how the heat is escaping from your home.

Clusters of customers reduce the survey price to around **£50 per property**. This small investment will possibly **save you £100s** in heating bill when you know where next to insulate. Phone Parish Councillor Mike Jackson on 01886 884745 (who is co-ordinating this project for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Suckley).



Suckley Church

Christmas Services:

Sunday December 5th: Christingle at 4.30 pm

Christmas Eve: Crib Service at 4.30pm

Christmas Day: Family Communion at 10.30am

Regular Services at Suckley: There is a basic pattern of:

1st Sunday All Age Worship 11am (a lively informal service)

2nd Sunday Evensong with prayers for healing 6pm (a quiet contemplative service)

3rd Sunday we go to Alfrick for their All Age service at 11am or Leigh for Evensong at 6pm

4th and 5th Sundays Common Worship Holy Communion with a Sunday School (a traditional service).

For further information please contact Anne Lewis (Suckley Church Warden) on 884552 or annelewis@doctors.org.uk

Events: Suckley School Choir and Colwall Community Choir in concert at Suckley Church on Friday 3rd December at 7pm. Wine and nibbles. Proceeds to Suckley School and Suckley Church (for Worcs and Dudley Historic Churches Trust). For further information contact Mary Barnes 884170 or 07966 168433.




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Garden Tip from Adrian Bloom

My gardening tip at this time of year would be to tidy up with care. On the one hand it is necessary to carry out clearing up tasks for garden hygiene purposes (disposing of rose leaves with black spot is an obvious one), but on the other hand fallen leaves, dead perennial stalks etc., provide shelter for a host of tiny beneficial creatures such as ladybird, hoverflies and lacewings, beetles and brown centipedes. These insects are the 'warriors' of the garden keeping aphids, slugs, leatherjackets and vine weevils at bay.

For example, I came across some sheltering ladybirds when I was clearing out my strawberry bed recently, so gave them a wide berth!

PS. I have been clearing out some beds and dividing herbaceous perennials so have a few surpluses if anyone wants anything. I've also got a whole load of hellebores I grew from donated seed a couple of years ago and which now need a good home, or they'll end up on the compost heap. They've not yet flowered, so there could be some real gems waiting to be discovered! If you are interested please call me on 07855171356 or email soundpost1@aol.com.



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The Suckley Quiz night by The Village Hall Reporter

Gwyn Williams is a genius.

The thing about a good quizmaster is that he, or she, makes the job look easy. I know from past experience that it isn't. The required skills include balancing your witty and entertaining personality with an element of credibility and gravitas (not least in case someone dares challenge your answers). Being able to simultaneously talk and master your equipment - projectors, CD players etc. Oh, and not getting confused and accidentally reading out the answers instead of the questions. Awkward to recover from that last one in my experience.

Suckley Village Hall's recent quiz night performance by Gwyn made me ponder what the mark of a true master might be? I think it's picking your questions so well that even a general knowledge ignoramus like me thinks they might be in with a chance of winning... whilst still being challenging enough for the most Tefal of eggheads. A packed village hall audience comprising both eggheads and jolly ignorami loved it.

Gwyn returns for another Quiz Night on 11th March.

A Timely Reminder – from Mike Taylor – your local Plumber

With the weather turning colder, don't forget to turn off the isolation valve to your outside tap and once turned off, leave the outside tap 'open'.

Don't have an isolation valve? Contact Mike on 07734 812027 or 01886 884280 to fit one for you.

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The 423 bus service - use it or lose it.

How handy it is to have a car to drive into Worcester? Zip along the A44 eastwards and find a city parking spot for a few pounds. It's called convenience.

But it does damage - two sorts - firstly, to the environment - the vehicle is using precious fuel (which globally is running out) and your motor is spewing out fumes that are heating and polluting the atmosphere - causing climatic havoc in other parts of the world. Secondly, close to home, the prospect of a bus service being retained for those people without a car is being reduced. The 423 service is heavily subsidised by the county. There is no economic sense in running a bus with only a few passengers the 10 miles between Suckley and Worcester each day.

As County Hall contemplates ways of reducing its spend, an almost unused bus service must seem an obvious candidate for cutting. If they decide to axe the 423 then those people without their own transport will have no viable means of reaching the city, short of a private taxi. Then as fuel costs rise, or individually we become infirm, we will regret having allowed the wonderful service of the 423 to disappear.

I have walked from home to Malvern, Worcester and Bromyard. I cannot recommend the Bromyard road walk because of the stretch along the Malvern Road to the A44 (no ditch to duck into as cars roar past). It's pleasant, if time-consuming. But for a leisurely, civilised, relaxing, trouble-free, low cost, environmentally-friendly journey, I counsel you to try the 423 bus service at least now and then.

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Al Gore wisely talks about Inconvenient Truths - well, waiting for a rare bus can be inconvenient, but I say: embrace it - it's good for you, our community and our planet.

Councillor Mike Jackson (Green Party).

Service 423 Timetable

Bromyard - Suckley - Alfrick - Worcester 423 - Mon to Sat from 6th June 2010

Notes:	NS	S	W
Suckley Green, White House	07.33	09.33	11.33
Suckley, Stocks Crossroads	07.36	09.36	11.36
Longley Green	07.38	09.38	11.38
Worcester, Bus Station	08.10	10.10	12.10

Notes: **NS** - Runs Mon to Frid only, **W** - Runs Weds only, **S** - Runs Sat only

Worcester - Alfrick - Suckley - Bromyard 423 - Mon to Sat from 6th June 2010

Notes:	W	S	□	
Worcester, Bus Station	10.45	13.10	16.35	17.45
Longley Green	11.18	REQ	REQ	REQ
Suckley, Stocks Crossroads	11.20	REQ	REQ	REQ
Suckley Green, White House	11.23	REQ	REQ	REQ

Notes: **W** - Runs Weds only, **S** - Runs Sat only **■** - Runs Schooldays only, also on Wednesdays only during school holidays, **REQ** - Calls here only on request to the driver

No Sunday service on either route

Operator Phone Number: First - 0800 587 7381

Buzz Words

Local beekeeper Robin Hill answers some questions about these extraordinary insects.

I have read a lot in the papers about honey bees being under threat. Is this true?

Bees have had an increasing number of challenges to live with over the last couple of decades, and it is good that this is now being more widely recognised. There have been habitat losses and instances of chemical poisoning, but the most serious and widespread problem has been the infection of hives by the varroa mite. These seriously weaken colonies of bees, making them less resilient to other problems, and require all beekeepers to treat annually to reduce levels of infection.

As far as I know there are no beehives kept close to my garden, yet I see plenty of bees on shrubs like my Cotoneaster. Where might they come from?

Honey bees will fly up to 2 miles to a good food source, and tell others in the hive how to find it too by performing an elaborate dance. Each bee's carrying capacity is so limited that it needs colleagues to help – it is estimated that it would take one bee two weeks of constant flying to bring back one teaspoonful of honey!

How do the bees convert nectar into honey?

Nectar contains a high percentage of sucrose, as found in domestic sugar. The bees process this in the hive, evaporating much of the water content and changing the sucrose into two other sugars, glucose and fructose, which together with vitamins, enzymes and water make up honey.



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When left on a shelf for a while my golden, runny honey can set and turn white. Is this natural?

Yes, honey naturally crystallises, especially if the glucose content is high. Heating it gently over a radiator or in a vat of warm water will reverse the process.

Is nectar the only thing that bees are looking for in my garden?

No. In collecting the nectar from a plant a bee frequently emerges with pollen stuck to its hairy body. Sometimes this is intentional, as the pollen provides a vital source of food for their young, but whatever the motivation it certainly helps the plant world with pollination.

Do bees have the same senses as humans?

A good question. A bee does not have good eyesight as we know it, as it has no focusing mechanism and poor recognition of detail. It appears that taste and smell are linked in bees, and that both are well-developed. Bees do not hear as we do, but are instead very sensitive to vibration. A warning for the heavy-footed beekeeper!

How many bees are there in the average hive?

The number varies with the season. At this time of year there are likely to be around 10,000 bees surviving from the last hatch of the summer. As early as February each year a queen will begin to lay eggs again, so building up the strength of a colony until it reaches a summer maximum of 50,000. At this time the queen could be laying several thousand eggs each day – all as the result of a single mating when she was young!

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What happens when bees swarm?

This is a natural process of reproduction, and is frequently triggered by overcrowding in the hive. It happens when a percentage of the worker bees, accompanied by a queen, leave to seek a new home. Often, but not always, this happens in the middle of a warm day, and can be a spectacular sight.

Is a swarm dangerous?

Because the bees in a swarm have usually gorged themselves on honey to prepare them for a journey to a new home they are unwilling to sting unless provoked. Their goal is to find a new secure home, usually at least half a mile from the original hive. On the way there they may stop off on a convenient tree or fence post to regroup and rest, but usually move on to their destination by late afternoon.

Next time in Buzz Words we will look will look at how you can become 'bee friendly' in your garden by growing plants that attract and feed bees.



Do you have an interest, hobby, craft or sport that you'd like to share? If you are member of a club, society, charity or are passionate about a hobby or activity, why not write about it for the Newsletter? It's a good way to gain new members, encourage others to participate, raise sponsorship or receive offers of support. Call Hilary on 884355 or email suckleynews@gmail.com

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'Dad's Thai Fishcakes' from Tilda Swabey

As a family we have always been slightly obsessed with food, talking about it, sharing it, enjoying it, swapping ideas and recipes. My father was a fantastic cook and his passion for sharing wonderful food lovingly prepared with the people he cared about is something we have all happily inherited. This is a great recipe of his – very simple to do but with a depth of flavour and interest well beyond the effort involved.

A great starter or just cook up a batch to have with drinks.

100g white fish – skin, debone and chop thoroughly or process briefly.

100g salmon - skin, debone and chop thoroughly or process briefly.

75g prawns – chopped coarsely

1 garlic clove – peeled and finely chopped

1 quarter red pepper – seeded and finely chopped

1 thumb sized piece of ginger – peeled and finely chopped

1 tbsp chopped fresh coriander

1 tbsp Nam Pla (Thai fish sauce - optional)

Salt and pepper

Place ingredients in a bowl and combine with a fork. Shape into small flat cakes and fry in batches in hot oil on both sides until cooked – a minute or so each side until golden brown and firm. Serve hot with Sweet Thai dipping sauce and salad. Serves 4 as starter.

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- * Viewings welcome by appointment

Seville Cottage
Suckley
Worcester
WR6 5EQ
01886 884867

FREE Newsletter for Suckley Residents

SUCKLEY & ALFRICK PRE-SCHOOL

A modern pre-school in a traditional setting

The Suckley & Alfrick Pre-School is affiliated to Suckley Primary School. The school welcomes children from 2 years and is set in a ground floor wing of the impressive "Hop Kilns" private home in Suckley and has been designed to provide a home from home environment.

NOW OPEN

9.00am to 3.00pm Tue, Wed, Thu (term time only)
For more information, please call Linda Negrin-Torres on 01886 884 766 or visit www.thepreschool.org.uk

Reg. charity No: 1136309

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