

The Selsdon — Gazette —

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May 2020

THE SELSDON GAZETTE

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Full details of the roads falling within each of the Selsdon wards can be found on the home page of the SRA website <http://selsdon-residents.co.uk>



Editor's Note

Welcome to the Selsdon Gazette for May. As I put this edition together, we have entered another three weeks of lockdown. This is understandable given the number of daily deaths due to the coronavirus, but I would urge everyone to keep going. Whether working on the frontline, volunteering in the community or just staying at home we are seeing an encouraging change in the figures.

I must thank all those who have contributed articles that I hope you will find informative, uplifting and useful. We have tips for gardening in May and June, birds to look for when out exercising and a feature on the mysterious painted stones being found in our woods. The sterling work that is being done by the volunteers at the Coronavirus Selsdon Support group to support our elderly and vulnerable residents is outlined by Andy Stranack, (Selsdon Contact manager).

I firmly believe that the Gazette has a part to play in the fight against the coronavirus. With people having to spend more time at home it can inform, entertain and support our community. Please pass on to your friends and neighbours how to access the Selsdon Gazette on line through our website www.selsdon-residents.co.uk.

Another plea from me is for contributions. These maybe photos taken on your daily walk in the Selsdon area, a poem, ideas for children activities at home, information about our area, reminiscences or recipes. I would particularly like to hear about your experiences coping with the lockdown and about any 'Coronavirus Heroes' who you have encountered (you do not have to mention them by name). All ages can contribute. Please send them to me by email (selsdongazettesra@gmail.com) by 20 May.

Best wishes and I look forward to hearing from you!

Chris Jones

✎ SUBMISSIONS FOR THE JUNE 2020 EDITION SHOULD
BE WITH THE EDITOR NO LATER THAN
20TH MAY - PREFERABLY BEFORE! ✎

SRA NEWS ‘n’ VIEWS

Like most of our residents I have been cleaning and tidying up cupboards that have never seen the light of day for a few years and I found a publication by Ted Frith who was a great historian of Selsdon. It is titled ‘The Story of Selsdon, an Outer London Suburb’. It starts in Roman times through to 1945 with lots of very interesting facts but the main feature that stayed with me was how close a community Selsdon has always been. Starting with just two main buildings, Selsdon Park Farm (now Aldi) and Selsdon Park (now Selsdon Estate Hotel) and growing through time to become a thriving “village”. This strong sense of community has once again come to the fore during the pandemic. A group of volunteers, headed by Contact and the Jubilee Church have been delivering food boxes each week to the vulnerable and housebound, collecting prescriptions and phoning regularly to check up on their needs. The SRA decided we should donate towards the cost of this venture, so £500 was given to help continue this work in the coming weeks.

The Baptist Church is also helping with shopping delivery and I am sure there are others that I have not heard of, but a big thank you to all who help.

Croydon High School for Girls cooked a hot meal in the school kitchens on Friday 17th April and these were delivered to houses with help from the Fire Brigade.

My own next-door neighbours never leave the house without asking if they can help and I know this community spirit is reflected all over Selsdon.

How lucky we are to live in such a supportive place.

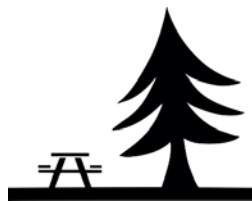
Keep Safe and stay positive

Sheila Childs, SRA Chair

~~

Sunday 6 September - FSW Open Day & Selsdon Community Picnic

Our Friends of Selsdon Wood/Selsdon Residents Association annual event this year is scheduled for Sunday 6th September and, at the moment, we are hoping that the lockdown will be over, and we can celebrate by then being a community, getting together once again. We are waiting until June to decide whether the event can take place and will announce our decision in the July Selsdon Gazette.



We do hope you will be able to join us if the event happens - maybe we will get a bumper attendance if there has not been much else happening between now and then!

Let's stay positive for now and hope we all meet up healthily in September!

Linda Morris, Vice Chairman of SRA

~~

Can you help keep the Selsdon Christmas lights shining brightly?



Without increasing our income we do not know for how many more years we can keep our fantastic Christmas lights. To help raise funds the SRA have joined *Easyfundraising* under the name 'SelsdonChristmaslights'.

If you ever **shop online** you can raise a donation for us, at no cost to you, by using the well trusted 'Easyfundraising' app or site, as your starting point, over 4,000 retailers and other websites (most of your usual shops and websites!) will donate to us when you buy.

Whether you do your weekly supermarket shop online or just the occasional 'special' purchase –to coin a supermarket phrase, 'every little helps' if you use Easyfundraising and support us.

Please tell as many people as possible about this easy and financially

painless way to support our local worthy cause. The more people you can pass the link to, hopefully, the more we will raise. Even better news is that until 19 May if someone signs up using the link below, the Selsdon lights campaign has a chance of winning £500!

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/selsdonchristmaslights/?invite=BF49MF&referral-campaign=c2s>

If you sign up after 19 May please use this link.

https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/selsdonchristmaslights/?utm_campaign=raise-more

WHAT TO DO

1. Use the link above to go to the correct easyfundraising webpage
2. Make a free account
3. Search for a retailer and select
4. Now on the retailers site make your purchases as usual
5. A donation is made by the retailer to Selsdon Lights when you pay for your goods.

Thank you, in advance, for your support – from the SRA Committee

~~

COUNCILLORS' NOTES

SELSDON COMMUNITY PLAN AND THE 'GARAGE' SITE

We are continuing to work to move forward with the Selsdon Community Plan. The aim is to have a plan based on the views of residents and businesses in the area. This will help to attract funding for local projects in the Selsdon area in future.

There has been some movement in relation to the Garage site next to Aldi in Selsdon. In February the site owners met councillors to discuss a new planning application they are proposing. The proposals are similar to previous applications and the developer seemed confident that they were viable. The next step was to put in a planning application. Unfortunately, the

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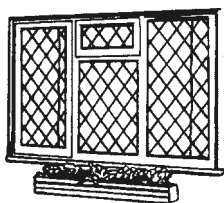
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Coronavirus has intervened, and we are not sure whether this will affect the development. We will have a better idea of this once the lockdown is over.

CORONAVIRUS

We have continued to support residents during the Coronavirus crisis. Council services are still being delivered and we are happy to help if there are any issues.

There was a virtual meeting between Conservative Councillors and senior Council Officers where we discussed how the Council is responding during the crisis. There has been some redeployment of resources as the Council puts in place measures to support residents and businesses during these uncertain times. We fully support the Council's efforts to support vulnerable residents and the NHS as the full impact of the virus is felt in Croydon.

FORESTDALE RECYCLING CENTRE

There are ongoing issues at the Forsestdale Recycling Centre. We often find the Council is not keeping up with emptying the bins, particularly around bank holidays. This results in people leaving piles of recyclables, and rubbish, next to the containers. We report this to the Council and they do eventually come and clear it up.

The Council has now agreed to put up CCTV to monitor activity in the area. We welcome this as it should deter the people who fly tip in the area. However, we will keep up the pressure on the Council to ensure they empty the bins regularly.

UPDATE ON HAWTHORN CRESENT PLANNING APPLICATION

A planning application was submitted to the Council by Brick by Brick (The Council owned property development company) to build 8 new houses on the green space in front of Hawthorn Crescent on the 12th March. The Developers have reduced the number of houses to be built from 9 to 8.

Both Andy and Stuart believe that this is overdevelopment of the area and will create significant traffic issues along Old Fairleigh Road they have therefore referred the application to the planning committee. Both Stuart and Andy continue to work with residents and the resident's association to try and prevent this planning application from moving forward.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

The Selsdon Team of Councillors usually holds surgeries in the Selsdon Centre (next to Sainsbury's) on the first Saturday of the month from 10am – 11.15am (except August). As a result of the Coronavirus crisis the surgeries have been suspended. If you wish to speak to a councillor, please get in touch and we can arrange a virtual meeting using Zoom or similar.

Helen.pollard@croydon.gov.uk

Robert.ward@croydon.gov.uk

Stuart.millson@croydon.gov.uk

Andy.stranack@croydon.gov.uk

PLANNING APPLICATIONS APRIL 2019

20/01424/LP – 1 Chapel View, South Croydon, CR2 7LG

Alterations, erection of a hip-to-gable roof extension, rear dormer and three roof lights along the front roof slope

20/01502/FUL – 49 Dulverton Road, South Croydon CR2 8PJ

Extension to the rear of the building with associated internal alterations at ground floor. Increase to the ridge height of the existing roof to provide an extension at the first floor with internal alterations and the installation of a lift.

20/01470/FUL – 119 Old Farleigh Road, South Croydon CR2 8QD

Demolition of existing bungalow and erect a terrace of 2 x three-bedroom houses and 1 x two-bedroom house with shared access and driveway using the existing entrance from Old Farleigh Road and 2 x one-bedroom house to the rear accessed via the existing entrance and via undercroft.

20/00902/LP – Amenity Land, Hawthorn Crescent, South Croydon CR2 2PD

Erection of eight houses and reconfiguration of car parking, with associated landscaping and servicing

20/01635/HSE – 59 Arundel Avenue, South Croydon CR28BJ

Erection of single storey outbuilding in the rear garden for a self-contained granny annex.

*(Remember that you can use this website to view planning applications
<http://www.localplanningapps.co.uk/croydon/sra/anupdate/planning table.html>)*

MP Chris Philp's Report

Coronavirus update

By Chris Philp, Member of Parliament for
Croydon South: : 020 7219 8026
chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk



The global Coronavirus outbreak will be one of the biggest challenges we face as a community and a country - we need to work together to get through this.

I have been in regular and ongoing contact with the Chief Executive and Chairman of Croydon University Hospital (Mayday) and the Chief Executive of Croydon Council to make sure that we have the resources locally which are needed to fight this epidemic. Croydon University Hospital has substantially increased the size of its Intensive Care facility to respond to the situation (and has not reached the new expanded capacity). The brand-new expanded A&E which opened last year is helping a great deal too. The Government has already provided Croydon Council with £60m to support businesses here via the grant schemes and further financial support to deal more generally with helping vulnerable people and the Coronavirus situation. The NHS is continuing to receive all the resources it needs. A substantial, multi-billion pound package of financial support is in place nationally to help employees, self-employed, smaller businesses with business premises, retail and entertainment businesses (pubs, restaurants etc) of all sizes and charities who are being financially affected by this situation.

I have been playing my part in the national response by working flat out in my areas of Ministerial responsibility in the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office. This has included keeping courts operating where safe to do so, and we have succeeded in moving a huge number of non-criminal hearings online in the last three weeks. We are also ensuring that people being arrested and charged by the Police are still being bailed or remanded into custody as appropriate (although Crown Court jury trials are not currently taking place). At the Home Office, this work has included maintaining Border Security while ensuring that freight continues to come in and out without impediment.

As you will be aware, the Government is now asking for everyone to only leave their homes when absolutely necessary.

We should only leave home to shop for necessities (as infrequently as possible); for one form of exercise a day; for any medical need; to provide care or to help a vulnerable person; for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home.

We all care passionately about Croydon. So many incredible people are out helping in the community during this situation. If you want to lend a hand, then I would urge you to go through the Croydon Voluntary Association. If you can volunteer to help or make donations, please visit their website at cvalive.org.uk/coronavirus/

If you are in the vulnerable category and need urgent or immediate support, please contact me at chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk

Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone working in our fantastic NHS and wider public services during this incredibly difficult time. Our country has come together, and we will certainly beat this terrible disease. Better days lie ahead.

Please note - the advice given in this article was accurate at the time of writing in mid-April. Please visit the gov.uk/coronavirus website for up to date information.

~~

Message from Jack Killian, Police Community Support Officer

Hello Residents,

Firstly, I would like to apologise for no updates recently as it has been over a month since my last email to you all. This is due to me having to self-isolate for 2 weeks and I was unable to send out an update and the crime rate as you could guess has gone down because of the pandemic situation.

PC McCarthy has still been patrolling the ward in my absence as well as our colleagues from our sister wards. They have been out more than ever recently as being outside is better for us than staying in the office in this current climate. Keep safe.

jack.killian@met.police.uk

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Press Release for Immediate Release

Date: 15th April 2020

Contact: Andy Stranack

Telephone: Office – 020 8651 4944 Mobile – 07816 123204

E-mail: Andy@Selsdoncontact.org.uk

A Glimmer of Light Behind the Coronavirus Cloud.

The following report (Week 3 of the Covid-19) outlines how the people of Selsdon, a small town in South London, came together with local businesses, charities and Churches to provide practical support to the most vulnerable in their community during this time of crisis.

By working together, the community partnership has been able to perform some minor miracles: -

- A door delivery service of free 'essentials' shopping bags to hundreds of the most vulnerable residents in the town.
- Over a thousand 'befriending' telephone calls to the lonely and isolated in the area.
- A team of 'street champions' set up so that every street has a good neighbour -willing to offer practical help and support.
- The local Fire brigade offering to do shopping delivery and a prescription collection service.
- A local butcher offering to provide 140 free 'meat packs' to feed the hungry.
- A virtual weekly pub quiz to bring people together.
- A local school opening their kitchens and the caterers making 150 meals to feed the hungry.

All the above has been set up from scratch in just 21 days. On Easter Sunday the Prime Minister talked of the NHS being an organisation powered by love. This report sets out what can be achieved when a whole community is empowered by love.

This project has been led by Andy Stranack who manages the Selsdon Contact Charity – www.selsdoncontact.org.uk and Jaz Potter who works for Croydon Jubilee Church – www.croydonjubilee.co.uk.

The local butcher is – Bashford & co - www.bashfordandco.co.uk

The local school is Croydon High School - www.croydonhigh.gdst.net/

Week 3 of the Covid-19: Building community support from the Grass roots.

I am a local councillor for the Selsdon area of Croydon [population 20,000 – (7,000 70+)], my day job involves managing a charity (Selsdon Contact) that looks after elderly and vulnerable residents living in the local area. The main aim of our charity is to help people remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible. My days are usually taken up making sure that our regular shopping bus is picking up 'neighbours in need' and taking them to the local supermarket, making sure our army of volunteer befrienders are visiting the correct addresses, making sure that outings and coffee mornings are organised, and advising and supporting our team of 270 amazing volunteers.

On the 13th March, I could see the clouds of Covid-19 gathering, I started cancelling the shopping bus, coffee mornings and outings as these were all events where over 70s gathered. I contacted our IT providers to discuss how we could continue providing a befriending service remotely to the 320 clients who use our services and I sat down and thought about how we were going to support our community through the upcoming storm.

At the same time, Jaz Potter a community worker from a local Church was thinking much the same thing. Jaz set up a Facebook group 'Coronavirus Selsdon Support'. This group quickly grew to 500 members, each with offers to volunteer and with almost 500 ways in which to help.

Below is a summary of what we have learnt and achieved in the first three weeks of lockdown: -

WhatsApp and Facebook are great tools if you want to help your neighbours or the street you live in but to help a wider area you need more structure in place?

The Facebook page (Coronavirus Selsdon Support) generated a lot of interest and now has 922 members it has a corresponding WhatsApp group (0796073858) – 106 members and birthed a webpage www.selsdoncovid19.co.uk. From the initial interest a working group was gathered that comprised the local churches, charities and businesses. A plan was agreed that in week one of lockdown, Contact would identify its most vulnerable clients and the group would ask for food donations from the public. Selsdon Sainsbury agreed to put collection points in their store and Contact phoned all their clients and gave them a rating: -

Red = No access to family living close by and no access to Internet
Amber = Access to either family living close by or access to the Internet
Green = Family living close by and access to the Internet

This exercise identified 140 clients that needed a general bag of shopping

in the first week. It was agreed that the bags would be free for each client, but a note would be put in bags asking for donations to be made to Contact if the recipients wished to. We were able to use the financial controls and structures of an established charity to collect and bank donations. In the first week, using a mix of existing volunteers and new recruits, we were able to deliver 140 shopping bags to our most vulnerable residents.



Review what you are doing regularly?

After week 1, Jaz and I sat down and reviewed the first week of operation. We identified the following issues:

Donations of food from the public had not matched the amount of food that was needed for our clients.

- The Trustees of Contact had to subsidise the project by £800 in the first week to be able to purchase food for the clients. However, as the week went on cash donations started to come in from the public, these donations came to £915 by the end of the first week.
- As the week had gone on, it was getting increasingly difficult to buy items in bulk for the food bags. We had attempted to purchase items from local supermarkets and wholesalers (Macro).
- The number of clients needing help during the week had increased to around 350 people.
- We had enquiries from about 1,000 residents who wanted to help our effort but were not being used by the current project.
- The Council were stating that they were going to set up a food delivery hub in Selsdon library (we did not want to duplicate their work). Ironically, the Council has never set up a hub!!!
- Croydon Neighbourhood Care (CNCA) had ceased running their DBS service so we had no way of checking the new volunteers against safeguarding guidelines.
- The Local Authority had advised us to plan for the worst and assume that both clients and volunteers would become sick.
- Bashford Butchers had agreed to donate 140 meat packs to deliver to our clients the following week.

Adapt your plan as you go

- Due to these issues we decided to adapt our plans for the coming weeks. We would continue to deliver 140 food bags to our most vulnerable clients for another week.

- At the same time, we would transition to a street champion model of working
 - ❖ Our (DBS checked) experienced volunteers would be the main point of contact for our expanding client list of 350 residents. Each volunteer would phone 19 clients /week to check on their needs and have a chat.
 - ❖ We would aim to have a couple of street champions in place for every road in Selsdon. If the phone calls resulted in practical tasks that needed undertaking, these would be covered by the new street champions.
 - ❖ The experienced (DBS) volunteers would be checking with clients regularly to check that tasks were completed, and that clients were happy.
 - ❖ Any financial transactions would still be made through Selsdon Contact with proper financial controls and audit trail.
- By the end of the second week we had identified 'Street Champions' to cover most of the roads in Selsdon.
- We had delivered a further 140 bags of food to the most vulnerable residents in Selsdon.
- 15 experienced (DBS) volunteers were able to work remotely and access Contact's client files from home (many thanks must go to our IT supplier QDOS Computer consulting based in Purley- who have done a lot of pro bono work to set this up).
- A new website was launched www.selsdoncovid19.co.uk , this gave residents information about street champions and local services.
- As news about our service was published more donations came in including a £500 cheque from the Selsdon Residents Association.

Week 3 – The latest update

- Last week 350 vulnerable residents got a befriending call from a volunteer at Contact. This led to hundreds of actions being undertaken by local street champions.
- Cllr. Stuart Milson agreed to pay for a leaflet to go through every door letting people know who their street champion is. These leaflets have now been delivered to every household by volunteers.

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- Croydon High School asked to get involved with the project and will open their kitchen and get their catering staff to cook and chill 150 meals for us at a cost of £2 a meal. These will be then be delivered to our most vulnerable residents by volunteers. Croydon High have agreed to do this every week until the lock down ends.
- The rotary club have donated £1,200 to cover the cost of the food.



~~

VE Day 75

When VE (Victory in Europe) Day dawns on 8th May 2020 it will be 75 years since the guns fell silent at the end of the war in Europe. Years of carnage and destruction had come to an end and millions of people took to the streets and pubs to celebrate peace, mourn their loved-ones and to hope for the future, but not forgetting those still in conflict until 15th August when it was announced that Japan had surrendered unconditionally to the Allies, effectively ending World War II.

The 75th anniversary will provide our nation, and our friends around the world, with an opportunity to reflect on the enormous sacrifice, courage and determination of people from all walks of life who saw us through this dark and terrifying period. These people were the members of the Armed Forces and Merchant Navy from



many countries who gave their lives or returned home injured in body and mind, the hard-working women and men who operated the factories, mines, shipyards and farms, and ARP wardens, police officers, doctors, nurses, fireman, local defence volunteers and others who toiled day and night selflessly on the home front during difficult frightening and uncertain times. *(This echoes our present fight overcoming the coronavirus and our thanks to NHS, social care, pharmacy, police, fire brigade, transport, supermarket, refuse collectors, delivery and postal workers and all the*

others that I have not mentioned.)

To commemorate this important time, 'VE Day 75' was being organised, a three-day international celebration that would have taken place from 8th May to 10th May 2020. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic these community celebrations will not take place then but could, possibly, be moved to the weekend of 15th-16th August so that VE Day and VJ (Victory over Japan) Day could be jointly celebrated.

Let us hope that we get the opportunity to remember the enormous sacrifices that were made at home and abroad and to joyously celebrate as people did 75 years ago, the arrival of peace in Europe.

~~

Birds Under Lockdown, May 2020

John Birkett, RSPB Croydon Local Group

We live in troubled times and, at the time of writing, many activities are still being curtailed to save lives during the coronavirus (covid-19) outbreak. We don't know when the ban on gatherings and meetings will end or for how long we can only go out for essential purposes such as buying food or exercising locally.

To try and relieve the limitations on going outdoors and to keep people amused, the RSPB Croydon Local Group launched the Croydon Lockdown Bird Watch in late March. We asked people to record all the bird species they could see or hear in, from or over their gardens each week. This would give them something to do while confined to barracks and help us to get a good idea of the birds appearing in our suburban landscape. By the time you are reading this, the first swifts should be well on their way back from wintering around central Africa. They have a strong affinity with man-made structures, often nest in eaves. So, this is one species that many should hopefully be adding to their lists even if we cannot go out.



Indeed, some of our summer visitors have been noted from homes; early arrivals have included chiffchaffs, swallows and house martins. Apart

from the ubiquitous robins, blackbirds, blue tits, magpies and crows, many other species have been appearing in gardens. These include great spotted and green woodpeckers, song thrushes, nuthatches, chaffinches, greenfinches and goldfinches. Diminutive goldcrests have been belting out their high-pitched song but are overshadowed by the wren's loud voice. Sparrow hawks and kestrels have been observed patrolling the skies, while looking to the heavens has rewarded some with views of buzzards and red kites. Virtually unheard of in these parts 20 years ago, the latter two species are now seen regularly, and several pairs of buzzards are now potentially resident in our woodlands. And, of course, listening out after dark has revealed the presence of tawny owls in various places.



(Great spotted woodpecker in garden by David Malins)

We all hope that before long we will be able to freely go outdoors and enjoy nature to the full. I know I will miss going out to a wood early and listening to the dawn chorus build up with more and more species joining in (with perhaps a few owls making their presence known before going to sleep for the day). A lesser version can still be enjoyed from the safety of home, however. Why not check it out for yourself?

If (and only if) you live close to one of Croydon's open spaces, you might be able to visit there and see what birds are around during your permitted exercise walk or cycle. A few other species such as skylark and whitethroat or migrating whinchat and wheatear could be on offer. And it is not just about the birds. Butterflies are now on the wing and a few people have seen bats flying around at dusk.

You could email us (johnbirkett@hotmail.co.uk) with information about what you see and hear, or if you might like to participate in the Bird Watch. Our group's activities are currently suspended but keep checking our website (<http://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/croydon/>) to find out when they are likely to start again.

Whatever you do and wherever you are, please stay safe and adhere to guidelines, remaining at home and not making any unnecessary journeys.

A Time for Gardening – May / June 2020



..... strange times continue, but there are positives. Time to appreciate what nature is doing. The daffodils, tulips etc were beautiful. Cowslips and bluebells are scenting the air. The birdsong has been gorgeous, possibly more audible due to the lack of vehicles and aeroplanes. There also seems to be more butterflies fluttering around, perhaps they are enjoying the decreased pollution levels. It has been very pleasurable to walk around the immediate neighbourhood and to enjoy all that has been happening in the different gardens.

Garden centres were closed as part of the 'lockdown' so here are a few online garden centres as delivery services are running almost as usual.

Crocus.co.uk – plants, tools and seeds Tel – 01344 578 000

Thompson-morgan.com – seeds, tools, compost, plants Tel – 0333 400 0033

Organicplants.co.uk – edibles Tel – 01345 740 553

Marshallsgarden.com – ornamental plants and edibles Tel – 0844 557 6700

Hooksgreenherbs.com – herb plants and seeds Tel – 07977 883 810

Hayloft.co.uk – wide variety of plants Tel - 0844 335 1088

RHS.org.uk – a very wide range of plants, both ornamental and edibles, seeds etc.

If you would like further advice, please contact us via the editor or via our website www.sandersteadhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

There is also a virtual Spring Show to view on the website.

Jobs to do in the garden in May/June –

The short list ... Snipping, spraying and supporting

- Snip off and spray your roses. ...
- Start feeding and pinch out tomatoes. ...
- Feed baskets and containers. ...
- Offer your support! ...
- Lift tulip bulbs. ...
- Snip, sow and dry herbs.

The Long List ...

- ~ Check plants daily and water them if the soil is dry – especially newly planted trees and shrubs that are still getting established.
- ~ Use blinds or apply shade paint to prevent your greenhouse from

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- overheating. Remember to open vents and doors on warm days.
- ~ Harden off and move hanging baskets and containers growing on in the greenhouse into their final position. If your hanging basket plants become leggy, trim off the excess to encourage bushy new growth.
 - ~ Lift and divide clumps of snowdrops and bluebells once the leaves start to yellow.
 - ~ Lift and divide overcrowded clumps of bulbs. Wait for bulb foliage to die down naturally before cutting back.
 - ~ Pinch out the tips of fuchsias to encourage a bushy habit and more flowers.
 - ~ Start to pick sweet peas as soon as they flower to encourage more blooms.
 - ~ Dead-head the roses if they're repeat-flowering types. Otherwise, leave the seed heads on for decoration.
 - ~ Dead-head and cut back oriental poppies after flowering. Cutting them close to ground level will stimulate new foliage.
 - ~ Keep the compost of newly planted container potatoes moist, but take care not to overwater, as this compacts the soil, squeezing out the oxygen, and prevents the developing tubers from swelling.
 - ~ Pinch out any side shoots from your tomato plants. You can pot these up to create new tomato plants. Start to feed once the first truss is setting fruit.
 - ~ Harvest salad crops, and resow every 2 weeks for a constant supply of tasty leaves.
 - ~ Keep an eye on your onion and garlic. When the leaves start to yellow and die back, they're ready to harvest.
 - ~ If there hasn't been much rain, raise your mower blades to reduce stress on the grass.
 - ~ Use water butts as much as possible and water your containers and baskets well in hot weather. Start to feed them with a balanced liquid fertiliser every 2 to 4 weeks.
 - ~ Check plants in your greenhouse daily and water them if the soil is dry. Damp down the greenhouse on hot days to increase humidity and deter red spider mites.

Most of all, take time to enjoy your garden.

Bill, Ben and Little Weed

What is there to like about Selsdon (Pt 2)

I contributed to the March Gazette with a brief list of things that I liked about Selsdon. Little did I realise the tsunami that was about to overwhelm us. Although currently there is no reason, or need, to get to London Bridge or Gatwick in less than an hour or pop up to the high street for a cheeky Tapas or Fish Friday our local essential shops are still open, working under difficult conditions to provide us with as normal a service as possible. Whilst the Selsdon Tennis Club is no longer providing me with a welcome, almost pastoral soundtrack, now with a north wind blowing, I can hear the trams in the distance from Gravel Hill. I am aware also of a surge in public spiritedness. Strangers now say hello or wave instead of keeping heads down. Littleheath Woods has been busy with new visitors enjoying their hour of exercise and discovering (or rediscovering) our wonderful woodland.

At the time of writing the Bluebells are rolling out their sweet-smelling carpets in a welcome to spring. Covid-19 support groups have emerged and evolved to help and assist the elderly and vulnerable. A local initiative The Selsdon Hub is receiving aid and voluntary help from Selsdon Contact, the Selsdon Centre for the Retired, Monks Hill Food Stop, Selsdon churches, GP surgeries, Vintage 62, Sainsbury and Aldi and had been able to provide 280 food parcels in two weeks to local and vulnerable residents. They now have a network of Street Champions who have contacted all residents on their street offering support in delivering shopping, helping with collecting prescriptions, and providing a telephone befriending service for lonely and isolated residents.

To keep up to date with the latest developments you can join the following groups: Coronavirus Selsdon Support on Facebook; or Selsdon Covid-19 Support on WhatsApp.

There is much to be grateful for, living in Selsdon.

Ian Leggatt

Chair of Friends of Littleheath Woods

Committee member, Selsdon Residents Association

Quarantine and Infectious Diseases

The principles of quarantine are nothing new. The earliest recorded uses date back to circa 1500 B.C. as can be seen from the transcription of the Hebrew scripts into the Old Testament of our Christian Bible. In Chapter 5 of the Book of Numbers:

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Command the sons of Israel that they send away from the camp every leper and everyone having a discharge and everyone who is unclean because of a dead person...”.

Just as the Lord had spoken to Moses, thus the sons of Israel did.

The word “quarantine” (from the Italian word quaranta – 40) came into use as a result of the bubonic plague which spread around Asia and Europe in the middle ages. Ships and people would be isolated for 40 days before being allowed into a port or other location.



February's main news stories were about the spread of coronavirus in China and the British passengers quarantined on the cruise ship, Diamond Princess, at the Japanese port of Yokohama. In the first week of March another cruise ship, the Grand

Princess, was quarantined off the coast of Los Angeles, also due to an outbreak of coronavirus.

Until the 20th century introduction of air travel, killer diseases were transported around the world via ships, their crew, passengers and cargoes. According to the World Health Organisation, even in recent times, there have been more than 100 disease outbreaks associated with ships since 1970. So, coronavirus is just another one. All be it, one of the most serious in our lifetimes!

Quarantine has been an important measure in helping to prevent, or at least reduce the spread of contagious diseases. However, mass tourism, air travel, the ease and speed of international travel now limit its effectiveness. This has been clearly shown by the rapid spread of coronavirus around the world, including here in the UK.

Historically, in the UK, Customs officers at our ports and airports have played a vital role in preventing the spread of contagious diseases. And how do I know?

Because in 1963 I moved from Selsdon to Dover, the busiest lorry/car ferry port in the world. I worked there as a Customs Preventive Officer for the next 13 years.

Whilst our primary role was the detection and prevention of smuggling, we were also tasked with implementing the initial health controls applied to all ships/aircraft, etc. arriving from a foreign destination.

This responsibility was delegated circa 1750, to what then became known as Officers of Royal Customs and Quarantine. No medical inspections were conducted by them, but they required that Masters of ships provide details of their voyage, cargo and crew, and to swear an oath that there was no sickness on board. If the Customs officer was not satisfied the ship would then be subject to quarantine. This could be quite harsh. It was not unknown for ships with suspect cargoes, or from suspect foreign destinations, to have the cargo or even the ship set on fire!

We have heard much of late, about the importance of keeping at least 6 feet away from other persons. Nothing new! The Customs officers obviously did not want to catch the plague. Accordingly, the Customs cutter would come alongside the ship from foreign lands and require the ship's Master to swear his oath on a "Quarantine Bible". This was placed inside a metal box fixed at the end of a long pole.

The quarantine regulations evolved over very many years as new diseases were carried around the world, such as cholera and yellow fever. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that from 1788 every ship liable to quarantine had to fly a yellow flag or at night a light, at the top of the main mast when arriving within 4 leagues of the British or Irish coast.

Old habits die hard. As a trainee Preventive Officer in Dover, my first duty at the start of a shift was to go up our watch tower and scan the harbour through our powerful binoculars (claimed to be a war time prize from a German submarine!). Were there any yellow flags or night-time lights indicating ships awaiting Customs permission to proceed into the docking area?

And this permission would not be granted until my senior officer had been on board and taken a written declaration from the ship's Master. So not much has changed, but as my boss's bag carrier, at least I did not have to lug around the bible on its long pole!

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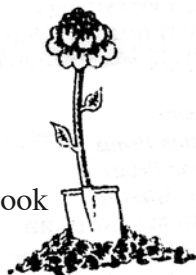
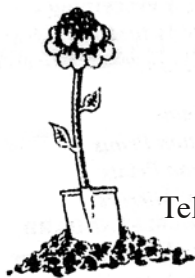
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Keeping a private diary/journal



I am sure in the future, once this crisis is over, people will ask you about this time. If you don't already, now might be the time to start noting down your thoughts, even if you never show it to anyone, as it will help to jog your memory.

There are many benefits to keeping a note of your life:

You can record special events.

A diary is like a completely personal, written photo, recording the things only you want to, in as much or as little detail as you like.

Normal is interesting too.

You might think that normal days are boring, until you start writing, such as noting funny remarks or interesting things. The small things you might otherwise forget.

You can record your thoughts and feelings.

Noting how things made you feel on certain days or in certain places will help keep your memory filled with more detail. **This is a kind of therapy after bad days.**

Getting your feelings written down on paper feels much better than keeping them to yourself. It can also help you think about things more clearly, and maybe even help decide how you feel about things

You can improve your writing skills.

Write in any way you want. Brief notes, poems, essays even make up your own secret code - whatever! Seeing your writing develop is very rewarding and your handwriting can be as messy as you like!

Why not try a foreign language?

Practise your language skills and improve your vocab, without worrying about mistakes!

Appreciate your successes and mistakes.

Sometimes, we don't appreciate what we achieve – writing down a challenge you overcame and how you did it makes you realise this! On the other hand, you can understand things you could have done better, if you have to write something down and consider it.

Leave the future something to look back on

In a year or so, you can see how you have developed as a person. If you revisit a place, you can read what you saw or felt last time. This can be totally for you and you alone. I can recommend Radio 4's 'My teenage diary' (find online via BBCRadioSounds) to see what some famous people decide to share of their past selves.

(Article thanks to learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org)

~~

Publicly share your experiences

In the past, many people regularly kept personal handwritten diaries, where they recorded the day's events and their observations. Without diarists like Anne Frank and Samuel Pepys, we wouldn't know much about the personal side of our national history.



Recently due to the isolation of 'Covid-19 lockdown' many people who might have previously avoided modern technology or who might have kept their thoughts private have started using social media to connect with the world. Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook etc – the list of platforms seems endless.

These posts and blogs have been helpful to many and can create a sense of togetherness but sadly even the most profound and useful of these words may be lost to future generations. **This is an extraordinary time and people of the future will want to know what it was like and how our lives changed.**

Whereas the printed word is protected (such as this Gazette which has been in print for nearly 70 years) by being stored at The British Library, electronic words only found on the internet can, over time be lost, corrupted or misused. Thankfully there is a safe and secure place designed to hold people's thoughts on their lives.

The Mass Observation Archive (www.massobs.org.uk) specialises in collecting material about everyday life in Britain held in the care of the **University of Sussex**. Since the 1930s, ordinary people have written to 'Mass Observation' about their experiences of key events as well as about their everyday lives. There are no criteria for becoming a writer.

They are currently creating a public record of the pandemic from personal points of view. Can you help? If so, you can choose to:

- a) just respond to the one off Covid-19 diary plea **www.massobs.org.uk/images/covid19_guidance_.pdf**
- b) also join the longer term 'Panel' of writers who respond to more 'Directives' which are particular diary headings (usually 3-4 a year) on a range of topics such as gender and Brexit. (It is worth considering that what we may dismiss as the trivia of our everyday lives may be fascinating to a future generation. Learning what people place on their mantelpieces being a good example!)
- c) just take part in the annual survey in May*
- d) check all the details on the website and see their guidance for some points you may wish to consider before sending in your contribution to the Archive. This is important to protect your privacy and ensure that your contribution can be included.

As well as the Covid-19 Diary call The Mass Observation Archive is also conducting its ***annual diary writing day on the 12th May 2020**. This is the 10th anniversary of the modern project to create a snapshot of life across the country. It is likely that this 12th May will be unlike those captured over the last 10 years whether or not the UK is still in lockdown. This can be done as an individual or as a group. For children this could consist of drawings. [For more details visit the 12th May page](#) on the massobs website. (www.massobs.org.uk)

The more people who take part the more accurate a slice of real life will appear in all its many colours and complexities and struggles. Best wishes to you all.

Janet Sharp

~~

Fairy Stones in Littleheath Woods

Late in March we started to notice the odd painted stone in Littleheath Woods. Placed in a tree or on a log they were relatively nondescript. One of the first stones had just 'South Croydon Rock' painted on it. Then one

with 'CR2 Rocks' was found. By the end of March more gaily painted stones were beginning to be found, some with Mr Men figures, abstract colours or beetles and then Rainbows. Dennis the Menace and slogans such as 'Keep Safe' and 'Love' appeared. Fast forward to the Easter Weekend and scores of stones were appearing overnight. Easter Bunnies and 'NHS' were to be found, more rainbows, fish and, strangely, eyes, and many flowers. Some fairy stones disappeared overnight to resurface in a different position the next day, some are still missing but many more kept appearing. The Fairies were very busy. At the time of writing the Fairies have now moved in with Fairy doors at the bases of venerable trees and attendant stones lining the approach to the front door.

If in May, and we are still allowed, do come and visit Littleheath Woods and look for the Fairy Stones and Doors. If we are confined to indoors then you could always check out a photographic record of most of the stones at our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Littleheath-Woods-433674263471968/>

or search for Friends of Littleheath Woods in Facebook.

Here is a taster of the selection on our Facebook page:



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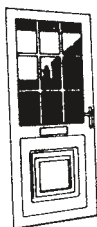
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A Time for Bluebells

During my daily walks in our local woods I was delighted to notice the bluebells slowly emerging. I was aware that there were different types of bluebell, but I decided to look more closely into this.

The UK's woodlands are home to almost 50% of the world's population of the bluebell. The native bluebell, (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), also known as common/English/British bluebell, wood bell and wild hyacinth, is an early flowering plant that naturally occurs in the UK. It appears in ancient woodlands and along woodland edges in April and May. Millions of bulbs can exist in just one wood, giving rise to the violet-blue 'carpets' that are such a springtime joy to walk through. This early flowering allows them to make the most of the sunlight that is still able to make it to the forest floor habitat, before the canopy becomes too thick. Native bluebells are protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.

The Spanish bluebell was introduced to UK gardens more than 300 years ago and is more vigorous than our native bluebell, so can outcompete it for resources like light and space. It can hybridise with our native, too, producing fertile plants that show a whole range of mixed features from both species. Over time, this hybridisation changes the genetic makeup of our native species, diluting its characteristics, weakening it and potentially evolving it into something else.

How can you tell them apart?

Native bluebells have

- narrow leaves, about 1-1.5cm wide
- deep violet-blue (sometimes white), narrow, tubular-bell flowers, with tips that curl back
- flowers on one side of the stem
- distinctly drooping stems
- a sweet scent
- cream-coloured pollen inside.



Whilst Spanish bluebells have

- broad leaves, about 3cm wide
- pale blue (often white or pink), conical-bell flowers, with spreading and open tips
- flowers all around the stem
- upright stems
- no scent
- blue- or pale green-coloured pollen inside



(With thanks to these websites woodlandtrust.org.uk and wildlifetrusts.org.uk)

CJ

The River Wandle - Croydon's buried treasure



Who knows that Croydon was founded on a river? There is little evidence of it today as much was hidden underground in Victorian times. However, a short delve into Croydon's history shows how important it was. The name for Croydon was 'Crogedene' which in Anglo-Saxon which means 'valley where wild saffron

grows'. The valley is that of the River Wandle. Crocus may have been introduced by the Romans for making a dye. Certainly, in its later history the Wandle's pure and plentiful spring water meant that it was a natural choice of location for washing, dyeing and production of textiles.

The Wandle, begins as rainwater which is filtered/ percolated through chalk downland, (e.g. from Caterham and Riddlesdown) and so at its start is naturally very pure and rich in minerals and remains at a fairly constant temperature year-round. It originally emerged over ground in South Croydon (by the former Swan and Sugar Loaf pub) being locally known from this point as 'The Croydon Bourne'. It then travelled along Southbridge Road to Old Town where it divided into smaller channels and was joined by other springs and tributaries.



Before modern drainage and intense building up of the area the grounds of the Old Palace (which was one of a series of palaces of the Archbishops of Canterbury held from before Domesday, over a 1000 years ago, until 1760) and Scarbrook Hill had springs engineered with ponds, streams and canals where fish swam, especially trout.

Croydon Parish Church (now known as The Minster – see image) had to be careful where they buried bodies in their graveyard to ensure that they didn't reappear when the water level rose!

Croydon, as well as being home to clergy, was from its earliest days a prosperous market town, its water being used for tanning leather and brewing. The oldest brewery recorded was one based on what is now the southern High Street. In 1586 the first recorded brewer was John King, who made a successful brewhouse with yards, orchards, and gardens. The heart of the brewery was the well, of unknown depth believed to

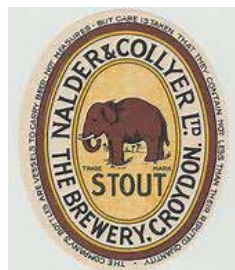


be kept full by spring water. Brewing on this site was continuous for some 350 years with various owners until, in 1936, it ended with the closure of Nalder and Collyer's brewery. It was famous for its 'Porter' drink and for giving a famous elephant a taste for beer. The large brewery was

a South Croydon landmark which disappeared with its demolition in 1964, the lofty chimney came down. There is no trace of the brewery left on the site, which is now occupied by the massive Leon House and its precincts.

The Industrial Revolution began about 1760 and the population of Croydon began to expand rapidly. By this time the Archbishop of Canterbury and his retinue complaining of the damp and the encroaching neighbours, decamped to Addington. By 1780 the Old Palace was sold off and might then easily have been knocked down and a brewery put in its place. But the buildings escaped demolition in exchange for the indignity of becoming, successively, a linen printers, a bleaching works and then a laundry.

As Croydon's population grew, the river became little better than an open sewer and was culverted (placed underground) from 1840 after outbreaks of typhoid and cholera. The culverts lead from South Croydon, passing under what is now the flyover, to the water meadows of Frogs Mead and Stubbs Mead, which were purchased to become Wandle Park in 1890. Local springs were used to form a central boating lake and supposedly 30,000 attended the opening. In its final years the boating lake was drying up so in 1967, a concrete culvert was constructed, the



river was diverted into it, and the old riverbed buried and forgotten until its grand reinstatement in 2012.

Wandle Park (an easy walk from central Croydon) is now the very beautiful start of the marked River Wandle Walk. See www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk/map/

This is a lovely 12.5 mile cycle and pedestrian trail along the river to the Thames in Wandsworth. It is full of beauty, history and interesting places to visit, play and eat and well worth exploring at any time.

There is more to tell at another time about the special ecology of the river Wandle, its place in our country's history, its recent return to health and what you can find on the River Walk. The Wandle is worth knowing, valuing and protecting.

Janet Sharp

(Article was formed with information found at edithsstreets.blogspot.com, London's Lost Rivers - Book by Paul Talling and Journal of the Brewery History Society by Herbert Shaw, www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk)

~~

Food for Free

As we all nurse our seedlings in anticipation of a bumper crop of fruit and vegetables this summer, we should not forget that there is 'food for free' on our doorstep. There are so many plants we can use if we have a bit of knowledge.

One of the delights of late spring and early summer is the sight of elder trees laden with fragrant white flowers. They



are common in woods, hedgerows and wasteland. I gather handfuls of flower heads in order to make a refreshing delicious elderflower drink. Elderflowers can also be used to make a good sparkling wine.

The white sweet-scented flower heads should be gathered carefully so as not to disturb the pollen and should not be washed before use. (It is important to sieve the cordial once prepared).

Elderflower Cordial

1 lemon (grate the rind and slice)

25g citric acid

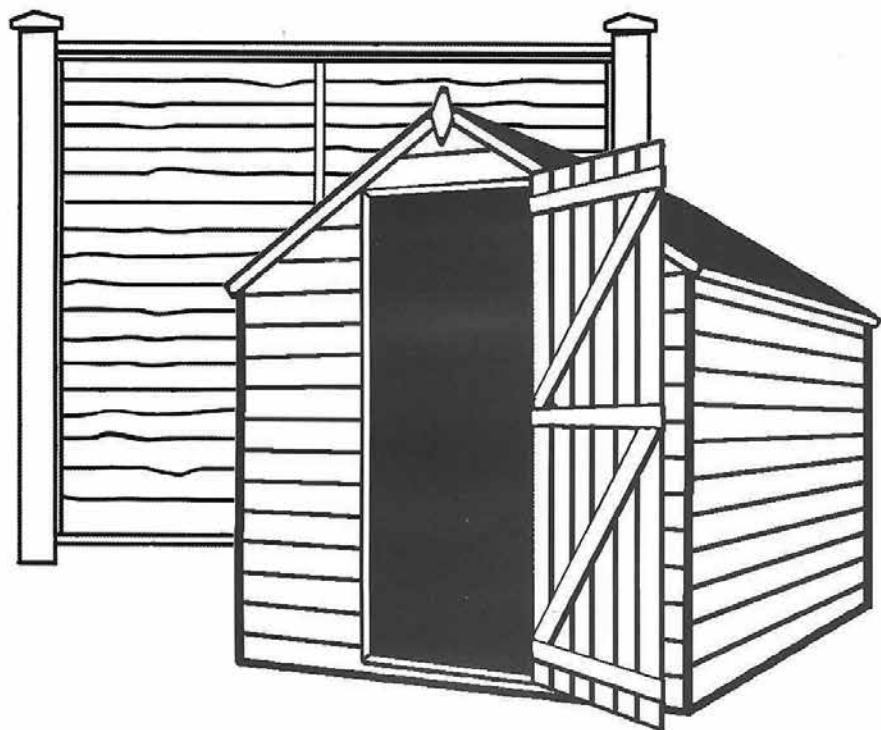
1 kg sugar

10 large elderflower heads

750ml boiling water

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Place the sugar in a large bowl and pour on the boiling water. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Add the lemon rind and slices, the citric acid and elderflower heads. Leave for at least 24 hours, stirring occasionally. Sieve through fine muslin and pour into clean bottles with screw tops. I use plastic bottles so that I can freeze the cordial. This gives it a much longer life. To use as a refreshing drink, dilute with water and add a slice of lemon. The cordial goes well with gooseberries if you are making a gooseberry crumble or pour a little over ice cream.

Gooseberry and Elderflower Preserve

For each 500g gooseberries

4 elderflower heads

500ml water

500g sugar

Top and tail the gooseberries and put in a pan with the water. Simmer for half an hour, mashing the fruit into a pulp. Add the sugar and stir until dissolved. Add the elderflower in a muslin bag and boil rapidly until the setting point is reached. Remove flowers and pot in the normal way

You can also make a cordial from gorse flowers, but they are a bit prickly to gather so as, yet I have not tried that! There are lots more plants which we can use but if you are going to start foraging you need to get a good book with good illustrations so that you can identify the plants. I also gather wild garlic in early Summer, and I have heard of cases where people have mistaken lily of the valley for wild garlic. Yes, I have seen lily of the valley growing in the woods, but I think I can tell the difference!

Marie Fuggle

~~

Covid-19 Scams



There are numerous examples of people going out of their way to help others in this crisis but, unfortunately, we must be aware that some criminals will take this opportunity for criminal activity. Here are some of the scams and what you can do to protect yourself.

- Buying online. Many criminals are advertising online for face masks, covid-19 test kits and hand sanitisers. These are very often either fake

or non-existent. Only use sites that you trust and be especially careful if payment is requested by bank transfer.

- Doorstep fraud. There have been cases of criminals offering to do shopping or other jobs for those self-isolating and then disappearing with cash or bank cards. Only accept help from friends, neighbours or from organisations that you can trust.
- Moving bank account scams. Criminals get in touch and claim to be from your bank. They explain that your account has been compromised and they would like to move it to a safe account. Remember no bank would ask you to do this, so it is a scam.
- HMRC scams. If anybody purporting to be from HMRC sends an email about a tax rebate/goodwill payment for NHS staff do not click on any links given.

Please do take care

~~

The Rainbow Children Poem

This poem has become a social media sensation, shared all around the world. Gemma Peacock, a mother of two, was inspired to write the poem after going for a walk with her sons and seeing the many rainbow pictures displayed in windows. With schools closed due to the coronavirus outbreak, the rainbow has become a symbol of hope for many children across the country. The poem describes a time 'when the world stood still' and when people 'risked their lives so others could be saved'.



Gemma said 'I wrote this poem as I don't want these children to feel like the lost generation, the kids who missed out on schooling and were at a disadvantage.

Life will be hard for a lot of these children and their families, but they'll also be the children who had time to think, time to heal and time to dream. They'll be the 'rainbow children'.'

The Rainbow Children by Gemma Peacock

The history books will talk of now,
That time the world stood still.
When every family stayed at home,
Waved out from windowsills-
At those they loved but could not hold,
Because they loved them so.
Yet, whilst they did
They noticed all the flowers start to grow.

The sun came out, they can recall,
And windows, rainbows filled.
They kicked a football in their yards,
Until the night drew in.
They walked each day but not too close,
That time the world stood still.
When people walked straight down the roads,
That once the cars did fill.

They saw that people became ill,
They knew the world was scared.
But whilst the world stood still they saw,
How much the whole world cared.
They clapped on Thursdays from their doors,
They cheered for the brave.
For people who would risk their lives,
So others could be saved.

The schools closed down, they missed their friends,
They missed their teachers so.
Their Mam's and Dad's helped with their work,
They helped their minds to grow.
The parents used to worry that,
As schools were put on hold,
Their children wouldn't have the tools,
They'd need as they grew old.

But history books will talk of them,
Now adults, fully grown.
Those little boys and girls back then,
The ones who stayed at home.
They'll tell you that they fixed this world,
of all they would fulfil.
The RAINBOW children building dreams,
They'd dreamed whilst time stood still.

Something for Bored Children at Home – Wild Art Competition



The RSPB and the Cameron Bepolka Trust have an exciting competition for talented young artists. They would like children to create a piece of art inspired by nature. There are two categories to choose from. Real life is for entries using the more traditional approach of paints, pastels, acrylics, pens and pencil. The Go Wild category is for those who want to experiment with textiles, sculpture, recycled and eco-friendly materials, collages – anything goes!

The competition is split into three age groups: under 8s, 8 – 12, and 13 years and over. To enter email a photo of your artwork to competitions@rspb.org.uk with the heading WildArt 2020 competition.

The winner for each category in each age group will receive an art gift voucher worth £100. There are also runner-up prizes. Closing date Friday 28 August 2020.

~~



We welcome your letters so do **please get in touch** if you have something to share with Selsdon residents.

Please remember to state your name, address, contact number and publication anonymity

requirements in **all** correspondence to the Editor. Anonymity can be granted on request, but anonymously sent letters/e-mails will not be published. Publication dates may mean a delay between receipt of your letters and when they appear.

~~

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the most opportune article “Get out in the Local Countryside” in the April issue. I had been to most of them – Selsdon Wood being my home walking ground - but not to the Sanderstead Plantation.

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Site Clearance

The Plantation turned out much more interesting than I'd expected - I thought it was just a thinnish strip of woods along the Addington Road. I followed a circular path round the wood and was particularly impressed with the views to the North towards the centre of Croydon. Unfortunately, these were obscured by several trees which reminded me of the 1987 Hurricane that cleared a lot of vistas we'd forgotten existed. I'm not sure what the answer is here, perhaps just clearing the low scrub and low side growth on the trees might reveal more of the view? Anyway, I had an enjoyable time and thank you again for providing the background on these woods.

(Name and address supplied)

~~

Dear Editor

In these times of loneliness and isolation, there is a tiny ray of comfort for those who do not have family or friends. There is a charity called "SILVERLINE" and it will arrange for a phone call to an older person, once a week. People can volunteer to be the one to phone. It could be a lifeline in present times to someone isolated.

SILVERLINE. 0800 470 8090

~~

Dear Editor,

If this can be of any use to you, please cut and slash as you feel fit. The pleasure for me is just writing it. Stay safe.

For four weeks now, we have been at home, and should this tale see the light of day, it could be several weeks longer. Our son brings our groceries each week, because we are in the vulnerable grouping. I am so glad that the weather is wonderful, as I don't like him having to queue for ages to get into the store. He says it's fine, his office contacts him by text and he can sort out problems while standing, waiting to enter the supermarket. Wish my work had been like that, instead of being a human sardine on the underground. Sometimes it feels as if we are on a "self-catering" holiday and we truly have our home comforts too. We

have our garden and potter around in it, on and off all day, and every morning we share a ten-minute workout with the young and energetic Mr. Wicks. There is Zumba for the elderly and Tai Chi and yoga too.

Thank Heavens for learning roughly how to work the computer, although it is always worrying, when paying for things online. There are museums to virtually walk around, and concerts to attend, but should the little word "subscription" be attached, the old fear of paying an unknown face, makes my hand bypass the sign. My hand may hover, but I make sure it doesn't give in to the temptation. Well that has not happened so far, but there is always such a long queue for the 'Uffizi' museum in Florence or 'The National Gallery' here or 'The Hermitage' in Russia, yet alone such treats as 'The Museum of Lights' in Las Vegas, that I will not be able to fight off the virtual urge to see these places, for much longer.

Then there is the problem of who you are locked down with. It is not possible to storm out in a rage when you are locked down. More than 50 years ago it would have seemed idyllic to be locked up with Mr. 'Him Indoors', but that was before the imperfections in one another became noticeable. Today for instance! I was having a shower and realised the tube of shower gel was nearly empty. So, I yelled from the door of the shower to 'Him Indoors', could he find me a pair of scissors to cut off the end the tube, please? Promptly Mr. 'Him Indoors' came with the scissors, and yet another lecture on making sure the scissors are returned to him! "Where do you want me to put them?" I yelled. This was asking for trouble, but nevertheless, I couldn't resist adding, "shall I put them in your back or chest - err pocket?" Fortunately, his reply, coming from further away, was lost in the sound of running water.

Yesterday we had eaten the remains of a roast chicken for lunch and he was sitting rather quietly, so I decided to cheer him up with pulling the wishbone. There were some scraps of meat still clinging to the bone, but a quick rub on a clean tea towel, removed most of them. However, he pulled rather hard on the bone, and now I am wishing I hadn't had such a good idea, because it is necessary to wash his trousers. The tug on the wishbone pulled it out of my hand, and it fell onto his lap!

We have many e-mails arriving from family and friends every day. The e-mails need answering, which can take a time and good jokes are forwarded to others. Some family members know how to crack the screen in four, so most evenings we can all chat together. This is better than

normal, when we often do not see each other for months. I wish I could understand how they do it. My version of screen cracking could be rather expensive and leave me not chatting to anyone, not even 'Him Indoors'.

The garden is looking tidier than it has for years, but today it is raining and the indoor chores need doing. To make the tasks less irksome, we shall play our favourite game, 'Where shall we not go today', and the other one, 'What shall we not order from our favourite restaurant'. This latter idea inspires me to rake through our herb drawer and food cupboard to turn out some interesting meals, also I attempt to make meals from some even more interesting foodstuffs, which our son has substituted, when buying our weekly shop and finding himself unable to buy some items on the list! Thanks son, we are never bored!

Stay safe folks

Jessica Blake

~~

Here are two recommendations that I received about some online resources

Dear Editor,

I really like this set of videos creating by an American charity that has worked with young people in Chicago and elsewhere on helping them to understand about making good decisions. <https://www.decisioneducation.org/decision-focus-videos>

Apparently young people in bad situations often don't realise that they have choices and helping them to understand that they have, and how to make better choices, has had success in getting them on to better life paths.

It works for everyone, not just young people.

Robert Ward

Dear Editor,

'People fixing the world' is a radio programme which last about 20 minutes. This isn't a special lockdown broadcast but one that has been available for a while. I find that if you have a boring task to do at home (washing up) and would like some mental stimulation these audio broadcasts can make the time fly. It is a short weekly radio programme from the BBC world service found on the website called 'BBC sounds' (this is the radio archive). You may need to register with the BBC first, then type 'people fixing the world' to find the episodes. There are really fascinating ideas from around the world and show that if people put their heads together, they can remedy many problems. There are also a lot of other things to listen to at your leisure like drama and comedy.

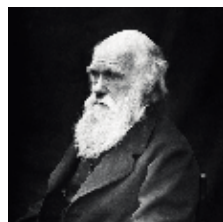
Janet Sharp

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Nature Notes from Ted Forsyth

Evolution

Charles Darwin collected enormous amounts of data to support the theory he was working towards but was sensitive to the current religious teachings, so he continued to collect evidence. Before he had a chance to publish, he received a communication from Alfred Russell Wallace whose observations in the tropics had led him to develop almost the same theory. Eventually they presented their separate ideas to the Royal Society, but history gives credit to Darwin for developing his Theory of Evolution with Natural Selection, possibly because of all the books he published or because of Wallace's slightly different emphasis.



Bear in mind that Darwin was working before DNA and genes were discovered, and seems to have been unaware of the work of Gregor Mendel who, by cross-breeding garden peas, showed that there had to be two internal factors involved for each trait investigated which in modern terms we would describe as dominant and recessive genes. Mendel's work was published but was not understood at the time and was not rediscovered for at least 30 years.

Darwin's idea was that random variations might occur in the properties of

the offspring in any breeding experiment, whether this involved mammals, birds, reptiles, plants, insects, etc. If this variation allowed a mammal or bird to more easily escape a predator, or a plant to produce more seed, then subsequent generations might contain more of this variant property and over a sufficiently long time this might lead to it dominating in the population – the situation commonly described as ‘Survival of the Fittest’. In one extreme all other variants die out, leaving only the new property whatever it happens to be. Alternatively, part of the population becomes so different from the remainder that it effectively becomes a new species. This second possibility is shown in Darwin’s Finches in the Galapagos. Here a possibly wind-blown immigrant bird species from the mainland has gradually given rise to a whole series of species, some with very large bills capable of cracking open big seeds and others with smaller bills and feeding mainly on insects.

As Darwin suggested that all living things were related to a common ancestor it was realised that the theory needed a long time for the succession of changes to occur from a single-celled ancestor to the complex things alive today. However, Archbishop James Ussher had worked through the families mentioned in the Bible and stated that the earth came into existence in 4004BC, and even gave a specific date and time! Lord Kelvin had tried a more scientific approach by considering an Earth which began as a molten ball and by calculating the rate at which it would cool he said the Earth could be as old as 100 million years – but he did not know about radioactivity which would supply more heat and extend the estimate still further. More progress was made when the Scottish geologist Sir Charles Lyell considered natural geological processes and increased the estimate to billions of years (1 billion = 1000 million). Modern values, including radioactive heating, take the estimate to 4 billion years. This is enough time to support evolution by natural selection.

The fossil record has always been sparse. Firstly, an animal which dies will quickly be eaten by scavengers and has no chance of becoming a fossil. Secondly, for fossilisation to occur the animal must die in a suitable environment, such as a natural tar pit or where it will be covered by sediments which gradually turn to rock. Thirdly, the fossil must be found by someone! There are favoured places in the world where large amounts of fossil material can be found – the La Brea tar pits in America, in Mongolia, and even on a walk along a beach on the south coast of UK it is possible to find fossils.

Darwin's theory is largely accepted by the scientific community but there are still arguments about the details, ranging from continuous gradual evolution, through to evolution by punctuated equilibrium in which long periods occur with no changes followed by a sudden appearance of something new. Evolution occurs frequently in annual illnesses like influenza, and the arrival of Covid19 in recent months is a reminder that viruses are relatively simple things which can easily evolve.

One modern view of evolution is given in the book "Arrival of the Fittest" by Andreas Wagner which tries to show that there are many ways in which, for example, proteins can be built to give the same final properties.

Ted Forsyth

~~

World Bee Day

World Bee Day is celebrated on May 20 each year. The purpose of the international day is to acknowledge the role of bees and other pollinators for the ecosystem.

Every year on this day, the global public focuses on the importance of preserving honeybees and all other pollinators. People are reminded of the significance of bees in providing for the needs of humanity.



Did you know:

1. Though bees have jointed legs, they do not possess anything like a kneecap, and therefore do not have knees.
2. Honey has antiseptic properties and was historically used as a dressing for wounds and a first aid treatment for burns and cuts.
3. The natural fruit sugars in honey – fructose and glucose – are quickly digested by the body. Therefore, sportsmen and athletes use honey to give them a natural energy boost.
4. The practice of beekeeping dates back at least 4,500 years.

5. Bees must gather nectar from two million flowers to make one pound of honey
6. One bee must fly about 90,000 miles – three times around the globe – to make one pound of honey.
7. The average bee will make only 1/12th of a teaspoon of honey in its lifetime.
8. A honeybee visits 50 to 100 flowers during a collection trip.
9. A honeybee can fly for up to six miles, and as fast as 15 miles per hour.
10. Bees communicate by dancing.

~~

Poetry Corner (in honour of World Bee Day)

BEE AWARE

There's no greater
pollinator
than the busy, buzzy bee.
Flies to flowers
and devours
nectar then, quite carelessly,
takes the pollen
it has stolen
to fertilize the plants that we
grow to feed us
and to keep us
healthy as we want to be.
Now they're saying
bees need saving,
there are fewer every year.
Without their labour
every acre
of crops will start to disappear.
Varroa mites
and pesticides
make life harder for the bee
and, furthermore,
we can't ignore

the dearth of plants on which it feeds.
Monoculture
makes life tougher -
not so much variety
and, it emerges,
close cut verges
means less flowers for the bee.

So, save our saviour,
learn to favour
ways of farming that allow
bees to flourish,
help to nourish
this insect that's so threatened now.
Less pest control
must have a role
in giving bees the life they're due.
Do less mowing
and start growing
plants that bees are partial to.
Bluebells, heather,
borage, clover -
lavender's a special treat.
Shift your focus -
mint and crocus
full of nectar bees can eat.
When you attend a
garden centre
ask them what the bees like best,
or ask Alexa,
"Where's the nectar?"
And trust the bees to do the rest.

Thanks to Mary Gill

~~

Project for Children - Making a Bee Hotel

Bees, too, are facing unprecedented changes. They have lost much of their natural habitat in the past 60 years – including 97% of wildflower-rich

meadows. They are also under attack from pesticides, intensive farming and climate change. However, by creating bee-friendly spaces where we live, we can start to replace and restore some of this lost habitat and help Britain bloom for bees.

Bee hotels are used as breeding places by cavity-nesting solitary bees like Mason bees, Leafcutter bees and Yellow-faced bees which naturally nest in hollow stems, earth banks or old beetle holes in dead wood. None of these bees are aggressive, so they are fine around children and pets. From spring through summer, different species of bee will hopefully build cells inside the canes and lay eggs. They'll add pollen and nectar to feed the larvae, and block the entrance to the holes with leaves, mud or other materials. Others are 'cuckoo bees' that will pop in to lay their eggs when the hard-working owner is away.



What you need

- A terracotta plant pot, mug, tin can, body of 1 plastic bottle (9 – 15cm in length)
- Modelling clay
- Plastic straws or bamboo canes
- String

What to do

1. Cut the straws or bamboo canes to a length that is about 3cm shorter than your container. This keeps the straws/canes dry from rain. If you are using bamboo canes, you will need a grown up to carry out this part as it's tricky. Use sandpaper to smooth the ends of the bamboo if they are uneven. Bees will be put off by sharp edges barring entry to the holes. Splinters on the inside edges can also cut their wings.
2. Tie the bundle of straws or canes together with a piece of string.
3. Place some modelling clay in the bottom of the pot and stick the bundle of straws or canes into the clay.
4. Place the pot horizontally in your garden in a quiet place for the bees to move in.
5. Locate your bee hotel at least a metre off the ground, with no vegetation blocking the entrance. Always keep it dry, to prevent the

- contents going mouldy, and in an area protected from high winds.
6. Secure it firmly to a wall, fence or free-standing post while in use. The front of the house should have a south or southwest exposure where it will get the most sun in winter to keep bees warm. After the bees mate, the female places eggs in the tubes.
 7. You will need to move your bee hotel in the autumn and winter to protect the bee eggs inside. You can move it into a garden shed or similar. Basically, somewhere dry and unheated. Do this from October to February, and then put it outside again in March.
 8. Then, after the new generation of solitary bees has emerged (you'll see if they've made their way out of the hollow stems in the springtime as any mud covering the hollows will be opened up), you can replace the stems with fresh materials for a new year.

(with thanks to Friends of the Earth and the RHS)

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Jankers

We have all been through testing times as a result of Covid-19, being confined to our homes for days, perhaps weeks on end. We have been told that it is a war against an invisible enemy, so confined to barracks might be a more appropriate term!

Those of you who are old enough to have done National Service or those who have served in our Armed Forces, will be familiar with the term Jankers. Also known in service slang – as being ‘put on a fizzer’. These terms were and no doubt still are, commonly used words for being confined to barracks as punishment for a minor misdemeanour. The term Jankers is a shortened version of “Justice Administered by an N.C O” or J.A.N.C.O.

National Service, or call up as it was more commonly known, ceased on 31st December 1960. But earlier it had been decided that those born on, or after 1st October 1939, would not be called up. I don't know if I was lucky or unlucky but being born on 1st October 1939, I missed the call up by one day!

At the time, I and thousands, of other teenagers were thankful that they had missed the dreaded square bashing, Jankers, and 2 years in uniform. However, in hindsight, I later regretted the experience of not having served at Her Majesty's request.

My brother was older than me and when his time came, he took the Queen's shilling and signed up for 3 years in the Royal Artillery. He spent much of his time in Hong Kong, a world away from our home in Selsdon. And this was one of the advantages of National Service!

Today, many youngsters after leaving school go onto university and follow it up with a gap year, hitch hiking in foreign lands. But for my brother and others from Selsdon Secondary, National Service provided an opportunity to see the world - all expenses paid! Mind you, National Service was not all sandy beaches and hitting the night spots. Our squaddies have served in such hot spots as Cyprus during the EOKA uprising, in Kenya with the Mau Mau rebellion, and not forgetting Egypt during the Suez Crisis.

But to return to our present Jankers as a result of Covid-19, it was this that reminded me of my brother's time in Hong Kong. In the 1950s the greatest danger to life in that far off enclave of the British Empire was Chinese food and the dangers of eating it. Our troops were warned about local customs of food, hygiene, etc and to them Chinese takeaways had a different meaning!

Now we have all put on Jankers because of Covid-19, which probably started from a Chinese food market in Wuhan. So being a squaddie, you learnt a thing or two!

Des Donohoe (des.oldselsdon@gmail.com)

~~

Could you write for the Gazette?



Do you have a hobby, interest or story to share with our readers? Don't be shy. We are looking for more voices to contribute articles to the Selsdon Gazette. No long-term commitment necessary. Would you be interested? All ages welcome. For a full breakdown on terms and guidance please contact the Editor at [**selsdongazettesra@gmail.com**](mailto:selsdongazettesra@gmail.com)

In summary ideal contributions would be:

From a Selsdon resident, your own words (copyright free!), no more than 650 words, clearly written and suitable for a family/community

audience. Topics to write about should be interesting, useful, educating or entertaining to read but ideally contain some local angle or way for readers to engage with your words.

We can't guarantee submissions will be published as The Editor will decide based on edition theme, if there is space and if an article is suitable.

~~

Useful Information about Services during Lockdown (compiled 21/4)

GROCERIES

SAINSBURY'S

Monday to Saturday: 08:00 - 20:00

Sunday: 10:00 - 16:00

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday shopping is only available for elderly customers, disabled customers and carers from 08.00 to 09.00.

NHS and social care workers will be able to shop for half an hour before the shop opens from Monday to Saturday. Anyone with NHS ID will be able to shop from 07.30 to 08.00 on these days.

ALDI

Monday to Saturday: 08:00 - 20:00

Sunday: 10:00 - 16:00

All day, every day, key workers in the NHS, Police and Fire Service will take priority ahead of queues upon showing a valid ID. This is in addition to early access on a Sunday, where they can enter stores 30 minutes prior to opening.

The elderly and vulnerable customers are also given priority access at any time - go to the front of the queue.

ICELAND

Monday to Saturday: 10:00 - 19:00

Sunday: 10:00 - 16:00

The last hour of trade is reserved exclusively for NHS customers on production of an official NHS ID.

CO-OP in Forestdale

Monday to Sunday: 07:00 - 20:00

Dedicated shopping for vulnerable customers from 8am to 9am Monday to Saturday and from 10am to 11am on Sundays.

New limit on contactless card payments: increased to £45, making it easier to use this service in all stores and helps to protect customers and staff.

PHARMACIES

Lloyds Pharmacies in Selsdon can deliver prescriptions.

Tel: 020 8657 1292

Goldmantle Chemist in Forestdale will deliver prescriptions. Tel: 020 8651 1270

Day Lewis in Selsdon can also deliver.

Tel: 020 8657 6172

PET SHOPS

Village Pets in Sanderstead is open with reduced hours listed on their Facebook page, and will do local deliveries.

Please visit their **Facebook page** or call: 020 8657 1791

TELEPHONE BEFRIENDING

Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association offers anyone over the age of 80 the opportunity to have telephone befriending during these difficult times. Email: info@cnca.org.uk

Tel: 07926 525472

If you have any concerns about an older or vulnerable person, you or they can contact CVA on 020 8253 7076 or 07540 720102 Monday to Friday 10 - 4pm or email connectwellcroydon@cvalive.org.uk

DENTISTS

Dentists are closed, but please contact your dentist for emergency consultations on the phone if available, or they will signpost you for further assistance.

Are you looking for a venue to hold your community group or business meetings?

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St John's Church Upper Selsdon Road, Selsdon

CR2 8DD

www.stjohnsselsdon.org.uk

A SELECTED LIST OF SELSDON ORGANISATIONS

The information provided is, we hope, accurate, but we cannot take any responsibility for any mistakes. Any alterations should be sent to the Editor.

CHURCHES

| | | |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| Forestdale & Selsdon Community Church | | 8657 0078 |
| St John the Divine (Church of England) | Parish Office | 8657 2343 |
| Selsdon Baptist | Office | 8651 4308 |
| St Columba's (Roman Catholic) | | 8657 3747 |
| St Francis (Church of England) | Monks Hill | 8657 7864 |
| Croydon Jubilee Church | Office | 8651 2807 |
| Upper Selsdon Road Hall (Christian meeting place) | | 8657 2417 |
| Church of Jesus Christ of LDS | Bishop Hawkins | 01883 349914 |

DOCTORS, DENTISTS & EMERGENCY CARE

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Farley Road Medical Practice | 8651 1222 |
| Queenhill Medical Practice | 8651 1141 |
| Selsdon Park Medical Practice | 8657 0067 |
| Croydon University Hospital (formerly Mayday Hospital, 24/7) | 8401 3000 |
| New Addington Minor Injuries Unit (Mon-Fri 14:00-22:00/Sat-Sun 12:00-22:00) | 8251 7225 |
| Purley War Memorial Hospital (Urgent Care Centre, 08:00-20:00, 365 days/year) | 8401 3238 |

CLUBS, GROUPS & CHARITIES

| | | |
|---|---|---------------|
| CONTACT (neighbourhood care) | Andy Stranack | 8651 4944 |
| Selsdon Centre for the Retired | Craig Anderson | 8651 1111 |
| Croydon Hearing Resource Centre | Office | 8686 0049 |
| Bourne Society | Roger Packham | 01883 349287 |
| Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society | Brian Lancaster | 8668 6909 |
| Croydon Recorded Music Society | Liz Brereton | 8656 7382 |
| Croydon Voluntary Association for the Blind | | 8668 2486 |
| Cruse Bereavement Care Helpline | | 8916 0855 |
| Friends of Littleheath Woods | Ian Leggatt | 8651 1140 |
| Friends of Selsdon Wood | see website: www.friendsofselsdonwood.co.uk | |
| Rainbows, Brownies, Guides & Senior Section | | |
| Girlguiding UK: http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get_involved.aspx | | 0800 169 5901 |
| Parkinson's UK Croydon & District | Jacky Green | 01737 355487 |
| Police (Selsdon & Ballards SNT) | Beat Officer: | 8721 2464 |
| RSPB, Croydon Local Group | John Davis | 8640 4578 |
| Rotary Sanderstead and Selsdon | Wendy A Parr | 07774 186792 |
| Probus Club of Croydon South | John Barker | 8657 2093 |
| St John's Dramatic Society | Caryl Rapps | 8651 1326 |
| St John's Wives | Jane Guglielmi | 8657 6672 |
| Sanderstead Plantation Partners | Michael Lishmund | 020 8651 2760 |
| 1 st Selsdon & Addington Scout Group: | Website: www.1stselsdon.org.uk | |
| Beaver Colony (6-8yrs) | Maddie Dunn | 07703 531652 |
| Cub Pack (8-10yrs) | Louise Baker | 07737 404668 |
| Scouts Troop (10-14yrs) | Douglas Gordon | 07514 651711 |
| Croham Valley Explorers | Anthony Woodin | 020 8651 3780 |
| 2 nd Selsdon & Addington Scout Group: | Website: www.2ndSandAScoutGroup.org.uk | |
| Selsdon Art Group | Mrs F Hooper | 07973 412952 |
| Selsdon Bridge Club | Tony Cherrett | 01883 730304 |
| Selsdon Community Hall | Tim Potter (Centre Manager) | 8657 4300 |
| Selsdon Afternoon Townswomen's Guild | Elizabeth Veasey | 8657 1092 |
| Selsdon Floral Club | Maureen Browning | 8651 5821 |
| Selsdon Social Club | Beryl Gascoigne | 8660 2611 |
| Selsdon Tennis Club | Geoff Littlewood | 8651 4748 |
| 66 (Selsdon) Squadron Air Training Corps | Rob Cleeter | 8651 5958 |

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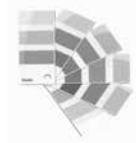
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