

AUGUST 2013

SUCKLEY NEWSLETTER

One man went to mow...



With the recent good weather, Duncan Reynolds has been working long hot hours to cut grass to store as winter food for farm livestock. As an agricultural contractor, he travels from his base in Linley Green to clients spread over a 30 mile area. He lives with Lisa Blackburn and they have a small holding which they have to manage in between their 'day jobs'. Duncan also cuts the grass at Suckley playing fields. Lisa and Duncan give us an insight into the work of an agricultural contractor.

FREE Newsletter to Suckley Residents

AUGUST 2013

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Next Issue: First week in October 2013

Content for newsletter to be submitted 23rd September 2013.

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 or for Parish Council business www.worcestershire.gov.uk/MyParish (select Suckley from alphabetical listing).

Suckley Good Neighbourhood Scheme - 840480

Village Hall: Steve Boughton - 884210

Suckley School: Mr Matthew Meckin - 884283

Suckley & Alfrick Pre-School: Joanne Hall - 884766

Church: Wardens: Dr Anne M Lewis – 884552

Parish Clerk: Mrs Diana Taylor - 01684 569430

District Councillors: Mr D Hughes - 833049, Mr A Warburton - 832753

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Duncan first became interested in agriculture and machinery at a very early age; his father David was an agricultural contractor and built steel framed buildings with great skill. Duncan grew up in this environment and developed a desire to one day run an agricultural contracting business of his own.

By the age of 16, Duncan became independent with several clients of his own and began to work for another local contractor, Paul Beaumont who took Duncan under his agricultural wing and taught him some valuable skills. He then went on to do a few years work for a larger contracting firm, A. Legge and Sons., where he furthered his knowledge and skills of the contracting business whilst also maintaining his own customer base. Within the last 2-3 years Duncan's business has grown and customer base expanded so that he has been able to purchase newer machinery and no longer needs to work for others.

Recently, he has been busy 'making hay' for local farmers. Hay making is the longest established method of conserving grass for feeding cattle and sheep (and horses) through the winter and has been an important function of the farming calendar in the UK for the last six thousand years.

In the simplest terms, hay is grass in its driest form and requires turning the most times and doesn't need to be wrapped. All types of grass are used in the winter to feed farm animals and horses.

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Haylage is slightly wetter than hay and needs to be wrapped to prevent mould growing on it and to preserve the nutrients in the grass. Silage is the wettest form of mowed grass and can be wrapped like haylage or put in a silage pit covered by plastic but must be kept airtight to enable fermentation so that bacteria can create a natural preservative and vitamins such as folic acid and vitamin B12.



Maintaining equipment is vital for Duncan's business - a broken machine means delays for farmers and loss of earnings for Duncan.

For storing hay, some people prefer square bales as they are more convenient to fit/stack in sheds and on trailers. Round bales are preferred due to being able to roll out in sheds. A lot of people like the conventional little square bale for portability and ease of handling if they don't have the equipment to handle larger bales.

Farming is constantly at the mercy of the weather and it is always a gamble whether to mow or not. It is a chance every farmer takes for himself. Hay is not as good a quality once it has been rained on and requires drying out prior to baling. The arrival of the recent warm weather meant 'all hands on deck' and 16+ hour days were normal! Some farmers opt to mow part of a field ie. the headland where it is damper under hedges and trees and make into haylage/silage and make the middle into hay if the weather allows. Mowing speed depends entirely on the terrain and the size of the field, how many different places the contractor has to mow in a day and how far between each field.

In previous years Duncan has struggled with older mowers but this year with the addition of a newer John Deere mower, it has had pretty much been plain sailing

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on that account. Sometimes things don't always go according to plan and one has to improvise in order to get the job finished or just to get home safely. If a contractor has the money, he can pretty much spend as much money as he want on farm machinery. There is also the less expensive option of buying used machinery but this isn't always without problems as Duncan has found out on several occasions. However, usually with a bit of time in the workshop, most creases can be ironed out; cracks welded up and bearings replaced. Maintaining equipment is fundamental in keeping Duncan's business afloat as breakdowns cost time and money during a busy spell. Diesel is another costly part of contracting and at nearly 70p per litre for gasoil it is increasing the price of services offered by the contractor. Parts for machines and tractors are also costly.



As Duncan works on a contract basis, he has to travel to where the contract takes him. Living in the country, care is always needed driving on rural roads and lanes but this is especially so during the farming busy periods such as silage harvesting, haymaking and grain harvesting when large tractors can be round the next bend usually pulling an even larger piece of machinery behind. Anticipation is key, be ready to stop quickly, pull over or reverse out of the way – whilst manoeuvring is usually possible for the tractor the limited space on Suckley's lovely lanes means it is always easier for cars.

Next on the schedule for Duncan is second cut hay / haylage making, hedge trimming, straw baling and muck spreading. He also has a few welding jobs that have taken a back seat due to the recent busy spell. Despite the workload and vagaries of our weather, Duncan enjoys his work. "Lisa and I rarely stop; contracting is long hours and requires devotion. We are extremely lucky to have such a supportive family network to enable us to work the hours we do and also run our household and look after our small holding. "

Duncan established his business DJR Farm Services in 2004, specialising in farm services, welding and fabrication and services for equestrian establishments. Information of services provided by Duncan can be found at the DJR Farm Services website, www.djrfs.co.uk or call Duncan on 07957 251630 / 01886 884328.

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The Clover Mill - The Place to Be

Julie Dent left a scientific career to start a new business in the tranquil surroundings of Clover Mill (formerly Archer's Mill). With links to Suckley, she has fond memories of relatives living in the village and is delighted to have found the perfect location just a short distance away for her new business venture.

Turning off and parking by Suckley church, walking into the church grounds, what was unusual? Well I hadn't been here for over 30 years when relatives Raymond and Louise Denley lived in Rectory Bungalows. Fond memories include (Great Uncle) Ray riding everywhere on his bicycle, handling his ferrets, collecting eggs from his chickens and relating anecdotes from his past and generally enjoying his very simple life in the country; and Lou producing a gorgeous rice pudding every visit. It all sounds quite idyllic until I remember the one tap in the kitchen for cold water straight from the outside butt, hot water only came from the kettle on the wood fired Rayburn and the only heat came from the Rayburn so winters must have been tough. This is all a very far cry from the luxury I'm now offering a couple of miles away at The Clover Mill. I wonder if Ray came here for his flour, did he know Ted Archer the miller? Maybe they went to school together? What would they have thought of me living here and restoring the old mill and adding in treatments rooms, yoga studio, showers and a steam room, items unheard of to them?

Formerly Archer's Mill, now The Clover Mill, it is an exclusive health spa and yoga retreat offering Ayurveda and healing yoga classes. Inside this 19C water mill that used to grind grains and beans, sits a stylish steam room, massage treatment areas made from the original grain store timber and a spacious, light-flooded yoga studio in the loft. You might find yourself looking up at the Crown Wheel whilst receiving a heavenly deeply relaxing massage with therapeutic oils gently worked into your body, followed by lunch in the 17C dining room next to the clover mill mechanism.

Ayurveda is an ancient holistic philosophy of life tried and tested over thousands of years offering lifestyle information to enable us to be healthy - mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Ayurveda treats people as individuals. Have you ever wondered why some people are hyperactive and fast moving whilst others exude grace and stillness? Why some people can eat any food they

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like and not put on weight? Why some people are always happy and optimistic whilst others are anxious and depressed? Ayurveda answers all these questions with the Three Doshas – Vata, Pitta and Kapha. The doshas are physical energies or metabolisms that govern all physical and mental processes and provide every individual a blueprint for health and fulfilment.

At The Clover Mill, dedicated, specially trained therapists will assess your dosha type and prescribe the best treatments to bring you back into balance. Living in a world where we are time-crunched, stressed and tired, takes its toll on us, and this is when we become out of balance and illness may follow. Having regular Ayurvedic treatments and yoga, together with a healthy diet will help you maintain balance and ward-off illness, mental and physical. "After this weekend I feel a totally chilled woman ready to take on the world" wrote a guest.



A yoga class at the Clover Mill, in the reburbished loft, with the old mill workings and natural light adding to the ambience.

The Clover Mill offers several weekly yoga classes including 'Yoga breakfast' (7am yoga followed by a delicious healthy breakfast), 'Yoga Lunch', 'Yoga for Men' and other classes for beginners and mixed abilities. Come for an Ayurvedic massage or relax into a whole day of de-stressing treatments, steaming and re-balancing, or stay for a weekend or 5 day retreat.

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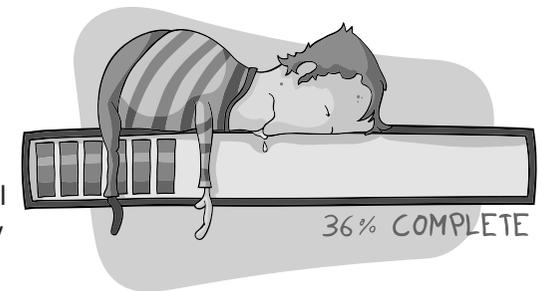
The founder of the mill, Julie Dent, left her scientific career in infectious diseases to build a place where she and her guests can immerse themselves in nature, in Ayurveda and stay in eco-lodges where environmental sensitivity meets luxury and comfort.

Nestling between Cradley and Suckley with views of the Malvern Hills, The Clover Mill is less than a mile from the main road but is quite hidden behind trees and ancient hedgerows. After a year of searching for the 'right' place, Julie came to view what was then Archer's Mill and only then learned that her grandparents were from Birchwood and had married at Storridge church so, together with her childhood memories of Suckley, Julie felt that the mill must be the 'right' place to be. To be relaxed, yet revitalised, to be in nature, to be in a yoga class, to be in a gorgeous treatment room having a sublime massage, or, just, to be.

For more info www.theclovermill.com or call Julie on 01886 880859

Broadband - response not speedy enough!

The push on faster broadband appears to have hit the buffers as so few households in Suckley have expressed any interest. Only 9 so far out of 262 households have registered for Airband and a handful more for the Worcestershire County Council initiative.



For Airband, a minimum of 30 residents need to register their interest - you will not be committed to the service at this stage. Other communities who have taken up Airband packages, (which includes a £99 setup cost) have been delighted at the 20Mbs speed for £22 per month and some have offset this cost by cancelling their BT lines.

To register your interest, please visit www.airband.co.uk or phone 01905 676121. For the Worcestershire County Council initiative, there are two registrations, one each for businesses and residents. To register with the WCC scheme, visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/broadband

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What is the county flower of Worcester?

A question put by James Leutchford of 'Plantlife' – a plant charity looking for local volunteers in the quest to improve wild flowers in our road-side verges. They also encourage families and schools to get outside and discover the wild flowers - and insect life they support - that are on our doorstep.

Wild plant charity Plantlife (www.plantlife.org.uk), are hoping to reach out to many wild plant enthusiasts and nature lovers by inviting them to become wild plant 'pioneers' and subscribe to a free quarterly e-learning bulletin to learn more about our native wild plants via the 'Wild About Plants' project website - www.wildaboutplants.org.uk. The May e-bulletin is out now and the August issue being written as we speak! The Wild About Plants team deliver Plantlife's outreach programme and work to help people reconnect with the outdoors and their local green spaces. Working with schools, families and communities from all walks of life and with fantastic free downloadable resources, the team hope to engage people with the nature on their doorstep. In recent years subscribers have been asked to record the plant life in their local area and recount what they used to see/pick and forage for.

Plantlife have just launched "Flowers on the Edge" their annual road-verges campaign. They are asking communities to record how their road verges are looking this summer by taking photos and sending in stories. Wild About Plants is funded by Natural England through Access to Nature, as part of the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme. It is a partnership project involving partner organisations throughout the country.

Finally, the answer to which flower is the County flower of Worcestershire – it's the cowslip! Its habitat is open woods, grassy places and meadows and cowslips are at their best when in flower, from April to May.

Did you know?

The name cowslip allegedly derives from the term 'cowslups', basically meaning cowpat! They flowered where a cow had 'slupped'.



Photo by Alex Brown on Flickr

Holloways

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Recipes from the Suckley Masterchef

Goan Masala Curry Paste

This is an indispensable Masala in Goan kitchens. It is found in most homes in Goa and is used for many seafood dishes as well as white meat ones. This recipe makes about 200g, any leftovers will keep in a jar in the refrigerator for 3-6 months. Replace shop bought curry paste with this easy home made version, and taste the difference.

Makes about 200g Masala Paste

Preparation: 15 mins / Cooking time 5 mins

DRY INGREDIENTS	WET INGREDIENTS
75g small dried hot red chillies	1 tbsp oil
1 tsp cumin seeds	1 small onion, diced
4 cm piece of cinnamon, bark, broken up into bits	10 garlic cloves, peeled and roughly chopped
1 tsp cardamom pods	Juice of half a lemon
1 tsp cloves	50g ginger, peeled and roughly chopped
1 tbsp ground coriander	150ml palm or cider vinegar
2 tbsp hot paprika	

- Dry Ingredients:** Grind the dry ingredients together in a mortar and pestle or in a coffee grinder to a powder.
- Wet Ingredients:** Heat some oil in a saucepan over a moderate heat. When the oil is hot add the onion, garlic and ginger to the pan. Cook until the onion is soft and transparent, remove from the heat and allow to cool for a couple of minutes.
- Add the wet ingredients including the vinegar to the dry ingredients in the mortar and pestle and grind to a paste. Alternatively place all the wet and dry ingredients together in a food processor and process to a smooth paste (you may need a little more vinegar but be careful not to add too much).
- To Store:** Place the mixture in a sterilised jar with a little oil over the top of the masala. Store in the refrigerator for up to 6 months.

Suckley Church

Suckley Services for AUGUST and September

Sunday August 4th at 11am All Age Service (A lively informal Service)

Sunday August 11th at 6pm Evening Prayer (A quiet contemplative service)

Wednesday August 14th at 10am a small said Common Worship Communion service

Sunday August 18th We go to Alfrick for their 11am All Age Service (A lively informal Service)

Sunday August 25th at 11am Family Communion (A formal Common Worship service)

Sunday September 1st at 11am All Age Service (A lively informal service)

Sunday September 8th we go to the Alfrick Show Marquee at 11am for another 'Songs of Praise followed by afternoon tea and cakes... look out for more details!

Sunday September 15th We go to Alfrick for their 11am All Age Service (A lively informal Service)

Sunday September 22nd at 11am Family Communion (A formal Common Worship service)

Sunday September 29th at 10.30am we go to Broadwas Church for a combined service with all the Worcester West Rural Team churches

Don't forget to enjoy Suckley Church's own Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/suckleychurch). You can enjoy the photos even if you don't have a Facebook account.

September 15th: Walking the Suckley Hills with Garth Lowe! With BBQ afterwards

During the Festival of Churches weekend, Suckley Church will be open for the Ride and Stride on Saturday 14th September. On Sunday 15th we are hosting a walk on the Suckley Hills with Garth Lowe starting from the church at 2pm followed by a BBQ tea in the churchyard at about 4pm. Proceeds to be shared between Suckley Church and the Worcester and Dudley Historic Churches Trust (who very generously contributed to the restoration of Suckley Church Tower)

Come and enjoy the camaraderie of the walk... Garth's walks are always a treat.... or if you prefer come and enjoy the BBQ and welcome the walkers back.

What's on, what's happening in and around Suckley

...	<p>Come along to the 61st Alfrick & Lulsey Show On Saturday 7th September 2013 at Alfrick Village Playing Field Time: From 12.30pm till Late Bar, BBQ, Refreshments, Ice Creams, Displays, Competitions, Entertainments, Stalls, Raffles, and much, much more. There will be lots and lots for all the family to see and do, so come along and support what is one of the best local country shows that is still going strong after 60 years!</p>
...	<p>SPACE Project If you have any questions or would like to share your thoughts on the proposed re-ordering of the church, please do not hesitate to contact:</p> <p>Liz Devenish. Chairman, the SPACE project. email liz.devenish@virgin.net Mobile 07929001563, Home 01886884787</p>
...	<p>Local History Society - next meet Saturday 14th September at Stocks Farm starting at 2.00pm. Price is just £6 for adults and £3 for under 16's to include the afternoon tea. More details in this issue's article from the History Society.</p>
	<p>Suckley Village Hall - Cakes and Puddings evening - postponed - now held on 25th January 2014. Watch out for details.</p>
	<p>Village Supper Evening held in Suckley Village Hall This is being held on Saturday, 26th October so please book this date in your diaries.</p>

Local Services:

Mobile Library Timetable 2013

Please note change of location and new times :

Fridays only at
 Suckley - Cross Keys 11.20 - 11.40
 Suckley School - 11.45 - 12.10
 Longley Green Post Office 12.20 - 1.00

Dates: 16th August, 6th September and 27th September.

Enquiries about this service should be made to Malvern Library, Graham Road Malvern or telephone 01905 822722, or email malvernmobile@worcestershire.gov.uk

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All participants must bring a packed lunch, plenty to drink, appropriate clothing, shin pads, sun cream, a hat and both football boots and trainers. All players must bring suitable footwear.

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10.30 - 11.00
Skill of the day

11.00 - 12.00
Fun Games

12.00 - 12.30
Lunch

12.30 - 1.15
Coaches' Challenge

1.15 - 3.00
Small-sided games & tournamenty

Village Hall News

It was great to see so many people at our Coffee Morning on 8th June. There was quite a buzz in the Hall and everyone seemed to enjoy meeting old friends and chatting to new ones - all helped along by a cuppa and homemade cake. To those people we say a big thank you for taking the time to visit us. We would also like to thank the History Society, the Good Neighbour Scheme, the Space Project and the Art Group for putting on interesting exhibits which added greatly to the proceedings.

Cake and Puddings evening - Our proposed date has clashed with the Alfrick Show so our event will now take place on 25th January, 2014. Seems a long way off but something to look forward to in the New Year. Watch out for details.

A reminder...

... for Heart Start Suckley. Would you like to be better able to save a life? If you would like to be informed of any basic resuscitation course in Suckley, or be involved in any way to make this happen, please let Anne Lewis know. 01886 884552 or annelewis@doctors.org.uk



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Suckley History Society explores Archers Mill

On a glorious summers evening in mid July, around 30 members and friends of the Suckley Local History Society enjoyed the hospitality of Julie Dent at Archer's Mill. Situated between Cradley and Suckley on the Cradley brook, this historic gem dates back to the 17th century. Originally a clover mill, it was rebuilt and extended as a corn mill in the mid 19th century and was worked by the Archer family until 1975.

Over the past three years, Julie Dent has restored the mill and preserved the original milling machinery over the five floors of the stone built mill. It is now one of only three mills in working order left in the county.

With the assistance of Julie's brother Phillip, our group was given an entertaining and informative tour throughout the mill where we learnt about some of the finer points of milling, including breast-shot water wheels, pit and spur wheels and various types of shafts that that lifted and moved corn and flour throughout the milling process.

Julie's outstanding work (and courage!) in completing this huge restoration is remarkable. There has been a huge amount of effort, energy and money invested in the mill to bring it back to life with a 21st century use.

The mill is now an exclusive health spa and yoga retreat – a haven from stresses of modern life. The spa features a steam room, private treatment areas and a popular spacious light flooded yoga story on the top floor of the mill. The spa treatments are based on the Ayurvedic treatment- harnessing the healing power of nature. Three new eco lodges have been created in the ancient orchard and both residents and local visitors are welcomed at the spa and yoga classes.

The evening was warmly rounded off by wine and nibbles and Julie's home made cake enjoyed in the late evening summer sunshine.

The history society's next event is a late summer highlight – a field trip to Stocks Farm on Saturday 14th September, courtesy of the Capper family. We will learn something of the history of hop growing in the area, see hop picking and drying

in action and learn about modern apple production. The afternoon will be rounded off with a full afternoon tea of sandwiches, cakes and a drink.

As always, guests are very welcome and this afternoon event will start at 2pm. Price is just £6 for adults and £3 for under 16's to include the afternoon tea. There will be something of interest for almost everyone and as numbers are limited, please secure your place by calling Andrew Grieve on 01886 884795 or by email andchris2@btinternet or Margaret Davies on 01886 884301.



The glorious setting of Archers Mill in the morning light. Now known as Clover Mill, this tranquil spot now has a new lease of life as a health spa and yoga retreat.

Suckley Church is moving forward!

We continue to move forward with the SPACE project to upgrade Suckley Church. Residents may be aware of the decision to move forward with a phased plan to provide a kitchen, heating and toilets. Together with the community and school we now move on to the task of raising funds for the project. The majority of funds will come from grants which in turn rely on the project being outward looking and inclusive.

A SPACE newsletter, which was distributed to all households in Suckley, was well received and as a result we were pleased to have more feedback from villagers. The following is typical:

"I was very sceptical initially and not at all convinced that the original ideas would work well. However after reading the leaflet delivered today I can see that they allay my fears. I am impressed with the ideas so clearly depicted in the illustrations and hope that progress can be made now"

and:

"We may not always be able to attend the meetings; but we are very much behind the reordering of the church, and the plans do look very impressive."

There is another opportunity to see the latest plans on the SPACE stand at the Alfrick Show on 7th September.

Have you visited our website (www.suckleyspace.org.uk) yet? Suckley Church also has a Facebook page, where you can see photos of the church and read about its history, even if you don't have a Facebook account (www.facebook.com/suckleychurch). So, please keep yourselves in the loop so that YOU know what is going on and keep your comments and feedback coming in so that as the detail is discussed YOUR ideas can be considered.

Liz Devenish (Churchwarden and Chair of SPACE Steering Group) 01886 884787 or liz.devenish@virgin.net and Anne Lewis (Churchwarden and Vice-Chair of Steering Group) 01886 884552 and annelewis@doctors.org.uk

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SPOTLIGHT ON - Emis Web and Summary Care Record

On 15th October 2013, we will be changing our existing computerized patient record system to a version called Emis Web. This is the upgrade to our present system, which is no longer being developed and will be gradually phased out. All the information we hold about you on our current system will be transferred to this new version. We will check each step of the conversion process to ensure that information is transferred accurately and correctly. Your records and the way we safeguard them will continue to be protected as before, by the Data Protection Act and our own Information Governance protocols. There may be some disruption to our appointment schedules at change over time but we will keep you informed throughout the process.

This new system will allow improved sharing of information between Health Care providers through the provision of patient Summary Care Records (SCR). The SCR is an electronic record that holds three critical pieces of information about you – Medications you are on, Allergies and Adverse reactions to medicines. This information could be vital if you require emergency treatment or treatment elsewhere when the GP surgery is closed. The SCR can only be accessed by NHS Healthcare staff and your consent is sought and recorded every time. An audit trail is created each time your SCR is accessed and access is monitored by Privacy Officers.

You can find out more information by calling the helpline on 0300 123 3020 or visiting www.nhsCareRecords.nhs.uk

The Care Quality Commission is making inspections of GP Practices in this area. When they visit a practice, the inspectors seek the opinions of patients, visitors and staff about the services provided. This means that you could be questioned about the care you receive at Knightwick, the way we deliver services and how we keep you informed about relevant issues. We receive 48hrs notice of an inspection and we will advertise the date in the waiting room.

DISPENSARY OPENING HOURS

From 1st August 2013, the Dispensary will be CLOSED to patients between 12.30pm – 2.30pm. You can still collect pre-ordered medication from Reception between these times.

Dispensary Team: A big THANK YOU to all patients who give us 2 full working days to process their medication orders. This helps keep our dispensing processes flowing smoothly. While we appreciate that anyone may experience exceptional circumstance from time to time, asking for your medication at short notice can lead to backlogs and delays. If you order via email or our website, please remember that orders sent after 6pm Friday or over the weekend, will not be received by us until Monday morning. This means that these orders will be ready for collection on Wednesday.

The full A4 version of this Newsletter is available at the Surgery. It will also be available on our own dedicated website – www.knightwicksurgery.co.uk and on the local Clifton on Teme website at www.temetriangle.net - courtesy of Bernadette Higgins.

 THE CLOVER MILL Health Spa & Yoga Retreat De-stress, relax, re-vitalised by Ayurvedic massage Personalised treatments based on assessment of your body type Day Spa • Yoga Classes Yoga Breakfast • Yoga Lunch Men only • Mixed • Beginners welcome theclovermill.com 01886 880859 Located between Suckley and Cradley	<p>Suckley Good Neighbour Scheme. Tel. 01886 840480</p> <p>This is a voluntary initiative run by local residents who recognize the benefits of such a scheme to the community, and want to help their neighbours enjoy a better quality of life. For example, household repairs such as changing a light bulb, fixing a dripping tap, checking smoke alarms, moving furniture, or hanging a picture could all fall within the scheme where skills are available. If you are able to offer help, or need some assistance, please give us a call.</p> <p>And all our volunteers are CRB checked, carrying with them a photo-identity card.</p>
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News from Suckley Parish Council Meeting Held on 8th July 2013

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR - Dist Cllr Anthony Warburton reported on proposed changes to the operation of the Revenues & Benefits systems, presently based at Wychavon District Council. With the introduction of Universal Credit there was a strong possibility of a private partnership with Civica who would take over operational activities. This could save approximately £1/2M over the next 5 years.

FOOTPATH WARDENS - Both our Wardens, Richard Harward and Peter Markins have been busy clearing the Suckley part of the Worcestershire Way ready for a charity walk. They have also made some earth steps up a steep part of the footpath near to the Steps Cottages.

SPEEDING ISSUES - The Clerk reported that the upgrade to the VAS camera had been completed. The camera was positioned in Leigh & Bransford parish. The new data available would show the actual speeds of vehicles. All vehicles registered as "hits" would be exceeding the speed limit, as the hit level was now set at 36 mph. The cost of the upgrade would be shared between the three parishes – Suckley, Leigh & Bransford and Alfrick. The County Council would be erecting the T junction signs (the only signs that Highways would allow) in Suckley Green within the next 8 weeks.

COMMUNITY GROUP/PLAN - Cllr A Lewis reported continuing interest in the basic first aid/Heart Start training, with about 10 names registered so far. Anyone interested in this free basic training should contact Cllr A Lewis on 01886 884552.

BROADBAND IMPROVEMENT – The Council arranged for a presentation by Airband at the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th May. However, we still do not have enough expressions of interests for Airband to start doing any preparatory surveys to improve the Broadband in the Parish. This is not a commitment to the service, but if you are interested, please contact the Clerk, Diana Taylor (details below) or contact Cllr Peter Whatley on 01886 884126.

HIGHWAYS - As previously reported, a large number of drainage problems in the Parish have been resolved, thanks to the efforts of Cllr J Green, Barry Bennett our Lengthsman and the Jetting team sent by Worcestershire County Council Highways. However, some potential flooding problems still remain, and the Land Drainage Officer Mr Tom Palmer has now issued notices to the landowners concerned, with a timescale for the work to be completed.

LOCAL POLICE - Crime figures for Suckley in April were reported as NIL except for 1 burglary where three mobile phones were stolen from an unsecured caravan.

SUCKLEY PLAYING FIELDS - Thanks to the continuing hard work and persistence of Cllr Carol Luton, Severn Trent have now resolved the long term saga (over 12 months!) of the water leakage and the enormous water usage bill sent to the Council. Severn Trent finally accepted the arguments put forward for not paying this bill. A substantial cheque has now been received (and banked!) and we are back to a "nil" bill situation. Quotes are being obtained for the removable bollards which unfortunately have to be erected at the entrance to the car park due to people dumping rubbish on the Playing Fields. Both the Lengthsman and Duncan Reynolds have worked hard to get the Playing Fields ready for the School Sports Day.

RISK ASSESSMENT - A tree survey (required by the Parish Council's insurance company) has now been undertaken. This includes a detailed log of all the trees in the Playing Fields and The Old Quarry, with the recommendation of the removal of an ash tree in the Playing Fields and a goat willow in the Quarry. The Council will be arranging for this to be done.

DIANA TAYLOR, Clerk to Suckley Parish Council
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Next Meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday 9th September 2013 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall. There is always time at the beginning of the meeting for parishioners to make a short address to the Councillors for discussions in the meeting.