



Summer has arrived and it seems that everything has opened up a little. We have been assured by the surgery that there are not many COVID-19 cases in our immediate locality, but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't remain vigilant. Many COVID-watchers are expecting a second wave and we must all keep wearing our face coverings.

On a lighter and more exciting note, Our Place Wye is delighted to announce two appointments: Amy Williams as communicator to oversee the Facebook page and production of this newsletter; and Maria Stuttaford as COVID-coordinator for Wye. They will be making themselves known to many of you over the next few months. These posts have been funded by Wye with Hinxhill Parish Council (Amy) and Kent Community Foundation along with The National Lottery (Maria). Welcome to both of them.

WYE SCHOOL DURING LOCKDOWN

Margaret Williams, Chair of Governors, Wye School

As a school we knew lockdown was coming, so we were able to plan ahead and acknowledge the huge challenge this would be for students, families and staff. Students were already using an online tool 'Show my Homework', where staff are able to deliver teaching, set homework and give feedback. Our sixth form students work in small teaching groups so have been able to have their lessons using Microsoft Teams.

We are very concerned to support all of our students both in their learning and their welfare. We have been able to provide Chrome Notebooks for students that didn't have their own laptops and have maintained contact with them via regular emails, phone calls, some home visits and on Twitter. The vast majority of students have engaged with learning, but for our more vulnerable students we do all we can to support them and their families.

Following recent easing of the lockdown restrictions our Y10 students came into school in small groups for lessons in English, Maths and Science once a week. Our Y12 students also had some face-to-face sessions with their tutors.

Plan for September

At the time of writing, we aim for all students to return to school full time in September. There is a comprehensive programme of regular cleaning throughout the school and we will have a one-way system in place for social distancing. Each year group will be in their own "bubble" with staggered break and lunch times.

Induction for new students, both Y7 and sixth form, was online in July. The transition from primary to secondary school is really important, and we put information on our website, with a video and welcome messages from the headteacher, senior staff and current Y7 students.

The school website contains lots of information, but also shows some of the fun things our school has done. We had online assemblies put together by our teachers and ran activities like a Virtual Sports Day. All of our staff deserve huge praise for their efforts – whether working from home or in school. Our school community is strong and we all work hard to support and care for each other.

THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY AT WYE SURGERY BY DR ALLAN FOX

I cannot tell you how proud I am of the way that the General Practice responded so quickly to the COVID crisis. We are also enormously grateful for the positive feedback we have had throughout this period, which has impacted everyone in one way or another. The staff has been heroic, coming in to the front line at the time of maximum COVID risk, some volunteering to go to the COVID hot site, knowing that almost everyone they saw was at high risk of having active COVID infection.

Special thanks must go to Dr Jess Crouch, our new partner who stepped up to the plate when Jolyon Miles and I started working from home. Jess has shown herself to be a born leader and has taken advantage of having us out of the way to improve systems further! Helen Goodman, our manager, worked very long hours and proved herself to be enormously flexible and skilled in managing multiple new problems as they quickly arose in the first few weeks and beyond; we are indebted to her. All the clinical and support staff, too many to name but they know who they are, can be proud of keeping the surgery going whilst wearing PPE and checking everyone's temperatures on arrival, frequent cleaning of handles and surfaces and everything else that is required to minimise risk to patients and staff. I know there has been genuine fear in the surgery of contracting the virus but they pressed on regardless. Thank you all.

We are not out of the woods yet and I would still urge caution, particularly if you are at high risk. Until there is evidence of complete eradication in our area, social distancing or protective masks should remain the norm. It is difficult to establish numbers of new cases in our area as the figures given are for total cases. It is clear though that Kent, perhaps because it is a "commuter county", has had a relatively high number of cases per 100,000 population.

Clinics are starting to re-open, with our musculoskeletal and cardiology clinics now open. We hope microsuction will begin soon, with minor surgery starting if risk remains low. Consultant led clinics should restart as clinicians who were seconded to cover the wards or ICU are released back to their former roles. Ashford was a hotspot for COVID and they will have been fully employed dealing with COVID-19 cases. We owe our thanks for their brave efforts too. Thanks must also go to all of you who were in essential roles and carried on at great risk to yourselves and families during the peak of the epidemic.

Let us hope we can all get back to some normality as soon as possible.

This lovely card came from **Wye Surgery** thanking all our volunteers for the help and support to the practice, patients and community over the last few months



AN UPDATE FROM BRAMBLES

Nicola Copley, Home Manager

The coronavirus has had an impact on life at Brambles, but normality has been the key word throughout, as staff have worked hard to ensure residents continue to have an enjoyable time in a safe environment.

Brambles are happy to say that we began accepting visitors from 6 July. This is under strict guidelines and by appointment only, but so far has made lots of residents very happy to see their loved ones. The only prior contact residents have had with relatives during lockdown has been either over the telephone or via Skype.

Residents have continued to enjoy a varied activity programme of sing-a-longs via Zoom, the Fellowship via Skype, art and craft activities, quizzes, gardening and a surprise tea party for all staff, to show appreciation for keeping residents safe. All staff received a trinket box, handmade by the residents. We were also able to celebrate milestone events, including Mother's Day, VE Day and Father's Day.

Letters, gifts and handmade tokens have flooded Brambles during the lockdown period. These have been warmly received by all. These have come from the local community and school children. It is hoped that once some normality can resume, we will invite everyone for a tea party in the garden to show our appreciation.

A VIRTUAL LUNCH WITH JAMES JIRTLE

What brought you to Wye?

We were living in south London and had been house hunting in Ashford on a beautiful spring day when we stumbled across The Tickled Trout and then saw the sign for the Downs View development – it was love at first sight!

What do you like about the area?

We are so thankful especially during lockdown to live in such a beautiful area and to be part of such a vibrant community.

Have you met anyone famous?

My dad is a geneticist and I used to work in his laboratory during the summers. One year I went with him to a conference in San Diego where he was presenting some of the projects I'd worked on and got to sit next to Francis Crick, one of the people who discovered DNA, at lunch. I was an excited 13-year-old and he was very kind to take the time to talk to me.

How have you been spending lockdown?

Between working from home and helping homeschool our two children I've been working on a few projects, including an app that tells you when the level crossing will be closed. It uses data from Network Rail to work out when trains are passing through Wye and then assumes the gates will be shut 5 minutes before to 1 minute after. You can use the app for free by bookmarking **wyelevelcrossing.uk** or adding the link to your home screen. An iPhone-specific version of the app will be available soon – watch this space!

Picked up any peculiar habits?

Filling out eConsult forms for the Surgery! We all had coronavirus just before the lockdown and it is taking me quite a long time to recover, but I appreciate all of the care from the doctors and nurses here and at the William Harvey Hospital.

What are you having for lunch today?

We're planning to take a picnic up to Herne Bay to do some fossil hunting with the kids.



Welcome to Wye!

Our Place Wye recently took over another initiative: the **Welcome Pack**. This is delivered to all newcomers to the village, with a friendly knock on the door to say hello. The pack contains the latest edition of the Parish Magazine, a letter of welcome and a very useful Wye Village Information leaflet. This was paused during lockdown, but will be back in business from September.

Could you please help by letting us know if anyone has recently moved in near to where you live. We don't want anyone to be left out, if we can possibly avoid it. Over to you.....!

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WYE CHURCH UPDATE

We're delighted to let you know that socially distanced services began happening at Wye Church at 10am on Sundays from the start of July.

The seating has been arranged so that people can sit two metres away from anyone outside their household, and given the size of the building we are able to safely accommodate up to 80 people. For those who prefer to join us from home, services will continue to be streamed live via the Wye Benefice Virtual Facebook page.

The Sunday morning services are following the same pattern as before, with Communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, Morning Prayer on the 2nd and All Age Worship on the 4th. For the time being we will not be able to sing and it will be a non-contact Communion! Sadly, we can't offer Sunday Club for the children, but we have socially distanced chairs and tables if you want to bring your own colouring sheets and pens.

We'd love to have you with us, either physically or remotely. Please feel free to call in during the week for a moment of quiet reflection. In whatever way works for you, keep in touch as we continue to be a worshipping and a caring presence in the centre of our village community.

God bless and keep safe!

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Hints from a veg gardener: part II, this time it's seasonal! By Marc Farr

1. In the land of the blind, the one-eyed potato is king. Grow stuff that's easy and congratulatory. Keep trying to bury them alive while pretending you're starring in a gangster film and they'll keep popping up to give you a friendly wave.
2. Don't build your herb garden downwind of the dumping ground for wetsuits and inflatables unless you want to spend most evenings trying to talk your spearmint and oregano back to life after they've been pummelled again.
3. Buy the right paraphernalia on Amazon so that you don't have to stake out your spinach using ribbon from the balloons at your daughter's birthday party.
4. Continue to rapidly acquire, and then pass off nonchalantly as your own, new gardening terms. This week 'pinching out'; the process of pulling away the shoots in-between the main tomato trunks / arms / legs / stalks / thingies.
5. Thank god for this wonderful mix of sun and rain so that you can tell any six year old girls you see that your sunflower will definitely beat theirs in any height competition. Ideally make them cry.

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