



# Banners Gate & Parklands

Community & Neighbourhood Forum

## 138th Issue June - July 2020

[www.bannersgateneighbourhoodforum.com](http://www.bannersgateneighbourhoodforum.com)

**The dates of the next three meetings are to be arranged.**

If you want Gatepost emailed to you in full colour, before it is printed, usually in black and white, please send an email, by just clicking the link, [bgatepost@gmail.com](mailto:bgatepost@gmail.com) with "Email Gatepost" in the subject line.

This is our second non-printed edition. Please feel free to forward it as often as you like because it is only reaching just under 400 people by email, instead of the usual 2500 homes. Advertisers may not be operating, ring to check. A link to Gatepost will also appear on our blog at [www.bannersgateneighbourhoodforum.com](http://www.bannersgateneighbourhoodforum.com).

It's a lovely freedom, editing with no eye the number of pages (23 this time) to fit in with two, three or four sheets of A3.

There's an international touch in this edition. We have readers in America and Wales and one from each country answered the call to send in their contributions.

We have another quiz in this edition and the answers to the one we had in the previous edition. There are also hints on what you could do with yourself, your children and grand-children over the holidays, now that they are let out of the house with a little more freedom to roam. If you are going on holiday have a great time and I hope the weather suits you wherever you go.

Whether this is the last digital Gatepost, or whether we manage to collate, fold and deliver the September edition is anyone's guess. Meanwhile, enjoy this one, stay safe and wear whatever you can in the way of mask and gloves to keep others safe. *Tony (Editor)*



### Rob Pocock:

Poet's Corner

I was always a bit of a loner  
And then got locked down with Corona  
I needed a chat  
So I spoke to the cat  
.. and now we talk over and over!

### A Reflection.

I can still recall, 50 years ago, as a fresh faced teenager excited by new technology, watching the first live TV broadcast from across the Atlantic. A reporter in New York I think it was, beaming back live to BBC Broadcasting House, a grey, grimy, faltering black-and-white image - barely discernible as a picture, but the first taste of international live TV.

Now 50 years later, I can sit and watch an afternoon of full colour crystal clear TV coverage of a live cricket Test Match in Barbados, sparkling footie as it happens in Brazil, or a live tennis match in Sydney. Anywhere in the world seems to appear live, as sharp and clear an image as if it came from next door.

This transformation struck me recently as I watched the current 'remote' interviews that are regularly broadcast daily on TV, or the Council meetings we now try and have 'virtually' from our homes. Freezing pictures, fuzzy faltering voices, lines and connections lost. I'm back with a reflection of 50 years ago with those faltering black and white TV pictures from the USA.

Will it take another 50 years, or sooner, before the

'remote interview' in front of someone's bookcase, matches the standards already there on live outside TV broadcasts? It would certainly make watching the news a less demanding experience!



**Kath Scott:** Hello everyone, I do hope you are keeping well and staying safe.

For this issue of Gatepost, I thought I would update you on policing issues. There had been a spike in burglaries in homes surrounding Sutton Park; consequently, police targeted some prolific offenders and made arrests (x3) so we should see those figures reduce. Sutton Park has had a dispersal order assigned to it, to combat the anti-social behaviour that has been increasing. They are also expanding their presence in the park during periods of good weather to combat the crowds that gather during those times. The Business Watch at New Oscott has been upgraded to include Tesco, Aldi, Lidl, & Homebase, and information on prolific offenders can now be shared.

**SPEED WATCH :** I am happy to announce that Sutton Vesey Ward now has its own dedicated Speed Gun. Since this was donated, I have had commitment from Sgt Heather Jones, that during each shift pattern we can have a SpeedWatch event. This is such great news, as speeding was one of the biggest issues that came out of the Community Survey and I can confirm my commitment to put the roads, that you took the time to tell us about, down as the first in line for speed watches to take place. Email: PCSO Ian Willetts if you would like to be part of one in your road.

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[suttonvesey@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:suttonvesey@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)

**STREET WATCH :** In other news, StreetWatch now has an additional 45 Vests; this means we have more capacity to have more street watch groups. So far, this initiative has been a great success; people are joining and the watches are growing which means our streets are becoming safer. Email: PCSO Satpal Singh if you would like to be part of one in your road. [suttonvesey@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:suttonvesey@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)

Finally, if I could squeeze in the Return to School in September. If your child is struggling with the idea of returning to school, and you feel their transition back may be difficult, please see the information on the Local Offer Website which may be of help to you and your family. <https://localoffer.birmingham.gov.uk/coronavirushelp/>

Please continue to stay safe, kind regards, Councillor Kath Scott



**Alison Jolley:** Trying something new! When the world suddenly turned topsy-turvy with COVID-19, and the consequences of lockdown loomed on the horizon, a new way of living soon became reality with vastly different implications for every member of the population. I am fortunate in having a garden in which to spend the extra time at home, particularly as we were blessed with sunny, warm weather during the spring.

With this in mind, I decided to grow tomatoes from seed, something I have always been keen to try but never succeeding in doing so. An old packet of tomato seed, free with a long-forgotten gardening magazine fostered my interest in having a go. Sowing the seed was the easiest part, germination was slow and erratic on the kitchen windowsill, but eventually eight plants took off out of a possible twenty-five. I shared half with my neighbour, who now has a fine row of healthy, bushy green plants, with an abundance of emerging tomatoes. Mine on the other hand are particularly lanky, and a rather sickly yellowish green colour, with a few tiny tomatoes on each plant!

However, it's all about trying something new and I was careful to reuse old plant pots and supporting stakes in order to prevent unnecessary items ending up as landfill. Homemade compost was also used and the ongoing need for water is from the garden water butt. My tomatoes won't win any prizes but it's good to try something new and I will have another go in the future.

A Few Tomato Facts: tomatoes can be traced back to the Aztecs and are native to Southern America.

Early 16th Century explorers introduced them to Southern Europe, where they rapidly became popular in Mediterranean recipes as the plants were suited to the climate. The pizza was invented in Naples in 1880's and there is no pizza without tomato sauce! Americans love tomatoes and get through 12 million tons per year!



**Jan Cairns:** The Pandemic has brought the best out in our residents who have all been helping each other and looking out for each other in these difficult times. I have been busy supporting local neighbours and those who are vulnerable and have been shielding to ensure that they have the supplies, medication and support that they need to get through.

I have been holding keep in touch Facetime and Zoom chats to provide a friendly voice to combat the isolation and loneliness and to check on the welfare of those who have been shielding and I have recruited my daughter Megan to be chief IT technician and entertainer. We have had many Quiz and Music events.

During Lockdown I too improved my DIY and Baking Skills so thankfully now we are coming out of lockdown and I can work off those extra pounds in weight that I gained.

Workwise I have carried on from home both personally and for the community and have spent time with my colleagues planning the next stages of the work of the Sutton Coldfield Disability Action Group in partnership with our Neighbourhood Network Scheme. I will report on our exciting plans next time.

The work of SCTC has never wavered and we have continued to hold our regular meetings via zoom. As the Town Centre re-opens our work to provide a masterplan for its future has continued including all of your consultation input prior to lockdown and this masterplan will be published during the Summer. SCTC have supported residents during the Coronavirus emergency in collaboration with Age Concern, Charitable organisations and faith groups and Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust to create [Sutton Coldfield Together](#), providing support to those in need.

Hopefully now we can all start to find a new normal way through this pandemic and get out to safely (following the guidelines) to meet with each other again as the summer progresses.

Cllr. Robert Pocock, [rob.pocock@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:rob.pocock@birmingham.gov.uk), tel: 0121 303 2039 (Labour Group Office), Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BB. Advice Bureau: Boldmere Library, 11.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m. First Saturday of the Month.

Cllr. Kath Scott, [kath.scott@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:kath.scott@birmingham.gov.uk) tel: 0121 303 2039 (Labour Group Office), Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BB. Advice Bureau: Boldmere Library, LAST Thursday of each month from 2.00 - 3.00 p.m. at Boldmere Library.



## **Season 2 Begins.**

### **Rev. Beccy Allen, vicar of St Columba's Church.**

I was at a training event last week, via Zoom (obviously) and someone described the easing of lockdown as being like living through season 2 of the box set, or a '*settling down to watch the sequel, to see how the next stage of the story unfolds.*' And to be honest, I found that a very helpful image, because there is no doubt that this stage of lockdown, with the lifting of restrictions, feels very much like a story continued, full of new ways of doing things, hope and uncertainty. Yes, we are trying to return to 'normal,' but at the same time everything is different.

The church is not immune from this 'new normal'. As you know, like everyone else, we were asked to close our doors when the lockdown began. There hasn't been a service at St Columba's since March 15<sup>th</sup>, we didn't have Holy Week, neither did we get to celebrate the joy of Easter Sunday together. Of course, these occasions still happened, but they happened in people's homes, in living rooms and at the dining table. Indeed, throughout the lockdown, our worship has been aided by online communication, TV and radio programmes and of course, good old telephone conversation. What we have been unable to do is gather, but we have carried on being church throughout it all.

As restrictions ease we have begun to open our doors again for 'quiet prayer', from 9.30-10.30am on a Sunday, and everyone is very welcome to join us. There is a video on our website ([www.stcolumbasbannersgate.co.uk](http://www.stcolumbasbannersgate.co.uk)) that shows what the church looks like, all set out according to the new guidelines. It has been wonderful to welcome people through our doors again and offer peace and some quiet. After all, in different ways, lockdown has been hard on us all, and our hope is to offer some space to take a breath and reflect on all that has happened in these past five months.

For St Columba's, season 2, includes a desire hope to re-open for worship services at

to take a breath and reflect on all that has happened in these past 5 months.

For St Columba's, season 2, includes a desire, a hope, to re-open for worship services at the end of August. We are still working through what our 'new normal' will look like – currently we know that it will involve masks and no singing – and we will continue to gather for online worship, prayers and conversation. We will hold a wedding in September and continue to mark the changing seasons as best we can. Life goes on. However, our church hall remains closed for the time being, as we work through the challenges brought about by the new guidelines, and consider what will be required for us to open safely in the future.

The following is a prayer from the Corrymeela Community, based in Northern Ireland, that I have found particularly helpful as I look to what will come next.

God of promises,  
sometimes we wait generations for the dawn from on high;  
sometimes only years,  
sometimes, no time at all.  
We wait for justice and hope  
and light and kindness,  
to mingle in the tangle of our days.  
And we age while we hope.  
So, may we age and hope  
with tenderness and truth,  
because you are tender and true,  
even though we sometimes wonder.  
Amen.

Our Season 2 prayers are for faith, hope and love. Faith offers a different perspective on the things that we face. It allows us to place our stories into God's Story, a much bigger picture, with a history of promises fulfilled and new beginnings. Hope and love run as threads throughout God's story and so we aim to remain rooted in those three words and all that comes with them as we look to what will come next. We pray faith-filled prayers of hope and love for all those in our wider community and beyond, as we figure out what the sequel will look like, may we know God's peace in our hearts.

If you would like to contact Rev Beccy Allen:

Phone: 0121 354 5873

Email: [vicar.bannersgate@gmail.com](mailto:vicar.bannersgate@gmail.com)

Website: [www.stcolumbasbannersgate.co.uk](http://www.stcolumbasbannersgate.co.uk)



## Staying Safe In Summer – Bike Theft

**Lockdown** has seen a lot of people dust off their old bike and get back cycling. With a lot of people holidaying at home this year you may well be planning a few bike rides. We wanted to share our top tips for keeping your bike safe.

Always lock your bike when you leave it – even if it's only for a few minutes. We would recommend using a D-lock.

Lock it in a busy well-lit area, where lots of people are walking past. Nothing puts off a bike thief as much as an audience!

When at home it's safer to lock your bike in a garage or shed or keep it indoors rather than leave it in the garden.

There are more tips on our website if you need them <https://www.west-midlands.police.uk/your-options/cycle-theft>

We wish you a safe staycation and hope for some lovely weather.

### **Message Sent By**

Stefanie Sadler (Police, Engagement & Consultation officer, Birmingham Partnerships)

## Crime Prevention Advice

We know that the lockdown means lots of people are holidaying at home this year.

Hopefully the weather will be great and you can enjoy barbeques, bike rides, day trips, picnics and even a dip in the paddling pool.

We have a few tips for you to prevent burglary so please take a moment to read them. We don't want anything to ruin your staycation!

- One third of burglars enter houses by open windows and doors so if you are in the back garden, lock the windows and doors at the front of the house.
- Remember to lock all windows and doors before going out for a day trip
- If you're lucky enough to be going away somewhere - ask a trusted neighbour to keep an eye on your house, cancel any regular deliveries and lock up before you leave.
- If you're gardening don't forget to padlock your shed after use, many burglars look in sheds for items to help them break into houses.
- If you have a few spare minutes tour our virtual crime scene for extra help and advice <https://www.west-midlands.police.uk/27stationroad>

Have a great holiday at home!

### **Message Sent By**

Faye Purcell (Police, Constable, Be npu Sutton Coldfield)



**Get Safe Online**  
Free expert advice

For more tips on staying safe online then visit [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)

Or if you prefer, have a look at this leaflet [July20 SM Scams Leaflet.pdf](#)

If you have trouble opening the links, press and hold the ctrl key. When the cursor changes to a hand, click.



## Introducing Our New Safety In Neighbours Burglary Campaign

### THERE'S SAFETY IN NEIGHBOURS

#### Our new Neighbourhood Watch campaign to prevent burglaries

As lockdown eases in the UK, we're expecting a rise in burglaries. We've partnered with the Home Office to create a new social media campaign to help keep people safe and continue the great work your scheme is already doing.

Our new **Safety in Neighbours** campaign is particularly exciting as it has a modern and eye-catching design to grab younger people's attention and attract even more new members. Read more about the campaign below.

#### We need your help

Please help us spread the word and share the campaign on your local Neighbourhood Watch's social media pages and chat groups. You could also share the press release attached with your local news media and radio stations.

- Visit our [campaign page](#)
- Watch our [campaign video](#)
- Download our campaign [social media pack](#)
- Share using **#SafetyinNeighbours** in the caption
- Tag Neighbourhood Watch in the post
- \* Facebook: @ourwatch
- \* Twitter: @N\_watch
- \* Instagram: @neighbourhood.watch insta

#### [Help spread the word](#)

More about our new campaign: **Safety in Neighbours**

#### The idea

Life's safer when you know your neighbours. With more people looking out for unusual behaviour on your street, burglaries can be prevented.

#### The design

It features our iconic black and yellow brand colours, but with a modern, animated twist to grab attention and stand out on social media.

#### The audience

We'll target the most high-risk areas of England and Wales – but we need you to help us reach people everywhere. Our campaign is designed to appeal to a younger audience of 20 - 50 year olds.

#### The outcome

We'll provide a pack of assets for you to share with members. It includes info on the [WIDE combination of security measures](#), which reduces the risk of burglary by nearly 50 times more than no security prevention measures, a [prevention checklist](#), [local crime map](#), and [how to become a member](#).

#### The campaign

We'll promote it on Neighbourhood Watch's main Facebook, Instagram and Twitter channels for 3 weeks from 27th July. Please help us by sharing on your local channels and do let us know about any local press you are able to generate.

[Find out more...](#)

#### Attachments

[NWN Burglary Campaign Press Release v3 230720.pdf](#) - 204.2 KB

Message sent by: Cheryl Spruce (NWN, Head of Membership and Community Engagement, National)

**Some answers to the question, "Has lockdown changed your life permanently in any way, or have you managed to keep to temporary changes?"**



Have far less ivy in my garden than I had at beginning of lock down. Looking forward to being able to get out and about?! Not too long now.

*Stella*

Hi, haircuts definitely. I have realised that I can do a decent short cut with clippers. Have enjoyed working at home, eating better, driving less. I have appreciated being in a job where I can do this and not have struggled financially.

*Alison*



Thoughts of the last three months:

It has been a time to reflect. I can just about remember the war and the hard times my parents had. We were lucky enough to have an allotment, so I assume we had a lot of fresh produce. I never heard my mother complain about anything. I know she spent a lot of time queuing for food. I can remember queuing at a cake shop called Chowens and we had a cream bun. Ugh!! the bun was full of synthetic cream. But at the time it was wonderful.

I remember the first banana I had, my mother warmed it in the black lead oven and would only let me eat half.

The last three months have been about renewing friendships by phone, doing things which had been left, having very tidy drawers. Having time to sit and listen to the beautiful birds in the garden and knowing your neighbours care about you.

I feel the last three months have been able to return us to what life should be like. Caring about each other.

*Val*

My wife cuts my hair, but she won't let me near hers!!



*Geoff*

I use zoom regularly - I think it is here to stay, even after Covid-19.

*Simon*

How have I kept myself busy during this lock down?

As a widower I am accustomed to being on my own for long periods. I have tried to be consistent in rising at 7.15am and aimed to be in bed by 10.30pm without, very often, having completed all the tasks I had set myself for the day.

For exercise I have tried to do a circuit of fifteen laps along the patio and down one side of my bungalow and these add up to nearly half a mile. I made a list most days of telephone calls, particularly to keep in touch with friends who have not been well, and family. Then there were the ones I gratefully received. Each call could range from 15 to 45 minutes, especially in the early days.

I have restricted watching TV to mealtimes and up to one hour at night. I prefer to see nature programmes and marvels of engineering etc. I find these mainly on Freeview Channels, I don't watch the News as I think the media operates on the basis that 'Bad News is Good News' and the experts go on chewing it over again and again.

As I cannot have my fortnightly cleaning help, I have had to resort to doing this myself again, with the help of a much lighter cordless vacuum cleaner I bought. In addition, there has been the washing and ironing to keep me busy.

I am richly blessed with family members. They have given me endless support with meals they have prepared, in addition to ones obtained with groceries. They are also in valuable daily contact with me.

Computer time is also valuable, and it is amazing how systems have been developed to make visual contact possible. I have learned to Zoom for my choir rehearsals and WhatsApp for family contact. Unfortunately, for the family/friends that have taught me, it has required a lot of patience. It is often said that when we get older, we return to our childhood and my teachers must have thought so with this 97-year-old and his short memory span of about five seconds!

How much longer will all this last?

Just a reminder that time flies! Have you not ever been with a small group of friends when one has spoken of an event being twelve months ago and someone promptly says, "No that was two years ago." Time will still pass just as quickly but if you want it to slow down just fill a kettle and wait, with nothing else to do, for it to boil!

*Harold*

Since the start of the 'Lockdown' I have been keeping a diary. This is mainly because I was afraid that I would forget what I was doing from day-to-day. This has definitely been a good idea because each day runs into another and I wake up every morning trying hard to remind myself what day of the week it is, as there is, now, no normal schedule. 115 days so far and probably many more to go.

It was a blessing that the weather was so glorious at the start and gave me the incentive to spring-clean the house, until I learned that the refuse/recycling centre was closed and so it was just a case of moving the unwanted stuff from one room to another. Eventually we paid for a company



to shred the paperwork - that was one pile out of the way.

Then, because of the good weather, I started on the garden - that no garden-tidying company would touch! It needed rather more than the lawn and hedges cutting. The shed roof had to be recovered, which I managed, and little by little I tackled the weeds and brambles. I was kindly given some vegetable seeds from a neighbour which I sowed in the greenhouse (after a good clean) and re-arranged my pottery firing area, neatly stacking the wooden palettes so that they no longer leant against the fence. I have gradually worked my way around the garden, pruning some plants and pulling up roots and perennial weeds. All this finally filled thirty-two garden rubbish bins and bags. They



covered the patio so the best way to dispose of it all was to hire a skip. Carrying them all through the garage required a scientific approach and the use of a broom handle and a trolley - I can explain no more than that. We are both very much the wrong side of seventy, but we managed to throw out the old bird bath, having already bought a new one, and replaced the rotten bird table - all in the skip.

I have also had periods of cooking, especially puddings - Queen of puddings goes down well and upside-down cakes (both pear and pineapple), instant trifle, with whatever alcohol I can find, and the usual fruit crumble. Although I have to say that ice cream is always the preferred sweet and I have even made that as well, thanks to Nigella Lawson's recipes.



Shopping has been hair-raising for me. I have preferred to do it extremely late in the day so that I do not have to queue much and only every ten days or so. Mostly, I have used the local shops, when I can - buying from the butchers and the greengrocers in Boldmere, just like many years ago. I think that I shall continue to do so, especially as they only allow two or three people in the shops at one time.



I go out every time with latex gloves and a mask on, not just to protect myself but other people as well. If only everyone else would do the same. It seems to be only now, that the government is deciding to believe the scientific advice that mask wearing is a particularly good idea. Please take note of that.

At the moment the tomatoes in the greenhouse have lots of promising bunches of fruit, the lettuces are huge, the courgettes and the French beans are flowering well. Even the three potatoes, that I planted on the spur of the moment, are actually showing leaves that I keep covering over with soil, apparently you have to! The Agapanthas and Hydrangeas are blue, and the Calendulas are orange, clashing beautifully with all the pink Geraniums. I have even cut around all the edges of the lawn with one of those half-moon cutters. Maybe, if we were not in this awful pandemic, I would invite you all to come and see what I thought was an impossible task - well, the professional gardeners thought it was.



*Helen*



Street Watch



Street Watch

I am messaging this morning to see if anyone would be interested in joining the community Streetwatch group we are setting up around the Sutton Vesey Area.

For anyone that does not know what Streetwatch is, it is a community patrol initiative that helps you make a difference where you live.

Streetwatch gives you and your community an opportunity to keep your area safe, including just walking round your neighbourhood, which can really help.

Local police keep in regular contact with Streetwatch members to share information and work in partnership with you.

As a Streetwatch member, you will patrol your local area for at least two hours every month, at times which suit you.

You will patrol in a minimum of two members, talk to people you meet and encourage them to take an active interest in keeping your area safe.

So your neighbours know what you are there for, you will wear a high visibility Streetwatch jacket provided by West Midlands Police.

Anyone that would be interested in joining us or you would like further information please contact me either via WM Now message or [i.florence@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:i.florence@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)

Oh and you can take the dog on your Streetwatch walks! ... Look forward to hearing from you!

**Message Sent By**

Ian Florence (Police, PCSO, Birmingham East Sutton Vesey)



## Sutton Park

Here is an ode to Sutton Park...  
I've spent so much time here, at dawn, dusk and even dark,  
Running, riding or just having a lark,  
It's the place to be, it tops the chart,  
For me, it's my Noah's Ark.

Birmingham is boring, Londoners hark,  
But what is somewhere like Cutty Sark,  
Versus parkland which allows your imagination to spark,  
Each time the seasons pass the change is stark,  
Yet the scenery remains picturesque and sharp.

So next time you're in Sutton Park,  
Looking over a lake, watching the ducklings dart,  
Don't forget to make a mental mark,  
How lucky you are,  
To be somewhere which holds a special place in many a heart!



By Amy Johnson

Muscle tightness / strains, Joint pain, Sciatica.  
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monthly packages also available!



In exchange for a little bit of Maths, **Tracy Cattell** has generously given me a quiz for Gatepost. Tracy said that as this was supposed to be an Olympic summer, here are eighteen questions (plus the odd bonus) on Summer Olympics since 1970. Thanks Tracy.

1. What has Black September to do with the 1972 Olympics, which began on 26<sup>th</sup> August?
2. Who became the most successful athlete of the Munich Olympics, winning a record seven gold medals and setting world records in all of them?
3. Who won Gold in the 200m breaststroke at the 1976 Montreal Olympics, becoming the first British swimmer to win a gold medal since Anita Lonsbrough in 1960? He is the only person to have held British, American, Commonwealth, European, World, and Olympic swimming titles at the same time.
4. In 1980 in Moscow, which British track athlete won Gold in the 800m in addition to setting several world records for 1500m and the mile run and a world best at two miles? He was dominant in middle-distance running from 1977 until 1983, and retired in 1991
5. A contemporary middle-distance runner of the athlete above, who challenged him over 800m and 1500m throughout 1980, which athlete chaired the London Organising Committee for the 2012 Olympic Games following his running career? He became Chairman of the British Olympic Association in November 2012, and became President of the International Associations of Athletics Federations in 2015.
6. In which event did Daley Thompson win Olympic Gold in 1980 and 1984?
7. Beginning with Commonwealth and European gold over 1500m in 1982 and World gold over the same distance in 1983, which athlete went on to win Commonwealth and European Gold over 800m and 1500m in 1986, with Silver over 1500m being his only Olympic medal in 1984?
8. Which middle- and long-distance runner represented Great Britain at the 1984 Olympics and South Africa in 1992, breaking the world record over 5000m in 1984 and 1985? Uniquely, this athlete elected to train and compete in bare feet.
9. Which American athlete won Olympic Gold in 1992 and 1996, going on to set a world record over 400m which remained unbroken until 2016?
10. Since 1984, three British athletes have won Olympic medals in the javelin. Can you name them?
11. Of those three in Q 10, which was the only one to win Olympic Gold?
12. Holding Olympic, World, European, and Commonwealth Gold in 2002, which British triple-jumper won Olympic Silver in 1996 and Gold in 2000?
13. In 2000, which Olympian became the first Briton to win five Olympic Gold medals? The feat was all the more extraordinary because the athlete had won them at five successive Olympics, beginning in Los Angeles in 1984 and concluding at Sydney in the year 2000.
14. In Athens in 2004, which track athlete won Gold in the 800m and 1500m, becoming the first double gold medallist at the same games since 1920.
15. Which heptathlete was prevented by injury from participating in the 2008 Olympics after promising triumphs at the European Junior Championships, World Indoor Championships, European Championships, and three World Championships. Gold medal success in 2012 and a Silver in 2016 were widely and warmly celebrated.
16. Who won Britain's first medal of the London 2012 Olympics?
17. What colour was it, and what was the event?
18. What medals, and for which events, were won by Mo Farah at the London 2012 Olympics?
19. With a total of seven Olympic medals in total, and becoming in 2008 the first British athlete to win three Gold medals in a single Olympic Games since 1908, who is currently Britain's greatest Olympian?
20. With four Olympic Gold medals as well as seven World titles, thirteen European Golds, three under-23 European Golds and Commonwealth Gold in 2014, who, in 2016, became Great Britain's most successful female Olympic competitor in any sport?

*Answers on Page 10*





Here's an international flavour, all the way from a reader in sunny Encinitas, San Diego, California, USA

The cartoons on this page and the next all come from my good friend Ed. We spent a year together in 1966/7, Ed with Peace Corp and me with VSO, in sweaty Borneo. Ed taught English and I taught Maths. One day, he asked me to stand at the back of the class and interrupt him each time he said something that was American English, not British English. After half a dozen or so interruptions in the first 5 minutes he politely asked me to leave, at least, that's how I remember it. There's a possibility that Ed remembers it differently! If he does, as he receives Gatepost he'll probably let me know. In exchange, he taught me how to eat food with just a fork, no knife., thanks Ed.

Tony

At first, I thought I had Covid  
because I couldn't breathe.



Then I unbuttoned my  
pants and it was all ok.

I got pulled over in the HOV  
lane for driving alone.  
I said that due to social  
distancing, my passenger was  
in the car behind me!



So in retrospect, in 2015,  
not a single person got  
the answer right to "Where  
do you see yourself 5  
years from now?"



"FREE HAMMOCKS, all over town. It's like a miracle!"

Because of Covid for  
the first time since  
1945 the National  
Spelling Bee is  
cancil... cancel...  
cansel...

It's been called off.





Me: Alexa, what's the weather going to be this weekend?

Alexa: Why? Where do you think you're going?







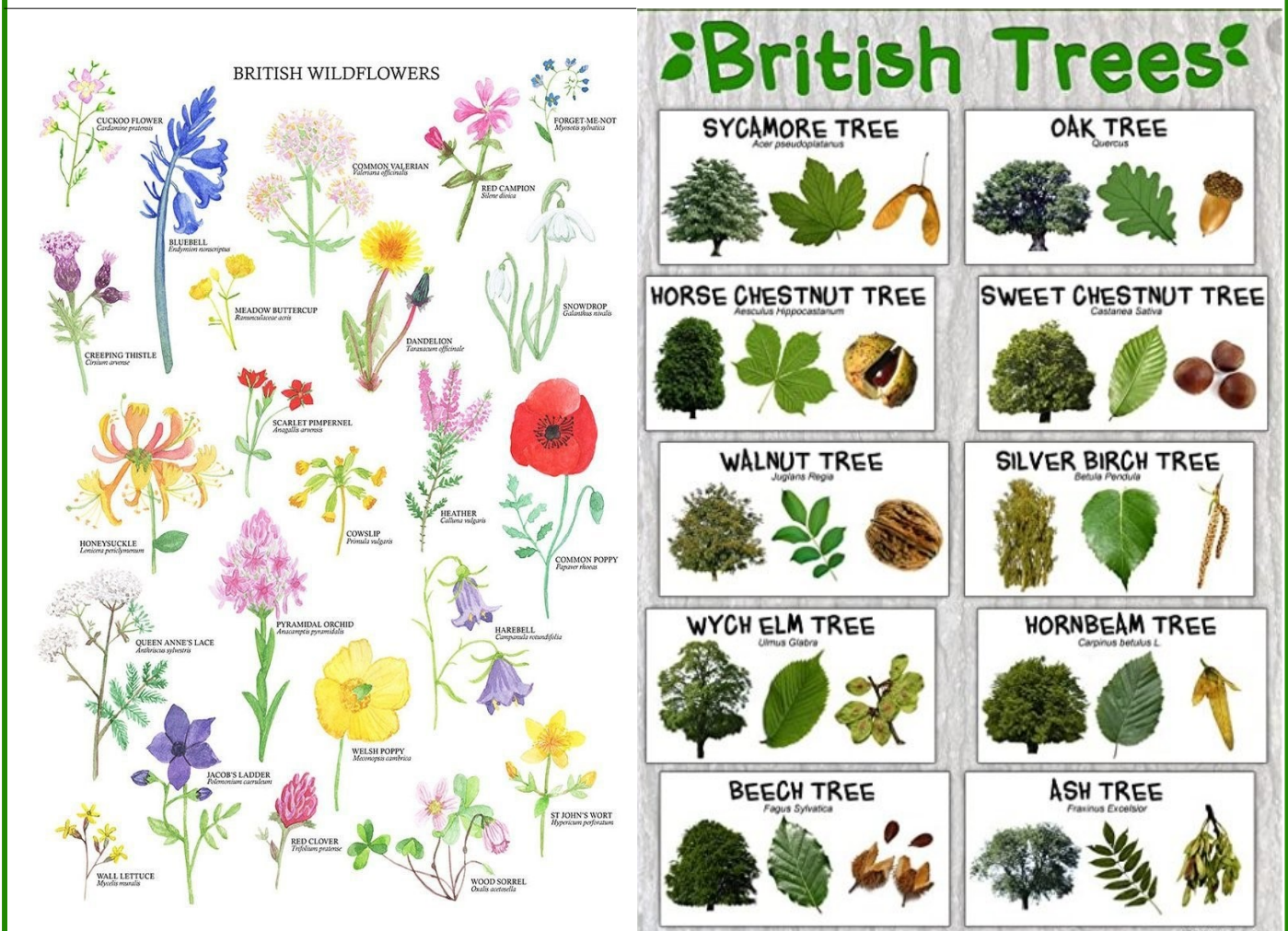
Continuing with the international flavour, here's one from another good friend and reader in Wales.

Many, many years ago a Daily Mirror journalist used to write under the by-line "In the country of the blind the one-eyed man is king." The impact of Covid-19 has helped me appreciate those words a little better. In one respect I am lucky, I possess two eyes that are reasonably efficient with the help of good prescriptive spectacles. However, in other respects I have probably been guilty of not using them properly. I look, but I do not always see.

Things have changed in the last six months and Covid-19 is the driving force behind that change. I have slowed down. This was not easy as, at my wrinkled age, slowing down meant almost walking backwards. But I started to notice little things in finer detail. With lockdown and social distancing, many things have been cut. Grass verges have not always been included in those cuts. At first you just notice the long grass, then the larger, eye-catching flowers like ox-eye daisies. But if you just mentally shrug, silently mutter the words, "They're nice" and move on, you miss the real gems. Take the trouble to really look. I have to confess that I have been astounded by the variety, colour and stunningly simple beauty of our wildflowers. They are there in abundance, and it doesn't cost anything to have them lift your spirits. Just take the trouble to see when you look.

If flowers are too weedy and you fancy something bigger, try trees. With the school holidays upon us, pick a nice day and take the kids or the grandkids to the park for a couple of hours. Get them involved in collecting leaves from different trees, not forgetting the trees in the roads on the way there and back. Then, when you get home, see how many they can identify. You get real kudos if you can identify more than they can. Don't show them the illustrations - just let them think you are a genius. On second thoughts, show them the illustrations. You never know, it could also help with a project in school or trigger a positive reaction to their world. Covid-19 has had an impact on all of us. Look for the positives: don't just look, see.

Frank



#### Answers from quiz on page 7

1. It was the name of the Palestinian terrorist organisation which kidnapped and shot 11 Israeli athletes whilst the games were being held in Munich.
2. Mark Spitz
3. David Wilkie
4. Steve Overt
5. Sebastian Coe
6. Decathlon
7. Steve Cram
8. Zola Budd
9. Michael Johnson

10. Fatima Whitbread, Tessa Sanderson, Steve Backley
11. Tessa Sanderson
12. Jonathan Edwards
13. Steve Redgrave
14. Dame Kelly Holmes
15. Jessica Ennis
16. Lizzie Armitstead
17. Silver; Women's Road Race
18. Gold: 5000m; Gold: 10,000m
19. Chris Hoy
20. Laura Trott

## Welcome to an update from Highbury Theatre

As with everyone else, our plans have been disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Back in March, we closed the night before Deep Cut was due to open, halted rehearsals for The Children and Nell Gwynn and cancelled our films.

We had agreed a programme of plays and films for the 2020/21 season and so, based on the hope that we might be able to reopen in the autumn, we revised those slightly, to incorporate the end of the 2019/20 season.

We were excited when the Prime Minister announced on 17 July that theatres would be allowed to reopen on 1 August, although with restrictions on capacities and that this would be on a trial basis. However, the government has also made a distinction between Amateur and Professional theatre, and the new guidance applies to Professional theatres only. We are still unsure when more advice will be available for Amateur theatres, and until we receive that advice, Highbury will remain closed for live performances and entertainment.

So, following our founder John English's philosophy that a good theatre never stands still, we are planning for a different future. Highbury Theatre is in a very strong position and everyone within it is committed to returning to entertain our audiences as soon as circumstances allow.

We are working on re-opening our film club as this is covered by different restrictions. We intend to run some trial screenings, testing procedures for reopening such as booking, entering and moving round the building, sitting in the auditorium, and leaving. We'll be doing more cleaning, providing hand sanitiser and asking people to wear face coverings when moving round the theatre. We'll also be trialling tracing mechanisms to compliment NHS Test and Trace.

In the meantime, we have been keeping in contact with our audiences through our emailed Highbury Flyer newsletter. Copies can be found on our website here <http://highburytheatre.co.uk/ahlt/HighburyLittleTheatre.html> and if you'd like to be added to our mailing list, please email [boxoffice@highburytheatre.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@highburytheatre.co.uk). We have also been experimenting with what we can do online and you can find one of our members reading a short story written by another member on our website's home page.

We are really looking forward to reopening, but won't do so until the government allows and we feel that it is safe and practical. When that time comes, we will know that we will have the appropriate measures in place to keep people as safe as possible and we look forward to seeing you again.





Local theatre company **\*Manor Musical Theatre Company\*** were scheduled to put on their annual show at Sutton Coldfield Town Hall in April, as they have done continually since their first show back in 1953. Hit by the lockdown and the subsequent temporary closure of the Town Hall it was a major disappointment to the society, who had been hard at work rehearsing since September last year. The Gershwin musical **\*Crazy for You\*** full of great dancing and memorable music had to unfortunately be abandoned, and just as we only had the finale audience bows of the show to rehearse. To say the cast and production team were extremely disappointed is an understatement, however of course obviously health and safety were paramount.

The society also has an active social side to it, and its planned Race Night and annual summer ball at Sutton Coldfield Golf Club in June were also cancelled. The society has, since its inception in 1953, given over £ 30,000 to local and national charities. We will hopefully continue giving with your future support.

Please check out our website regarding future activities or you would like to join us in the future.

[www.manormusicaltheatrecompany.co.uk](http://www.manormusicaltheatrecompany.co.uk)





Molly Jay Illustration | Illustrator & Portrait Artist

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CHRISTMAS COMMISSIONS NOW OPEN



The Sutton Coldfield Art Trail was due to take place on 13th and 14th June but for health and safety reasons we are holding a virtual exhibition instead.

Click on the link below for further details.

35 artists from the Sutton Coldfield area are included in this exhibition covering a wide range of media; painters, textile artists, jewellery makers, collage artists, photographers, ceramic artists and sculptors.

[www.suttoncoldfieldarttrail.wordpress.com](http://www.suttoncoldfieldarttrail.wordpress.com)

Next year we hope to be back exhibiting in our usual variety of venues around the town. The new dates will be announced on our website in 2021.

## Banners Gate Community Association AGM

BGCA enjoyed their first Virtual AGM on Saturday 18th July. This was possible due to the 33rd Scout Group kindly lending access to their zoom account. There was a good attendance and lively, positive discussion. The Hall is currently closed due to Covid-19 restrictions



with the time well

used to undertake a full redecoration. The Committee will take advice from Birmingham City Council, (we have a meeting on 29th.) regarding a safe reopening, although party bookings will not recommence until 2021.

Please remember that we have a **Community Minibus** and if your organisation would benefit from using it please contact Tracy on 07803 293 351.



This was our third delivery of food parcels, 70 in total. Hopefully, we will receive more funding in the future to have another round. Rob Pocock was at a meeting so was not able to help with this delivery but Kath Scott came to help.





# Sutton Coldfield in Common

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HELPING TO DEVELOP & EVALUATE NEW COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE AGED 50+?

**SUTTON COLDFIELD IN COMMON MEET ONCE A MONTH TO DISCUSS WAYS TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ACTIVITIES AND TO ACT AS A CRITICAL FRIEND TO THE SUTTON COLDFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORK SCHEME. FOR MORE INFO, PLEASE CONTACT [NNS@AGECONCERNBIRMINGHAM.ORG.UK](mailto:NNS@AGECONCERNBIRMINGHAM.ORG.UK) OR CALL 0121 362 3661**

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## Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Network Scheme

We are creating a map of all of the community assets and activities in the Sutton Coldfield constituency, which can help people aged 50+ to lead independent, happy and healthy lives.

Community assets are individuals, groups or organisations who are doing something or delivering an activity, project or service in a neighbourhood setting which older people can benefit from. This can be anything from a lunch club to a line dancing class, befriending to benefits advice, or a support group to a sewing club.

As well as mapping community assets, we are also working with them to sustain and grow the activities and services they offer to citizens aged 50+ in the local area. We can offer a range of support around issues such as marketing and promotion, volunteering, governance and fundraising, and as part of this, we have a micro and small grants scheme which can fund certain activities and projects in Sutton Coldfield.

We also have opportunities for citizens aged 50+ who have experience of social isolation or are carers (looking after someone regularly because they are older, disabled or seriously ill), or who have experience of running a community based activity to get involved in developing the Neighbourhood Network Scheme in Sutton via our co-production group.

The Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Network Scheme is delivered in partnership between Age Concern Birmingham and Compass Support. For more information, or a conversation about how you can get involved, please contact us on 0121 362 3661 or email [NNS@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk](mailto:NNS@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk)

For a searchable list of community assets in Sutton Coldfield, and the wider Birmingham area, please visit:  
[Birmingham.connecttosupport.org](http://Birmingham.connecttosupport.org)



**Banners Gate Community Church (Westwood Road) are reassessing our capabilities as far as letting out our hall are concerned, but are not "opening" the church just yet.**

**Simon Walker**

**Admin, Banners Gate Community Church**

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## Answers to quizzes in last Gatepost

### Answers Green Quiz

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Tiger             | 21. Venus                |
| 2. Eight             | 22. Humerus              |
| 3. Yes               | 23. Filament             |
| 4. A pride           | 24. Refraction           |
| 5. Kids              | 25. Issac                |
| 6. Dog               | 26. The Milky Way galaxy |
| 7. Fat               | 27. Charles Darwin       |
| 8. Bat               | 28. Plants               |
| 9. Cat               | 29. A star               |
| 10. Three-toed sloth | 30. Mars                 |
| 11. Russia           | 31. True                 |
| 12. London           | 32. The Triassic Period  |
| 13. Holland          | 33. Herbivore            |
| 14. Italy            | 34. T-Rex                |
| 15. Paris, France    | 35. Palaeontology        |
| 16. Sahara           | 36. True                 |
| 17. River Nile       | 37. Blue Whale           |
| 18. Madrid           | 38. Jurassic Park        |
| 19. The Himalayas    | 39. Dippy                |
| 20. Africa           | 40. Triceratops          |

### Answers Red Quiz

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Poland                   | 21. Elephant                           |
| 2. Two                      | 22. Marlon Brando                      |
| 3. Liver                    | 23. Ted Heath                          |
| 4. Spiders                  | 24. Zinc                               |
| 5. A murder                 | 25. (British) Open (Golf) Championship |
| 6. Lower jawbone            | 26. Taxidermy                          |
| 7. Thyroid gland            | 27. Radiation                          |
| 8. 186,000 miles per second | 28. Banana & Toffee                    |
| 9. Titan                    | 29. James Corden                       |
| 10. The Microwave cooker    | 30. Oxford and Cambridge               |
| 11. C                       | 31. Alcohol                            |
| 12. Retina                  | 32. Gravy                              |
| 13. 98 per cent             | 33. Joseph Conrad                      |
| 14. Jupiter                 | 34. Darth Vader                        |
| 15. Insulator               | 35. True                               |
| 16. Three                   | 36. Caterpillar                        |
| 17. Ag                      | 37. Hat or bonnet                      |
| 18. 24                      | 38. Kilo                               |
| 19. Smell                   | 39. Josiah Wedgwood                    |
| 20. The Fontanelle          | 40. Willow                             |



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There is a wealth of knowledge between us and we usually learn something new each month from each other at Banners Gate Community Hall.

There is **plenty of tea & coffee and usually some cake.**

Please call **Kathy 077 06 64 51 37** for details or just come along when we are next there and have a look at what we do.

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**The Banners Gate Community Hall is available at times during the week, including weekends.**

**The hall is approx. 38' x 21' (11.6m x 6.4m)**

**The kitchen is approx. 11' x 7' (3.4m x 2.2m)**

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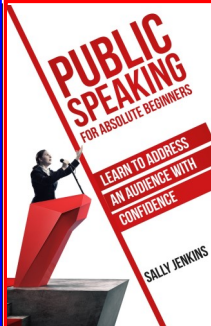
**The ladies has 2 cubicles and a nappy changing table.**

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**For further booking information go to:**

**[www.bannersgatecommunityassociation.org](http://www.bannersgatecommunityassociation.org)**



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## HATHA YOGA

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- \* Do you love dogs?
- \* Want to earn a little extra?
- \* Very flexible and fits into your lifestyle
- \* We are THE alternative to kennels in the area.
- \* Want to join a professional service?
- \* Then maybe being one of our many loving dog carers would be ideal for you!



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Earn from £105 to £207 p/w looking after dogs in your own home

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**0121 769 2706 07724 212204**  
**West Midlands North Branch**

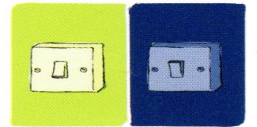
## Paul White Electrical

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**Paul Andrew White**  
Electrician

111 Wandsworth Road  
Birmingham  
B44 9LY  
07403445651

[p.white.electrical@gmail.com](mailto:p.white.electrical@gmail.com)  
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'Jenkins weaves a web of intrigue' – Judith Cutler.

The Promise is dark fiction set in Birmingham.  
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Give your little Mozart  
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- interactive concerts
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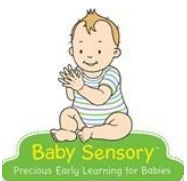
[www.rhythmcircle.co.uk](http://www.rhythmcircle.co.uk)



## SWIMMING LESSONS

for ages 4 and upwards:  
Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday  
Evenings

Local Pools ~ All Abilities  
Badge Work ~ Qualified Instructors  
**0121 353 6616**



**0 - 13 months**  
**Baby Development Class**  
**Wednesdays 9.30, 11.00 and 12.30**

Music, singing, exercise, massage, signing, light shows, bubbles, bells, tickly feathers and many more!! For more details:

Call Tracy Jones on 07753 82 56 22

Email: [suttoncoldfield@babysensory.co.uk](mailto:suttoncoldfield@babysensory.co.uk)

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Includes: Dry lining - Plaster boarding - Artex re-skimming - Replacement walls & ceilings - Painting / Decorating - Carpentry

**Lee Nugent**

36 Banners Gate Road  
Sutton Coldfield B73 6RX  
Office: 0121 354 5446  
Mobile: 07934 15 19 20  
[Lee.nugent1@virginmedia.com](mailto:Lee.nugent1@virginmedia.com)



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## HOME TUITION

Key Stage Two SATs tuition:  
English comprehension, spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Spanish and French: leisure courses and exam preparation to GCSE and A-level.

Tracy: 0780 329 3351



DAY/TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE	CONTACT	TEL.	<b>Useful telephone numbers</b> <b>Sutton and Kingstanding</b> <b>Police: 101</b> <b>Good Hope: 424 2000</b> <b>Outpatients: 424 2000</b> <b>NHS Health helpline:</b> <b>Call 111 it's 24/7</b> <b>Citizens Advice</b> <b>03444 111 444</b>
Sun (1st) 11.00 – 2.00 pm (1st) 4 – 7pm (1st) 7.00pm – 8.00pm 10.00 am 9.00 am – 11.00am 10.30 am 11.00 am	Create at Gate with K & S Global Communion Soul Yoga Family Communion For details see website at <a href="http://www.saintcolumbasbannersgate.co.uk">www.saintcolumbasbannersgate.co.uk</a>	Community Hall Community Hall Community Hall St. Columba's	Kathy Weston Pastor Chris 07565	628 6651 65 27 62  354 5873	
Mon 6.15am – 7.15am 11am – 1.00pm 5.30 – 7.00pm 7.30 – 8.30 pm	Stay in Focus Fitness Dementia Care The Girls' Society Line Dancing	Community Hall Community Hall Community Hall Community Hall	Barbara H-Walker 07872 98 76 10 Diane Pursall	553 6483  747 4659	
Tues 9.15 – 12.00pm 6.15 am – 7.15am 4.30 – 5.25 & 5.30 – 6.25 6.30 – 7.30 & 7.30 – 8.30 7.45 pm	Coffee Morning 3rd Tuesdays Stay in Focus Fitness IKA Sutton Kickboxing Line Dancing Chikara Karate Kai	Community Hall Community Hall Community Hall Community Hall St. Columba's	Chris Brown 07914 Joe 07864 Diane Pursall Paul Murphy 07837	79 44 56 84 22 99 747 4659 39 57 89	
Wed 9.30, 11.00 & 12.30 10.30 – 12.30 6 pm – 7pm 7.15 – 8.15	Baby Sensory Guide Dog Training Mid-week Service Bible Study I Yoga. Midlands	Banners Gate CC Community Hall Community Hall Community Hall	Tracy Jones 0775 Madge Nightingale Ola Samuel 07565 Angela Brookes 07939	82 56 22 360 0286 65 27 62 547392	<b>BANNERS GATE COUNSELLING CENTRE</b>  Accessible and Affordable Counselling to Adults in the Community. The Upper Room St. Michael's House 198 Boldmere Road Sutton Coldfield Tel : 0121 354 6544 For information or an appointment please ring after 10 a.m. daily, except Wednesday
Thurs 6.15am – 7.15am 10.00 – 11.00 am 6.30 – 9.45 pm 7.15 – 10.15 pm (4th & 2nd alt months) 7.30 pm (1st) 8.00 pm	Stay in Focus Fitness Holy Communion Yoga Zig Zag Dance Studio Bridge Townswomen's Guild Mothers' Union	Community Hall St. Columba's Community Hall St. Columba's Community Hall Banners Gate CC St. Columba's	Tricia 07954 Warren 01902 Sylvia Cunningham 07870 Josie Orme Judith Fennell	354 5873 40 39 43 897 900 82 98 37 352 1042 354 4390	
Fri 6.00 – 8.00pm	Make It Happen Dance Co	Community Hall	Mario Ferko 07908	51 76 84	
Sat					
<b>BOOKING SECRETARIES:</b> <b>Community Hall mobile:</b> 075 65 54 68 21 <b>Banners Gate CC</b> - June Dadd 07443 22 65 30 <b>St. Columba's</b> - Sallyanne Rowley 693 0084 <b>Scout Hall</b> - A & R Talliss 353 8166		<b>UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS:</b> <b>Scouts:</b> Margaret Drummond, 33rd GSL 353 5203 <b>Girlguiding:</b> Carol Gardner, Vesey West District Commissioner 350 7191			<b>Gatepost always needs volunteers, to cover illness and holidays, for deliveries of Gatepost - just 20 minutes every other month. Please call 605 4947 for further details if you think you can help us.</b>



Patron HRH The Princess Royal GCVO

**Thurs. 26<sup>th</sup> March** A.G.M. - Main Guild Meet  
**Wed. 22<sup>nd</sup> April** 50th Birthday Party  
**Thurs. 23<sup>rd</sup> April** A Taste of Burlesque - Main Guild Meeting  
**Thurs. 14<sup>th</sup> May** Little Aston Bell Ringers - Simply Social Meeting  
**Thurs. 28<sup>th</sup> May** Mandate Discussion - Main Guild Meeting  
 New members welcome.  
 If you wish to join our vibrant Guild please get in touch with Josie Orme 0121 352 1042.



**LoveWorld SUTTON COLDFIELD**

Specially invite you to

**Worship WITH US EVERY WEDNESDAY & SUNDAY**

**LoveWorld Sutton Coldfield:** Banners Gate Community Hall  
 35 Reay Nadin Drive, Sutton Coldfield B73 6UR  
**Contact Details:** 07565652762  
 loveworldsuttoncoldfield@gmail.com

Every Sunday 9am - 11am    Every Wednesday 6pm - 7pm    Communion service with Pastor Chris Every 1st Sunday of the month.

**Wanted, a Vice-Chair for the Forum**

The job: mainly to stand in for the Chair, if absent, but also to help with new ideas and to assist in maintaining the wide range of speakers we have for each meeting. For further details please call 605 4947.

The 18<sup>th</sup> Sutton Coldfield West Scout Group and the 15<sup>th</sup> Sutton Coldfield West Scout Group have merged and are now named the 33<sup>rd</sup> Headquarters are at the Scout Hut, Coppice View Road. B73 6UE.

**33<sup>rd</sup> Sutton Coldfield Scout Group,**  
 H.Q. Coppice View Road


Monday Beavers 5.30 p.m. – 6.45 p.m. ages 6 – 8 years  
 Scouts 7.00 p.m. – 9.00 p.m. ages 10 ½ – 14 years  
 Tuesday Beavers 5.40 p.m. – 6.40 p.m. ages 6 – 8 years  
 Cubs 7.00 p.m. – 8.30 p.m. ages 8 – 10 ½ years  
 Thursday Cubs 7.00 p.m. – 8.30 p.m. ages 8 – 10 ½ years  
**Contact 0121 353 5203**  
 Email: margaretdrummond1@btinternet.com



**Girlguiding gives girls and young women a voice.....has done so for 100 years.....be part of the next 100**

Could you spare 1½ hours a week to help with the St Columba's Guide unit? Gain real satisfaction in volunteering and helping to ensure girls in Banners Gate aged 10 – 14 can continue to enjoy games, projects, badges and outings at Guides.

There are also places available in both Brownie units in September for girls aged 7 or 8.  
 For more information contact Carol Gardner on 350 7191.



Day/Time	Activity	Venue	Contact	Tel
Mon 6.00 - 7.30pm	39th Brownies	St Columba's Hall		354 5873
Tues 6.00 - 7.30pm	45th Brownies	St Columba's Hall	Carol Gardner	350 7191
Thurs 5.00 - 6.00pm	39th Rainbows	St Columba's Hall		354 5873