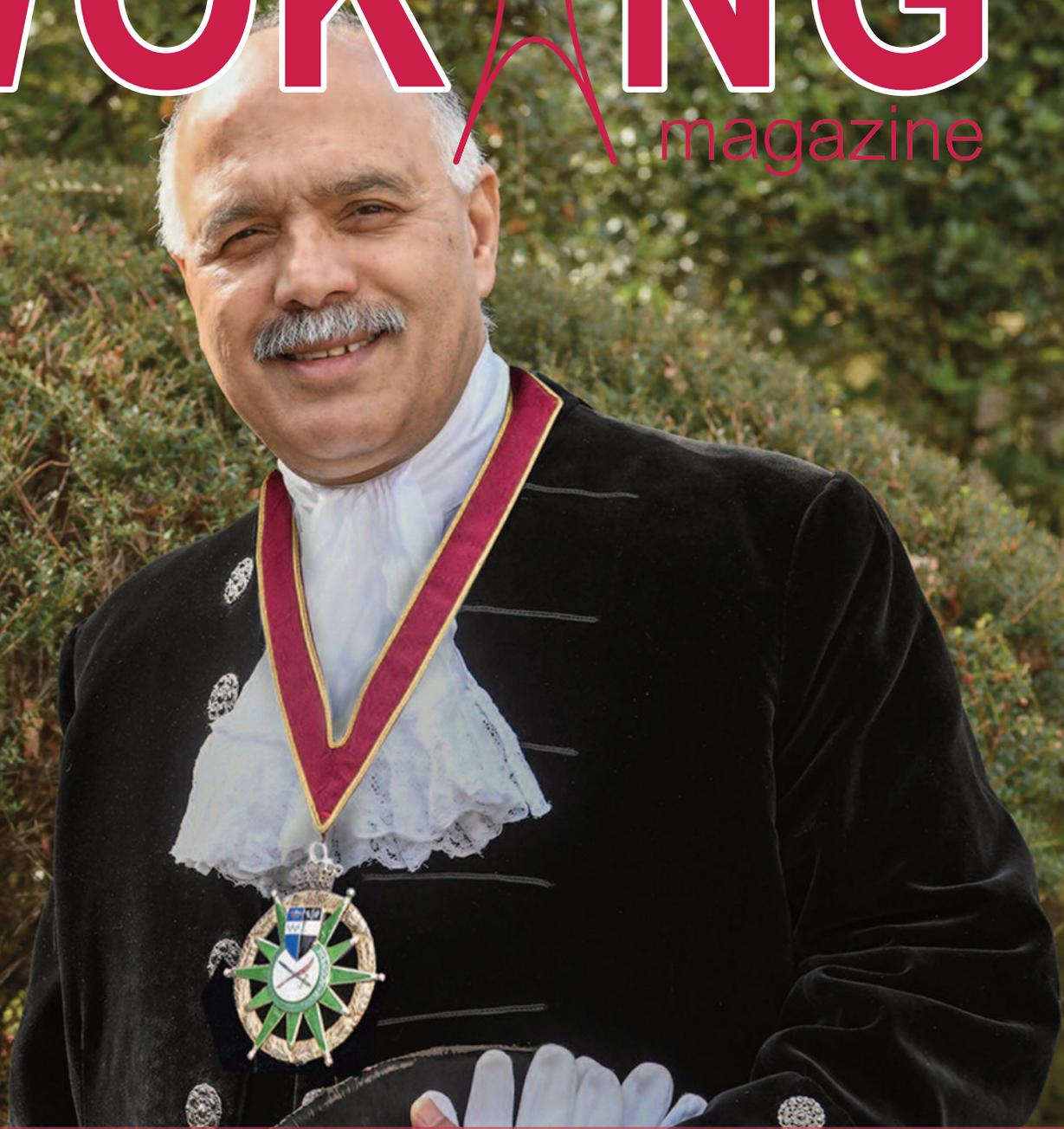


the

WOKING

magazine



Meet the new
High Sheriff of Surrey

Welcome more wildlife
into your garden

Summer 2020

Please read and then recycle

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woking-shopping.co.uk

To ensure the safety of all our visitors, retail partners and staff, we have adopted the following measures at Woking Shopping:



We have an enhanced cleaning regime including the regular cleaning of all key touch points



We have introduced additional signage to assist everybody in following the latest social distancing guidelines



You'll spot a lot of visual cues to ensure everybody is maintaining a 2 metre distance between each other. If you're unsure about anything, please ask



Our teams are following a strict personal hygiene regime including regularly washing hands, the use of disposable gloves and disposable respirators

Help us to help keep you safe.



WOKING SHOPPING

Peacocks • Wolsey Place

#WEAREWOKING

Introduction



Welcome to the summer edition of The Woking Magazine.

After the past three months of lockdown, this edition comes to you at a time when life is starting to return to normal.

It will undoubtedly be a new normal, and it is hard to predict what that will look like at the time of writing, but hopefully as we move through summer, life will feel more familiar than the unprecedented situation we have recently seen.

Inside, you will find a joint message from the borough's political leaders reflecting on the past three months, whilst #WeAreWoking celebrates the ingenuity and resilience of you, our residents.

Meanwhile, Woking Works guides you through some of the measures we're taking to support a smooth return to business as usual as shops and restaurants across the borough reopen their doors.

In a time that has been unsettling for so many, it is even more important than ever to look after your mental wellbeing, so you will also find top tips on how to keep active, live a greener life and reconnect with nature waiting for you.

Elsewhere, we check in with Cllr Beryl Hunwicks, who remains in post as Mayor of Woking for a subsequent year owing to the cancellation of the May elections. We meet Shahid Azeem DL who has recently been installed as High Sheriff of Surrey and we get to know the newly appointed Borough Commander, Dave Bentley.

Don't forget, your local councillors are still here for you throughout these challenging times. You will find your local elected representative in our up-to-date directory.

Whatever your experience of lockdown has been so far, please continue to stay safe, stay alert and have a relaxed and revitalising summer.

Andy Denner

The Woking Magazine Editor

#WEAREWOKING

Front cover: High Sheriff Shahid Azeem
Inset: Peacock Butterfly



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The Woking Magazine is compiled and published three times a year by Woking Borough Council. A total of 50,000 copies are printed and delivered free to households and many public information points across the borough.

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Design: Quantum PR

If you wish to **advertise** in The Woking Magazine, please call Andy Denner on 01483 743026, or email andy.denner@woking.gov.uk

The appearance of adverts or loose leaf inserts in The Woking Magazine does not constitute an endorsement by the Council. The Woking Magazine is distributed to households via Royal Mail. We have no control over the type or quantity of other materials that are delivered by Royal Mail at the same time.

Joint leaders' statement

Dear Residents,

At the beginning of this crisis, we set aside our political differences to stand together in our shared purpose of protecting and supporting our community during the coronavirus pandemic.

As your elected representatives, we have worked in partnership with senior council officers to deliver the necessary steps that continue to support you, our residents, during this difficult time.

We have seen first-hand the tremendous efforts made by our Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, and our own dedicated officers, as well as colleagues from other essential service providers. We have also witnessed amazing support by our community, registering over 550 volunteers. We are inspired by the acts of togetherness, kindness and selflessness – thank you to all of you.

During the past months, council officers have been joined by colleagues from partner organisations, such as Freedom Leisure, providing unprecedented levels of support for our elderly and vulnerable residents. Since lockdown was introduced, we have delivered almost 11,000 community meals, made over 10,000 individual calls to 'shielded' elderly and vulnerable residents, delivered over 430 prescriptions, placed more than 80 people at risk of homelessness in emergency accommodation and worked with more than 1,200 households in financial hardship to arrange alternative Council Tax payment plans.

Like many of you, we have had to adapt to new ways of working. Through video conferencing technology, we have resumed council and committee meetings. The newly enacted Coronavirus Act 2020 also provides revisions to a range of local government procedures and activities, including the deferment of local elections until May 2021. The deferment of democratic roles and associated responsibilities also means that the current Mayor, Cllr Beryl Hunwicks, and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Saj Hussain, will remain in office for another municipal year.

With the easing of lockdown restrictions we can begin the careful process of returning to a more normal way of life. Following government advice, we have already taken steps to reopen some of our recreation facilities, such as public tennis courts. We will continue to act in line with ongoing government advice when opening more public facilities and services. These will resume as soon as we can be sure it is safe to do so.

The coronavirus has severely affected our strong business community. Many have stepped up to the challenge by adapting and diversifying and, wherever possible, we are working with local businesses to support them with their recovery. So far we have distributed almost £13 million to over 900 local businesses through the Government's small business support grant scheme, which provides much needed financial support during these critical times.

We are privileged to have a strong commercial and retail base that provides employment to many local residents. Therefore we urge you to support these businesses and, wherever possible, shop and trade locally.

We have all made many sacrifices to our cherished way of life. Nonetheless, this crisis is not over. It remains imperative that we all take responsibility for our actions and follow government advice to socially distance and stay alert.

There are still many hurdles ahead of us and we are not afraid to take the necessary action to safeguard our community. Yet, by coming together, supporting our local businesses and remaining tolerant of each other, we can work towards a brighter, thriving future.

For more information about council services, government and health advice, access help and support, volunteer opportunities and support for businesses, please visit

www.woking.gov.uk/coronavirus



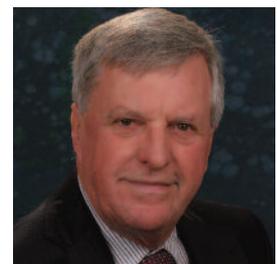
Cllr David Bittleston
Leader of Woking Borough
Council, Conservative Party



Cllr Tahir Aziz
Leader, Labour Party



Cllr Ann-Marie Barker
Leader, Liberal
Democrats



Cllr John Bond
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Cinema refurbishment back on track

A major multi-million pound refurbishment of Woking's Ambassadors Cinema is gathering pace ahead of a hoped-for reopening once work is completed this summer and when guidelines allow.

The Ambassadors Cinema closed in September 2019 as part of a joint investment plan between Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG) and Woking Borough Council to transform the much-loved venue into a new and exciting state-of-the-art entertainment facility.

A significant collaboration in the town's transformation programme, the plans include the introduction of spacious high-quality auditoriums, new bars and a lounge, and the addition of a luxury screen, bringing the total number of screens available up to seven.

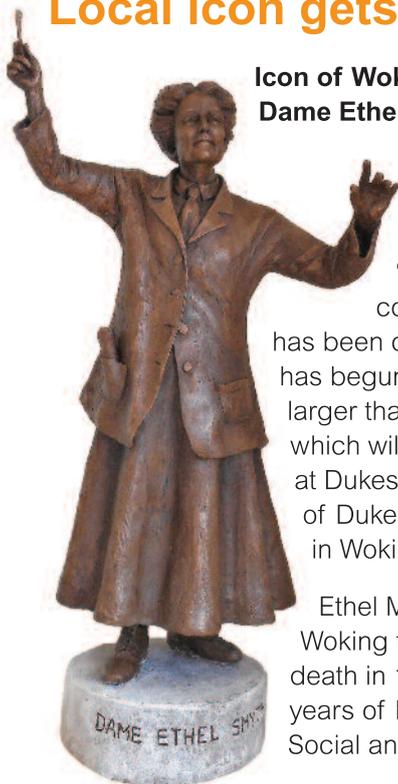
A media room and learning space for education, research and meetings is also planned at the cinema which first opened almost three decades ago.

The cinema's order of new high-spec seats recently arrived from Australia in 1,500 separate boxes, while nine new air-handling units have already been successfully lifted onto the venue's roof by crane from Jubilee Square.

The all-round upgrade will give film goers a local and premium independent cinema experience with state-of-the-art projection and industry-leading sound equipment.



Local icon gets permanent podium



Icon of Woking's suffrage past, Dame Ethel Smyth, is set to be immortalised in sculpture.

A quarter-size 'maquette' of the composer-come-activist has been completed and work has begun to transform it into a larger than life-size statue, which will take pride of place at Dukes Court on the corner of Duke Street and Locke Way in Woking town centre.

Ethel Mary Smyth lived in Woking from 1910 until her death in 1944. She devoted two years of her life to the Women's Social and Political Union,

including a brief period of imprisonment in Holloway Jail. She is especially well known for her song 'March of the Women' which she composed whilst living in Hook Heath.

Thousands of suffragettes marched to Hyde Park singing the song and Dame Ethel Smyth conducted with her toothbrush from her prison cell.

Artist, Christine Charlesworth, said: "I am extremely excited to have been chosen to create the portrait figure of Dame Ethel Smyth. She will be depicted enthusiastically conducting passers-by, with her toothbrush as her baton."

Dame Ethel's statue will join the rich trail of public art that brightens the streets of the town centre which include world famous sci-fi author HG Wells, cricketing legends Eric and Alex Bedser, local artist Shaun Henry's series of figurative statues and Team GB Paralympian Ade Adepitan MBE.

Sign up to receive our latest news

If you live or work in Woking and would like to receive updates straight to your inbox you can now sign up to the Council's newsletter.

Each newsletter will round-up all the latest news and services updates, as well as community updates and positive local stories.

To subscribe, simply visit www.woking.gov.uk/newsletter and complete the online form.

Those residents with a keen eye on green initiatives around the borough can also sign up to the regular Natural Woking newsletter by visiting www.woking.gov.uk/naturalwokingnews

Grants available for local community groups

Local voluntary and community groups can apply for a grant for the next financial year (April 2021 to March 2022) from Monday 6 July 2020 through the Council's Community Grants Scheme.

The scheme helps local not-for-profit community and voluntary groups which may be in need of financial assistance to continue providing services to the public. It supports both capital funding, such as the purchase of equipment or one-off projects, and revenue funding such as salaries and rent.

Last year, organisations awarded support included Citizens Advice Woking, Maybury and Sheerwater Community Trust, Woking Community Transport and Woking ShopMobility. Domestic abuse charity Your Sanctuary were awarded a grant towards the cost of organising outreach, helpline and refuge support in Woking.

Application forms for the 2021/22 financial year are available online from Monday 6 July 2020. The closing date is Friday 4 September 2020. To apply, visit www.woking.gov.uk/communitygrantscheme

For assistance in completing the form, please contact the Council's Democratic Services on **01483 743863** or email member.services@woking.gov.uk



The Your Sanctuary helpline service is available between 9am and 9pm, seven days a week and can be reached on **01483 776822** or via www.yoursanctuary.org.uk

Multi-million pound investment secured for Woking's future

Woking Borough Council has finalised the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) contract, securing a grant of £95 million from central Government.

This significant economic boost will help to support enhanced highways, pedestrian and rail links for Woking town centre and, much needed new homes.

Responding to the successful completion of the project's latest milestone, Cllr David Bittleston, Leader of Woking Borough Council, said: "Confirmation of this significant grant is welcome news during these challenging and unprecedented times. This funding provides a pillar of certainty for Woking's economic future and vitality."

This major project is led by Woking Borough Council in partnership with Surrey County Council and Network Rail.

It is anticipated that works will commence later this year.

For more information, including the proposal's maps, and to subscribe to the project's e-newsletter, please visit www.woking.gov.uk/victoriaarchscheme

Call of the wild

A sign which commemorates Woking's twin towns and provides a nesting chamber for swifts has begun playing call signs to attract these unique birds.

Swift calls are played from the chamber each day during nesting season to encourage the returning birds to stop by and call the nesting chamber home.

Swifts migrate through Europe to spend their winter in Africa – an annual round trip of some 22,000 km (14,000 miles) – before returning to breed in the UK late spring for the summer.

Designed by 51 architecture, the sign's stonework base design beautifully illustrates this amazing journey.

Swifts are a bird species in sharp decline and over the past 20 years the UK's swift numbers have halved.

Bird loving residents are being asked to keep their eyes on the sky and report any sightings of the endangered visitor to Surrey Bird Club at conservation@surreybirdclub.org.uk



swifts © James Sellen

#WEAREWOKING

TOGETHER

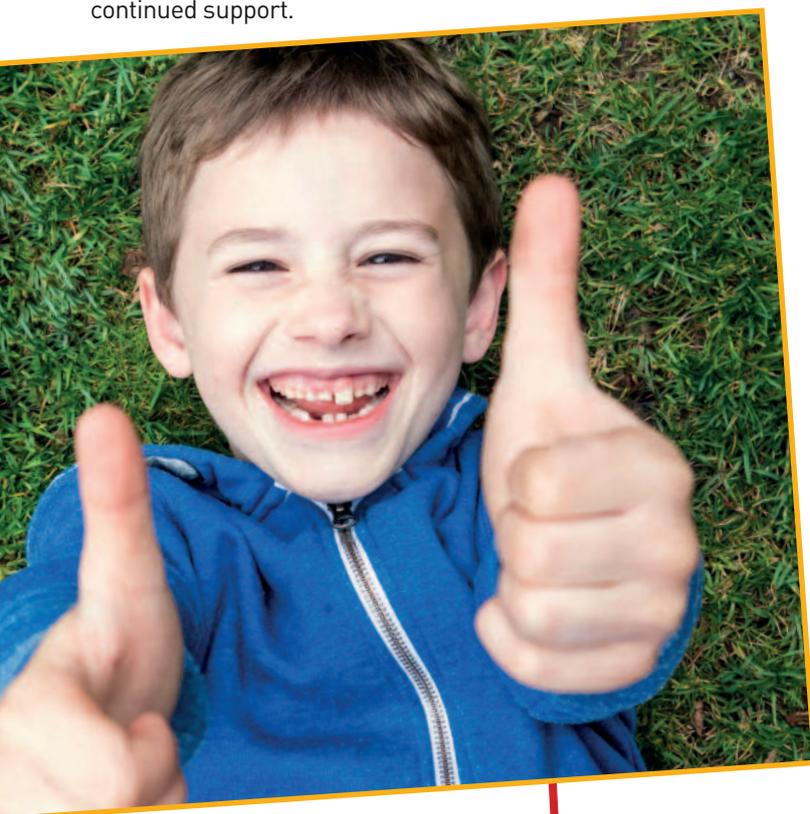
THANK YOU!

The response by Woking's residents, businesses and the wider community to the Covid-19 crisis has been unprecedented.

Despite the enormous challenges and the huge impact on our lives, people from right across the borough came together to support and help our frontline workers, community groups and those in need as part of a major response that harnessed the real spirit of Woking.

For weeks, we have helped to show that Woking is stronger together and that everyone's actions have helped to pave the way for recovery and a return to a normality that we have missed.

To those of all ages who gave up their time to help the most vulnerable, who kindly gave donations, and to those who also worked on our behalf during the worst of times – bin crews, delivery crews, supermarket workers, cleaners, food producers, health and care workers and more, thank you for playing your part and for your continued support.



WOKING NEWS & MAIL

Partnerships work. It's why we were immensely proud to support the Woking News & Mail in its mission to share important local community news, views, advice and tips to keep everyone informed when they needed it most.

Part of Woking's fabric and reflecting who we are since 1894, this iconic local newspaper was delivered free to thousands of homes right across the borough, keeping everyone up to date while shining a spotlight on the positive community effort which unfolded every day.

Well done to Mark (the editor) and all the team.

WOKING UNITES TO HELP THOSE IN NEED

Supported by generous donations from the public, churches and local businesses – and helped by an army of volunteers – Woking Foodbank and the Shah Jahan Mosque ramped up deliveries of food and essential supplies to meet local demand.

Established community groups also stepped up to provide support, including Horsell Prepared, which enlisted record numbers of volunteers to help local people who were self-isolating with shopping, prescriptions and more.

Businesses including Morrisons, Waitrose and Red Lion Horsell also offered generous donations and much-needed support, while many others waived charges or provided welcome discounts for frontline workers.



WOKING FOODBANK'S ROYAL APPROVAL

The Countess of Wessex arrived in Woking to help volunteers at Woking Foodbank prepare deliveries for local people impacted by the coronavirus crisis.

Working alongside others at Woking Foodbank's Lighthouse and Sheerwater depots, while observing social distancing guidelines, Sophie congratulated the hardworking team for their huge effort in helping to get hundreds of food parcels ready and dispatched.

Sophie's visit to Woking was also featured in the Daily Mail and in Hello! magazine, making headlines around the world.



MCLAREN'S FRONTLINE RESPONSE

One of Woking's best-known businesses, McLaren, joined the national response and won government approval for the first new medical ventilator to treat people with severe symptoms of Covid-19 as part of a high-level business consortium.

McLaren F1 team principal Andreas Seidl said that during the shutdown period for the race team, the full focus at the factory had been on its ventilator production efforts and that staff were working 20 hours a day with a clear knowledge and aim to hopefully save lives.

BUSINESSES SWITCH GEAR

A host of best-loved food producers, restaurants, pubs and cafés turned to delivery and collection to ensure that Woking's locals didn't miss out on all their food and drink favourites.

From milk, bread, steak, vegetables, eggs, chillies, pizza, curry and kebabs to high-end culinary delights, there was always a huge choice on offer to keep everyone going.

As more of us moved online, fitness experts from right across Woking also rallied the troops to encourage everyone to get some movement into their day.

Active Surrey helped to lead the way, providing top tips and guidance to keep everyone fit and healthy, and boost the mind while Woking library made sure everyone was well entertained and educated with a ramped-up online service that included free access to thousands of titles, magazines, e-books and audio books.



CEE-JAY'S FRONTLINE RESPONSE

Faced with the temporary closure of the Junction Tap pub on Chertsey Road, general manager Cee-Jay Williams joined the nationwide effort to help support our NHS.

The General Manager of one of Woking's best-loved pubs joined forces with friend Tim Charlesworth, to help ensure NHS frontline workers had the vital equipment they needed in the fight against Covid-19.

With valuable time on his hands, Cee-Jay Williams made the best use of his time making key components as part of a major PPE consignment using a high-tech 3D printer.

KIM'S LOCKDOWN MARATHON

Despite the restrictions, local resident Kim Owens smashed her marathon fundraising target by raising more than £4,800 for a local charity after a gruelling race around her own home which she streamed live to hundreds of supporters online.

Kim had hoped to raise £3,000 for LinkAble as part of the inspirational nationwide '2.6 challenge' to help support local charities but with gift aid she raised £4,842.79.

LinkAble delivers a diverse range of services for children and adults with learning disabilities in the Woking and Surrey Heath area, including holiday schemes, crafts, cycling and drama.

"The support I received from my family, friends and neighbours was unbelievable," said Kim.

And even after that mammoth effort, Kim still plans to run the London Marathon this October.



For the latest updates, visit www.wearewoking.com or email hello@wearewoking.com to share your stories.



Reflections on a Mayoral year

It's been a thrilling year for Cllr Beryl Hunwicks, the 46th Mayor of Woking, and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Saj Hussain - the borough's elected representatives of Her Majesty the Queen. We catch up with Cllr Hunwicks as she reflects on the past 12 months.

"Since becoming Mayor I have attended more than 200 events and met with almost as many voluntary and charitable organisations across the borough. It's been an incredible year, learning about their work, celebrating the borough's achievements and seeing first-hand the kindness, compassion and commitment of our many wonderful volunteers.

"It's almost impossible to say what have been the highlights of my time in office. From coffee mornings to carol concerts, I am grateful for every invitation and each event has been unique or special in some way. I would need to write a book to do them all justice!



"Last year's KidsOut Day will however stay with me for a long time. Supported by Woking and Woking District Rotary Clubs, disadvantaged children from across the borough were treated to a fun day out at the Army Rugby Stadium in Aldershot with their families and carers.

"It was an absolute joy to see them smiling and having a thoroughly good time in spite of critical illness, disability or other challenging circumstances.

"I was struck by how precious childhood is and I'm enormously grateful to the volunteers and helpers who gave these young people something happy and memorable to look back upon.

"On Christmas Day I attended the Lions Christmas lunch at Moorcroft Centre for the Community, where around 30 residents, who would otherwise have been on their own, were having a marvellous time!

"The oldest volunteer was 94 years of age and the youngest, Theodore, was



just 11. He took great pride in helping his mum to serve the meals. It made me think about the depth of involvement in helping others across all generations, which is so heartening.

"For me, the most important part of my role as Mayor has been to acknowledge publically, the great number of voluntary and charitable groups within the borough, and to thank them for all that they do.

"I am the first Woking Mayor to have had a Facebook page and Twitter account, which I have used in addition to my weekly column in the Woking News and Mail, to highlight their services, applaud their contribution and highlight what a great place Woking is to live.

"If you've been keeping up-to-date then you will hopefully understand when I say I was looking forward to an end of term break!

"But that was before coronavirus turned our lives upside down, and when I think about the year ahead, I am lifted by the bravery of our key workers, and the kindness, generosity and ingenuity that we have seen of late.

"I am truly humbled to be Woking's Mayor during this extraordinary time and will do all I can to support the recovery and rehabilitation of our wonderful and vibrant borough over the next 12 months."

The restrictions put in place to protect people during the coronavirus pandemic has made life tougher for those in abusive households. The Mayor will continue to support and fundraise for local domestic abuse charity, YourSanctuary, during the 2020/21 mayoral year.

Cllr Hunwicks will be succeeded by Cllr Lyons who will be appointed as Mayor at the Council's Annual Meeting on 20 May 2021, for the year 2021 to 2022. Cllr Hussain will continue as Deputy Mayor and will be appointed Mayor for 2022/23.





Horsell Garden Safari: Every year Horsell residents showcase their delightful gardens to other villagers.



Byfleet Parish Day: I loved reviewing the prize winning displays of fruit and veg, and some of the floral arrangements were absolutely stunning!



Remembering the D Day landings: I attend many memorial events at Brookwood Cemetery but the D Day commemorations organised by the Royal British Legion stands out because of the involvement of Knaphill Brownies and pupils from Brookwood School.



Playtime in West Byfleet: I love spending time with children. The turnout at the opening of the newly refurbished play area in West Byfleet was truly splendid. We all had a ball!



The magic of Mizens: Seeing Father Christmas arrive at the start of the festive season, on board the Mizens Railway, was a magical experience, bringing with him glad tidings, mince pies and mulled wine!



Flipping good fun: I was delighted to support Shopmobility's annual pancake race, which always draws a crowd and raises vital funds along with a smile or two.

In the spotlight...



Name: Cllr Saj Hussain
Ward: Knaphill
First elected: 2012
Appointments: Deputy Mayor 2019/20 and 2020/21
Occupation: Postmaster

Please sum up your experience as Deputy Mayor

I have enjoyed supporting the Mayor and have been impressed by the very warm welcome I've received when attending official engagements or meeting our many volunteers.

Favourite event since taking office?

The opening of the Woking Wharf on the Basingstoke Canal was a thrilling event and the first I attended as Deputy Mayor along with my daughter who has been my official Deputy Mayoress.

The opening of the 154th Byfleet Parish Day was a particularly memorable occasion when I rode with the Parish Day King and Queen in the 'royal carriage'.

What do you think is the most important part of your role?

Supporting the Mayor and when acting on her behalf, ensuring civic functions are carried out with dignity and prestige.

Tell us about your proudest moment so far

It would have to be leading the 2019 Woking Poppy Day celebrations alongside the Borough's Armed Forces Champion, John Kingsbury. It poured with rain and everything had to be relocated to Mercia Walk, including the marching band and several companies of cadets.

We managed to put on a good show nonetheless in support of our armed forces past and present, and raised much needed funds for the Royal British Legion's Annual Poppy Appeal.

Cllr Hussain will be appointed as Mayor at the Council's Annual Meeting in May 2022 for the year 2022/23.

Welcome back to Woking!



Over the coming months, residents, workers and visitors to the borough will be able to safely reconnect with their favourite shops, cafes, restaurants and bars.

Woking Borough Council has been working closely with its Woking Works partners during the lockdown, to help our businesses get through the crisis, publicising and signposting them to the wide range of local and government support available.

This has ranged from business rates relief for the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, through small business grants, to national measures such as VAT and tax deferment, furloughing employees, and loan schemes.

We hope that this support will help as many of the borough's businesses as possible to weather the coronavirus storm, and emerge ready for a safe reopening.

The Council is now looking at how best to translate government guidance into practical measures to keep our residents, workers and visitors to Woking's centres safe and well. Woking Shopping will be carefully managing queues and customer flows to ensure social distancing, their cleaning regime will be enhanced, and measures such as hand sanitiser will be available at mall entrances.

Our public spaces and car parks will also be cleaned and sanitised more regularly and, where necessary, queue distancing measures will be introduced. We are also working with the borough's shops, and when

allowed to reopen, restaurants, bars and cafes, to help them ensure their premises are safe to visit, adhering to social distancing rules.

Woking Works and its partners will be supporting the borough's businesses through the transition from lockdown to reopening.

Woking Works and its partners will continue to support the borough's businesses through this transition period, particularly working with shops, and then restaurants, bars and cafes in due course, to help them ensure their premises are safe to visit.

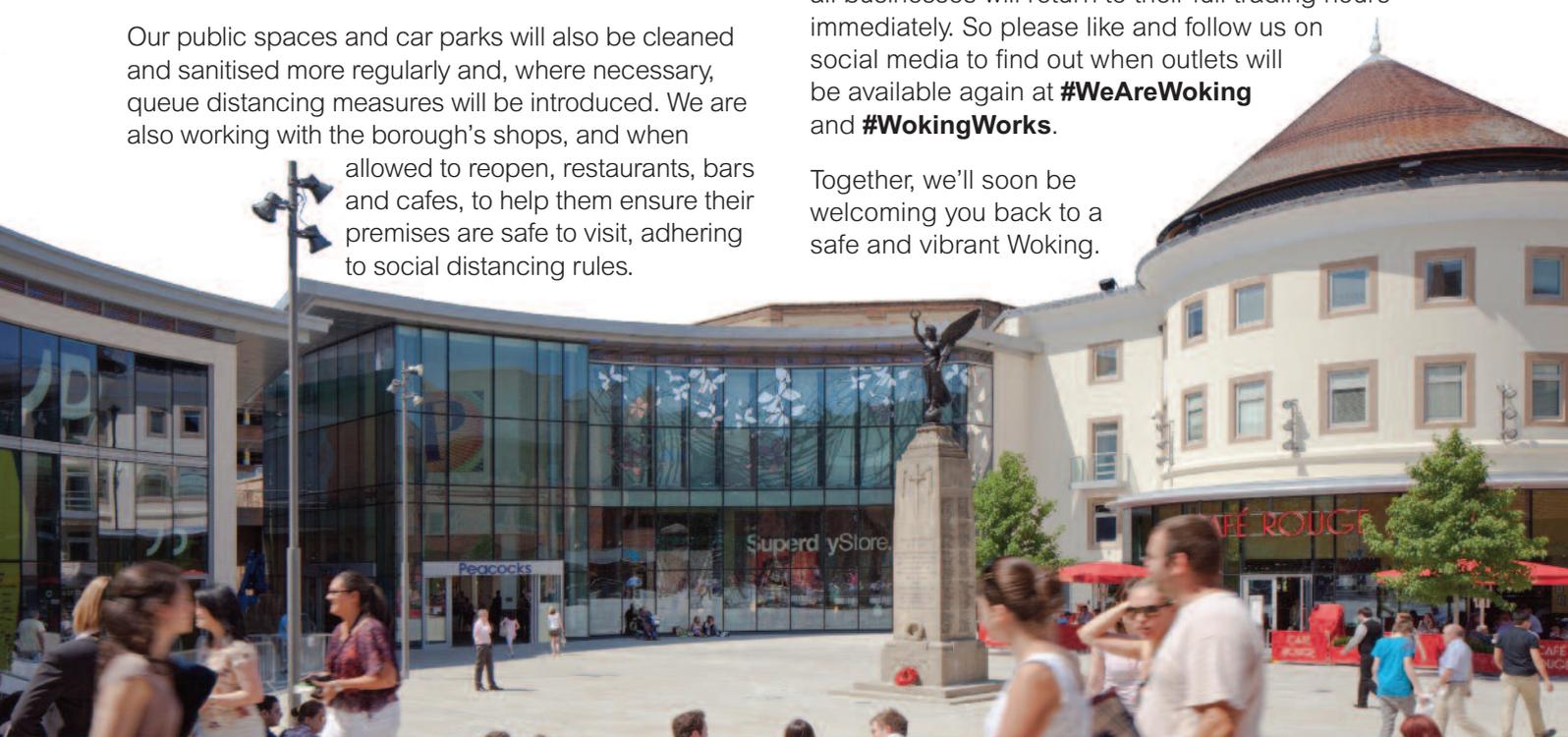
Businesses can find out more about the support available by subscribing to the Woking Works newsletter and registering their business on the Business Directory at www.wokingworks.com

We'll be keeping our residents, workers and visitors to the borough informed about the reopening via our social media channels, using the hashtag #WeAreWoking.

Please also visit www.wearewoking.com where information will be updated regularly.

We know the process will be gradual and not all businesses will return to their full trading hours immediately. So please like and follow us on social media to find out when outlets will be available again at #WeAreWoking and #WokingWorks.

Together, we'll soon be welcoming you back to a safe and vibrant Woking.



Meet the new High Sheriff of Surrey

At the beginning of April, local resident Shahid Azeem DL, was installed as High Sheriff of Surrey for 2020/21 during a virtual ceremony. Shahid is the first Muslim High Sheriff in Surrey, taking on a role appointed by the Queen. The Woking Magazine caught up with Shahid to find out about his background and his plans for the year ahead.

In 1969, Shahid's family was among one of the first Asian families to make Surrey their home and as a young schoolboy he did not speak English. After facing racism, bigotry and unfairness, he found himself expelled from school.

Shahid left with no qualifications yet a big dream – to become a footballer. He played in the Aldershot football area league, but his potential career came to an abrupt halt when he broke his leg.



A career in IT beckoned and Shahid worked at what is now known as DEFRA, the Home Office and at London Docklands Development Corporation. He later worked for AT&T, before branching out and starting his own business.

Now a successful businessman, Shahid lives in Woking with his wife, Sameena, and has two grown-up sons and a daughter. He is chairman of Aldershot

Town Football Club and has been involved in various local telecoms and communications projects including installing the Woking Town Centre wi-fi system and peregrine and swift webcams.

Surrey as a county has always been an important place for Shahid, supporting local charities, schools and clubs. He is chair of Woking Asian Business Forum, through which he raised £103,000 for Woking Hospice. Shahid said: "I have always lived and breathed Surrey and I am now being given the opportunity to play my part in supporting and strengthening that society."

Before becoming High Sheriff, Shahid has been Deputy Lieutenant of Surrey since 2010. The role of High Sheriff is a ceremonial position working in law and order, as well as representing and supporting local businesses and charities.

Shahid's theme for his Shrieval year is "Together we are stronger", with the three aims being:

- In memory of his best friend, Barry Hitchcock, who died in 2019, to set up a non-intrusive post-mortem scanning and public mortuary, giving loved ones dignity in death.
- Using technology to end malnutrition, developing an app that tackles both hunger and food waste.
- Promoting the Community Foundation for Surrey's Sports Fund, raising funds to support people to pursue a career in sports.

Speaking about his new role, Shahid said: "Now more than ever we need community, bridge builders and those that provide the glue that hold communities together. As High Sheriff, I will ensure I am a voice for the police, prison service, courts, third sector and charities."

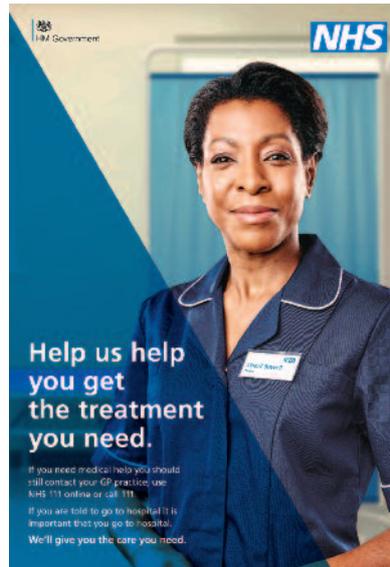
You can stay in touch with the ongoing work of the High Sheriff throughout his Shrieval year by visiting www.highsheriffofsurrey.com

The NHS is still here for you – get care when and where you need it

NHS workers are encouraging Woking residents to seek urgent care and treatment from healthcare services when they need it.

Since the coronavirus outbreak there has been significantly lower numbers of people contacting their GP practices or attending emergency departments and urgent treatment centres. Delays in getting medical help, advice and treatment pose a long-term risk to people’s health and wellbeing and ultimately their lives.

Dr Charlotte Canniff, local GP and Clinical Chair of NHS Surrey Heartlands Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), said: “We understand people are worried about placing a burden on the NHS and we know that people are concerned about coronavirus. However, the NHS is still



here for you and we have worked hard to ensure it is safe for you to access essential services.

“I would also encourage people to continue to use other vital health services such as maternity appointments, mental health support and cancer treatment. Your clinician will discuss if there are any issues posed by coronavirus. If we ignore problems or treatment it can have serious consequences.”

If you need medical help and it’s not a life threatening emergency, remember to call your GP practice, call **NHS 111** or visit **www.111.nhs.uk** first.

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Looking after your mental wellbeing

It's now more important than ever to look after the mental wellbeing of yourself and your loved ones. Here are some top tips which will help reduce the impact of coronavirus on your mental wellbeing.



1. Stick to the facts. Read and share accurate information from the Government, NHS and local authority to understand the actual risks to yourself and people you care about.
2. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
3. Take breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories, including social media – overloading on information can impact your mood.
4. Make time to unwind. If you can't do the things you normally enjoy, think about how you could adapt them, or try something new?
5. Look after your body. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink plenty of water and exercise regularly.
6. Focus on the present rather than worrying about the future. Relaxing techniques such as mindful breathing can sometimes help with feelings of anxiety.
7. Get a good night's sleep. You might find avoiding screens before bed, cutting back on caffeine and creating a restful environment helpful in improving your sleep quality.

Try the virtual wellbeing and mental health hub

To help support you, a new online wellbeing hub has launched enabling Surrey residents to access a range of mental health and emotional wellbeing sessions virtually from the comfort of their own home.

Surrey Virtual Wellbeing gives you access to online activities including virtual coffee mornings, group chat sessions and tailored exercise classes.

The hub hosts a range of activities and support sessions from Surrey third sector organisations including Community Connections (Richmond Fellowship, Catalyst, Mary Frances Trust and their partners), Age UK Surrey and The Surrey Coalition of Disabled People.

Visit www.healthysurrey.org.uk/mental-wellbeing/adults/virtual

www.woking.gov.uk | 01483 755855

What other support can I get?

In addition to the wellbeing hub, there's a wealth of support at www.healthysurrey.org.uk/mentalwellbeing which includes self-help resources, local services and help and advice if you feel your mental health is at breaking point.

If you would like to talk to someone about the help available, contact the confidential helpline to guide you to self-help resources and local/national services:

- Call **0808 802 5000*** (open 24 hours, 7 days-a-week, free from landlines and mobiles).
- SMS text: **07537 432411** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 2pm).

If you feel your mental health is at breaking point you can contact Surrey's mental health crisis helpline:

- Call **0800 915 4644** (open 24 hours, 7 days-a-week).
- SMS text: **07717 989024**.
- Next Generation text service: Dial **18001 0800 915 4644** from your text phone or smart app.

In an emergency please call 999.

** In high demand periods an answerphone system may be in place.*



On the beat with our new Borough Commander

Woking Magazine caught up with Woking Beat's latest recruit, new Borough Commander Dave Bentley. During the interview, we find out about Dave's successful 14-year police career, his aspirations for the borough and what he likes to do when he's 'off beat'.

Where were you born and bred? Did you always want to be a police officer?

"I was born in Hereford. Both my parents were police officers who met at police training school. Becoming an officer wasn't on my radar until I went to university. As part of my degree, I studied to be a crime analyst; this is where I got the bug and it all went from there."

Tell us about your police career to date, including any highlights.

"My career started at West Mercia Police 14 years ago where I stayed for just under a decade. For the last four years, I have worked for Surrey Police at Guildford police station, located at its current headquarters at Mount Browne.

"At both forces, I've worked in the emergency response teams and criminal investigation departments (CID).

"These roles have provided valuable experience working on a number of serious and complex investigations, ranging from murder and child sexual offences to robbery and drug supply.

"More recently at Surrey Police, I've been supporting Chief Constable Gavin Stephens with his national portfolios, including neighbourhood policing which aims to make a real difference in supporting our communities. Neighbourhood policing provides an opportunity to support our communities on issues which directly affect their lives.

"I'm honoured to have received a number of commendations, most notably a National Police Bravery Award in 2009 for my part in arresting an offender shortly after an armed robbery. I also received a Chief Constable's Commendation for the same incident, along with a few divisional commendations for dealing with serious and complex investigations."





Dave and his busy team includes two Sergeants, five Police Constables, eight Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and four specialist support staff can be contacted at Woking Borough Council Civic Offices in Gloucester Square.

The Surrey Police front

counter service, located in the Civic Offices reception, is open between 8am and 10pm, Monday to Sunday, and 9am to 5pm on bank holidays and public holidays, excluding Christmas Day. Out of hours, the service can be contacted via 101 in a non-emergency, 999 in an emergency and via the yellow phone box located outside the Civic Office Reception main doors.

For more information:

Web: www.surrey.police.uk

Twitter: @WokingBeat

Facebook: Search 'Woking Beat (Surrey Police)'

What was the driving force for joining the police?

“Helping the public is still my main driver. I enjoy problem solving, really thinking about the causal factors and how we can prevent the same problems recurring in the future. I’m also quite analytical – I like looking at the detail of problems and trying to understand them.”

What are your priorities for the borough under your tenure?

“My main priorities are to ensure we’re engaging with Woking’s communities and talking to them about what matters, problem solving together and building on the fantastic partnerships which already exist across Woking.”

What are you most looking forward to doing/achieving within this new role?

“I’m looking forward to continuing the great work which has taken place already within the borough. I want Woking to be the safest place possible to live and visit. I would also like to build upon the incredible community spirit we have seen during the coronavirus pandemic.”

What are your proudest career achievements?

“By the nature of my job, I have had to deal with difficult subject matters. My proudest moment was

gaining a successful court conviction for a child sexual offender who thought of himself as a pillar of the local community, and supporting his multiple, young victims and their families.

“More recently, I’ve gained immense satisfaction by helping to design a neighbourhood policing approach for early intervention for children in Surrey.

“The approach focuses on the issues children experience during their early years and how the long-term effects may impact their behaviour and actions later on in life.”

No day is ever the same in policing, tell us about your strangest moment at work.

“I’ve experienced quite a few strange incidents over the years! Early on in my career, I spent a good while chasing an escapee golden labrador around a roundabout to prevent it from getting on the main road. As you can imagine, I suspect it provided much amusement to anyone watching from the side-lines!”

What do you like to do when you’re ‘off beat’?

“I enjoy spending time with my family. I have two small children who keep me busy outside of work. I keep fit by playing five-a-side football and, when I can, I enjoy alpine skiing. Football is a longstanding hobby; I am an avid West Bromwich Albion supporter and I relish any opportunity to watch live sport.”

A greener life after lockdown

Whilst restrictions on everyday life have helped battle Covid-19, they have also had a welcome benefit for our environment. Air pollution has reduced due to decreases in air and road travel, and we've even seen wildlife reclaiming our towns.

Woking Borough Council has long been committed to protecting our environment. We adopted our first climate change strategy in 2002, although our efforts began much earlier in 1990 with a comprehensive programme of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, including the creation of ThamesWey.

More recently, in 2015 we adopted our Woking 2050 strategy, which sets out our vision for a sustainable borough through actions to reduce our environmental impact.

Since then just a few examples of actions we've taken include:

- setting up the popular Refill Woking scheme to help tackle single-use plastics
- installing a swift, bat and town twinning tower providing a nesting chamber for these wonderful creatures
- continuing our tree planting programmes with over 300 planted in the last year alone
- installing a living green wall along High Street in Woking Town Centre.

A lot of what we have achieved is thanks to partnership working with key stakeholders, commercial partners and community volunteers to meet our common environmental goals.



Poole Road Energy Station

Established in 1999, ThamesWey is helping to deliver a greener future. As green energy trailblazers, they led the way with the installation of the UK's first hydrogen fuel cell combined heat and power plant at Woking's Pool in the Park, and opened one of the country's first low carbon demonstration homes, Oak Tree House in Knaphill. The residential home showcased energy efficient, renewable technology and water saving improvements that we could use in our own homes.

Continually seeking ways to improve our environmental performance, ThamesWey are currently leading the construction of the Poole Road Energy Centre that will incorporate green energy technologies to further reduce Woking Town Centre's dependence on fossil fuels.



High Street green living wall

Mayor of Woking at the launch of the Refill Woking scheme

ThamesWey

For more information about the Council's green initiatives, please visit

www.woking.gov.uk/naturalwoking

Alternatively, to find out more about

ThamesWey's sustainable projects, please visit

www.thamesweygroup.co.uk

A carbon neutral future

Last year, Council declared a 'climate and ecological emergency' and pledged to become zero carbon by 2030 across its own estate and operations – eliminating our contribution to climate change.

Clear definitions and baselines will help us measure our continuing progress to reduce our footprint and we are working on a carbon reduction plan. This covers priority actions for the year ahead such as continuing to reduce energy consumption, increasing energy efficiency, looking at greener transport options and sustainable development practices.

A key aspect of our work is engaging the local community on how it can play its part. We are currently developing 'Planet Woking' – a programme of virtual talks supported by online resources to share information on Council climate change projects and to enable feedback from local residents and businesses on potential future activities. So watch this space!

What can you do?

During the past few months you'll no doubt have made some changes to your everyday routine which are making a difference. Have you considered continuing these changes into life after lockdown? Here are some ideas...

Active travel

With restricted trips for essential shopping, work and exercise, many of us have combined the activities and ditched the car in favour of walking and cycling. Not only is it doing wonders for your health and wellbeing, it's also reducing vehicles on the road and air pollution.

Waste not want not

We've all been asked to consider what, where and how often we buy food, which has made many of us think about what we need and how to plan our food shopping, resulting in less food waste. Not only good for our pockets, this also means less emissions associated with wasted food.

Flexible working

Many of us have embraced video calls and online working, meaning a lot less business miles and emissions. Many of these practices will continue post-lockdown which benefits our work-life balance, as well as our environment.

Living la vida local!

Limited trips out and media coverage of empty

www.woking.gov.uk | 01483 755855

shelves have seen many of us support our local shops and producers. Supporting our local economies is not only good for smaller businesses, it's also great for our sense of community and keeps our supply chain greener.

Staycations

With much national and international travel cancelled or postponed due to the essential prevailing government restrictions, it may be some time before we can travel hassle-free again. Perhaps a life of low carbon travel will become a life less extraordinary. Why not opt for more sustainable modes of travel and explore the many beautiful places on our doorstep?



Mayor of Woking and Jonathan Lord MP planting trees

Local wildlife

Many of us have been taking a stroll as part of our daily exercise, exploring local footpaths and green spaces. So why stop after lockdown? Continue to enjoy our local habitats and wildlife and see them changing through the seasons. You could even bring a bit of nature to your own outside space by planting a window box or creating an insect hotel.

A helping hand

During lockdown many people have actively volunteered to help others in their community. Whether picking up provisions for an elderly neighbour or collecting a prescription for someone in need, volunteering gives fantastic rewards, not only to those you are helping, but also through a sense of happiness and wellbeing knowing you're lending a hand.

Six recycling and waste hacks to help your bin crew

The start of lockdown and those early weeks indoors may seem like a distant memory now. But as we adapt to our 'new normal', there is no doubt that some lifestyle changes or new habits adopted are well worth hanging on to.

One of these is how we handle our waste and recycling – and trying to live in a more sustainable way.

During lockdown, Joint Waste Solutions worked hard with waste contractor, Amey, and the bin collection crews in Woking to ensure that waste and recycling

collections continued, despite pressures of staff sickness from coronavirus.

There was also a very real danger that services could become completely overwhelmed by the significant increase in household, recycling and garden waste that was generated by staying at home – garden waste increased by 55 per cent and household waste by 23 per cent – but the crews did an amazing job at collecting the additional materials.

To help keep collections running residents were encouraged to do **six simple things** that would make it easier for crews to collect their bins in very challenging circumstances.

Community recycling centres will take some time to run at full capacity and are likely to be overwhelmed so we advise hanging onto it for a bit longer – and avoid queuing for hours!

For more information about your waste and recycling collection service and advice on how to reduce waste, reuse and recycle more, visit www.jointwastesolutions.org



Here are those six easy ways that you can continue to help your crew and the planet.

1. **Reduce and reuse** – waste less by using items again, only buy food you need, freeze food before it goes off and cook or freeze leftovers.
2. **Recycle it right** – flatten and fold cardboard, wash and squash plastic and put the right things in the right bins by using the Surrey Recycles search tool and app.
3. **Get composting** – reduce your food and garden waste by composting at home. You can buy a discounted compost bin through the Surrey Environment Partnership by visiting www.surreyep.org.uk
4. **Make it easy to collect** – put your bins out early and leave them until they've been emptied. Be considerate when parking your car on collection days.
5. **Care for your crew** – help crews stay safe by closing bin lids firmly so they don't have to touch waste and wash your hands before and after touching bins. Give your crew a wave or smile to show your appreciation!
6. **Keep your clear-out** – hold onto waste you may have taken to community recycling centres until they are operating normally. Please don't leave waste outside charity shops or recycling banks – it's fly-tipping. Be considerate to others and don't burn your waste!



When good neighbours become good friends

Spending more time at home can be challenging if you feel your neighbours are acting inconsiderately, but there are ways to keep a healthy relationship with the people in your neighbourhood.

Since the start of lockdown, people around the borough have come together to showcase their community spirit. Whether shopping for someone in self-isolation, checking up on a vulnerable person or simply a cheery wave during the clap for carers, neighbours who were once strangers are becoming friends.

However, long weeks confined to our homes with 'normal' life on hold can have repercussions that are not always positive. Recently, the unprecedented lockdown conditions, coupled with heightened levels of anxiety, have resulted in increased reports of antisocial behaviour and neighbour disputes.

Whilst there are occasional incidences of true antisocial behaviour, many complaints are simply activities of daily life under strained conditions. Families entertaining children stuck at home may make more noise than normal and other residents might be finding solace in DIY, TV, computer games or music. This is where neighbours are encouraged to think about how they could tackle issues privately, or even prevent them arising in the first place.

As we all adjust to the new normal, consider being a little more tolerant to your neighbours. However, if it's something you can't live with, you could attempt to resolve matters amicably first. It's likely your neighbours don't realise you feel this way. Likewise, be considerate of other households. What's enjoyable for you might be unbearable for others, so be prepared to listen and act if your neighbour approaches you.

If you find yourself in an unbearable situation, Council Officers are here to help. If you have been affected by antisocial behaviour, or would like more information, please visit

www.woking.gov.uk/communitysafety

Alternatively, please call Woking Borough Council's Antisocial Behaviour team on **01483 743459** or email community.safety@woking.gov.uk



Easy ways to be a considerate neighbour

- **Bonfires:** Warn your neighbours in advance if you are lighting a fire or barbecue. Don't burn toxic material, rather dispose of it in your kerb-side collection or at a Community Recycling Centre.
- **DIY and gardening:** Forewarn your neighbour of potentially disruptive plans and try to keep activity within sociable hours. Do not prolong use of noisy tools.
- **Household noise:** Minimise unnecessary noise, such as slamming doors and stamping feet and use soft furnishings to muffle sounds. Avoid too much raucousness, both outside and inside.
- **Music and technology:** Where possible, keep these activities away from adjoining walls, with the volume low and bass turned down, or wear headphones, especially at night.
- **Parking:** Don't obstruct access routes for other road users, especially emergency vehicle and refuse collection trucks. Don't park across pedestrian footpaths.

If you believe a crime has been committed, report it to the police on 101. In an emergency always dial 999.

Dukes Court facelift underway

In November 2019, a series of enhancement works began to transform part of Woking town centre's business district. Key to this development is the rejuvenation of Dukes Court.



Built in 1986, Dukes Court was viewed as a symbol of Woking's economic growth, offering 220,000 sq. ft. of premium office accommodation. The works will ensure Dukes Court continues to play an important role in the town's commercial future.

Central to the area's transformation is a new landscaped pedestrianised public plaza along Duke Street, between the junctions of Locke Way and The Broadway, creating a welcoming open space for tenants and members of the public. Taking centre stage is a larger than life statue of Dame Ethel Smyth.

A new restaurant will add to the town's growing culinary reputation, whilst a huge living 'green' wall will improve air quality, landscaping will create a pleasant, vehicle free environment and new signage and pedestrian routes will enhance the visitor experience.

Thanks to the diligence of contractor, Farrans Construction, works have been able to continue whilst adhering to government advice and industry guidelines around social distancing.

In addition to the part pedestrianisation of Duke Street, improvements to the junctions of Maybury Road, Stanley Road and The Broadway were completed earlier this year.

It is expect that both building and highway works will be complete by spring 2021.

For further information about the project, including an animation revealing the exciting plans for Dukes Court and surrounding area, please visit www.woking.gov.uk/dukescourt

Victoria Square looks to the future

Construction on the landmark Victoria Square development in Woking town centre has continued during the past months, as thoughts now turn to driving the project towards completion.

In line with government advice and industry guidance, initial measures that allowed works to continue safely saw the number of on-site staff significantly reduced to around 300 people and construction activities streamlined to enable social distancing.



As the relaxation of restrictions on our movement and working practices continue, Sir Robert McAlpine has introduced further measure to ensure the safety of all on-site staff and contractors.

These include staggered start and finish times, which will mean longer working days and more Saturday working, a workforce of around 600 at any one time, workforce temperature checks at the beginning of each day, in-depth cleaning routines, on-site sanitiser stations, one-way routes around the site, and masks and visors available to staff and contractors.

Progress to date

Residential towers

- Installation of energy efficient glazing and generous balconies offering unrivalled views across Surrey in the two residential towers now complete.
- Internal fit-out of the apartments, including flooring, is progressing well.

Hilton Hotel

- Installation of the hotel's iconic golden exterior nears completion.
- Works to the senior suites has begun, whilst fit-out of the 189 guestrooms is progressing well.

Commercial space

- Boots store is complete and ready for the retailer to begin its interior fit-out. This means the existing hoarding along Commercial Way will change as the development takes shape.
- Glazing that will create an impressive entrance for the new Marks & Spencer entrance has been installed.
- Remaining retail units along Commercial Way are nearing completion.

Public plaza

- The steel support frame for the stunning glass covered atrium in-situ and installation of glazed panels is underway.

- Landscaping of the public areas has begun.

New car park

- With the car park foundations complete, construction of the concrete spiral ramps is progressing at a good pace.
- Construction of lift and stairwell core almost complete.
- Works to erect the car park's steel frame is taking shape and will soon be completed.

To receive the latest news and information as the development nears completion, sign-up to #WeAreWoking's e-newsletter by visiting www.wearewoking.com

Sheerwater regeneration update

Development of the new leisure facilities in Sheerwater continues to progress well and remains on schedule.



The main leisure centre structure is now complete, the exterior block work is nearly finished and work has started on the internal fit out. Work has now commenced on the sports pitches to make the most of the favourable weather conditions.

Construction of the first phase of residential properties was paused during the initial three weeks of the outbreak but activity on site has now resumed and good progress is being made. The top floor of the apartment concrete frame is being finished off and work has now commenced on cladding the apartments and building the town houses.

More news and updates are available at www.woking.gov.uk/sheerwater

Making 'active' your new normal

The coronavirus lockdown brought many changes, but one 'positive' was that many of us became more active which has got to be a good thing. Active Surrey's Bob Pritchard suggests ways exercise can remain part of your healthy routine.

Exercise was one of the reasons we could leave our homes. Being physically active helps our mental health, as well as our general health.

Sport England research suggests that 62 per cent of adults considered exercise to be more important than before coronavirus, with 65 per cent stating that it was helping their mental health.

Now that the initial lockdown is over, how can we maintain these new habits and benefit both the NHS and our long-term health? The Get Started pages at www.activesurrey.com have lots of ideas, but what's most accessible?

Walking back to happiness

Surrey is sometimes quoted as being England's most wooded county. Along with woodland we also have the Basingstoke Canal while the nearby Surrey Hills offer miles of paths. All of which mean that as more restrictions are lifted, we're spoilt for choice for new walks.

Alongside the physical gains, numerous studies have reported strong benefits to our mental health of spending time in green spaces.

Surrey County Council has a vast array of walks suitable for all abilities on their website. You'll find easy strolls from Hoe Valley and Horsell Common to longer self-guided routes with starting points from Haslemere to Limpsfield. Simply search 'walks' at www.surreycc.gov.uk



Woking Mind also run weekly 'walks for health' across Woking and Runnymede, ideal for those who may want to walk with others. They also offer 30 min 'starter walks'. Visit www.wokingmind.org.uk for more information.

Running for good

Many people, whose previous experience of running was limited to thinking it was good idea, took to the streets during lockdown. If this wasn't you, but now you want to stretch your legs, the free, nine week NHS Couch to 5k app is a great way to start. Visit www.nhs.uk and search 'Couch to 5k'.



When safe to do so, Park Run offer 5km runs in your local park. They take place every Saturday morning (Sunday for the 2km junior version) in a fantastic, supportive atmosphere. Once registered you just turn up at Woking Park or any other venue you choose. Walk as much of the course as you like and you'll still get a personal time – all for free. Visit www.parkrun.org.uk

If you're looking for a bit more, GoodGym Woking are a friendly social group who combine exercise with helping out in the local community. The group meets on Wednesdays and runs (or walks) to a venue where they will carry out a good community deed, such as painting a community hall and assisting elderly residents with a spot of gardening. Search 'GoodGym Woking' on Facebook.

Saddle up

With 68 per cent of journeys in England under five miles, what better reason to get out on your bike! With us all adapting to social distancing, biking to work makes sense as a healthy commuting option and the government offers help with its 'Bike to Work' scheme.



Cycling can also get the whole family active. There's a great network of cycle routes across the borough and beyond. Simply search 'cycle routes' at www.surreycc.gov.uk for a great selection of rides for all abilities, including the infamous Box Hill (definitely not family-friendly!).

For women keen to get into the saddle, there's the HSBC UK Breeze Let's Ride website which lists female-only rides with experienced leaders to help you get into cycling in a friendly atmosphere. Visit www.letsride.co.uk/breeze for more information.

Active Surrey is a not for profit, partner funded organisation dedicated to the support, promotion and development of sport and active lifestyles throughout Surrey. For more information, visit www.activesurrey.com

If in doubt, just do something!

At the end of the day, even small amounts of physical activity will keep you healthier for longer and help the NHS. Working out with a buddy or group (even virtually) works well and helps motivation so give it a try.



Whatever it is, just start slowly and listen to what your body is telling you – speak to your doctor if you're really unsure. NHS physiotherapists Leon Palmer-Wilson and Ryan Mackie from Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals stress that the human frame is remarkably robust but warming up properly with some light cardio helps.

Setting short term objectives (for example exercising three times a week) will help you reach your longer term goal, as can 'mixing up' your exercise – try an online class for a change.

Remember, soreness after new exercise soon disappears, so dig out the trainers, do what you enjoy and don't let those healthy lockdown habits go to waste!



Helping to look after the canal corridor through Surrey



The Basingstoke Canal, a jewel running through the heart of Woking, was completed in 1794. Today it is managed by the Basingstoke Canal Authority, supported by a team of volunteers. Meet Martin Thompson, a 23 year old volunteer, helping to maintain the canal corridor. This is his story.

Three years on and I'm still a volunteer

"I first found out about the need for volunteers when I was walking home along the canal and saw a sign asking for volunteers to help with waterway conservation. I thought, 'this sounds like fun' and decided to get on board.

"The work varies. You can work as part of a team or as an individual. Typical tasks include canal bank scrub clearance, managing overhanging trees, fencing work, repairing damaged banks, painting lock gates, the perpetual litter picking... anything that needs to be done to keep the canal looking good. It can be hard work but it's also a lot of fun and very rewarding.

"Volunteers receive very good training in how to use mechanical equipment such as hedge trimmers, brush cutters and grass mowers. They welcome you as a valued member of their army of community volunteers.

"When volunteering with the Canal Society, I really enjoy the camaraderie amongst the members, such as when celebrating a fellow volunteer's birthday a cake will suddenly appear! That's on top of the regular tea, coffee and biscuits in the rest breaks.

How volunteering has shaped my life

"Volunteering has been, and still is, a massive part of my life. I first started volunteering with the Surrey Wildlife Trust on Chobham Common when I was seven years old. I believe that volunteering has given me the building blocks for life.

"A couple of years ago, I was very fortunate to have to opportunity to volunteer in Bangladesh with an organisation called Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) – an organisation that sends volunteers overseas to help disadvantaged communities. The Canal Society helped me with my application, confirming that I met the key requirements for a VSO project.

"Upon returning to the UK, I participated in VSO's 'Action at Home' project. I decided to walk the Pembrokeshire coastal path with two friends in support of Alzheimer's Society. We raised over £2,000 for the charity.

"Since recovering from the tough Pembrokeshire coastline walk, I have recently been asked to go on BBC Radio Surrey to talk about how volunteering can give you important life skills and experiences, such as my trip to Bangladesh, that you might not otherwise have the opportunity to do.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed being part of the Basingstoke Canal Society team. It's something I'd recommend to any young or older person. It's about giving back to society and I encourage you to get involved."

For more information about how you can become a Basingstoke Canal Society volunteer, please email ken.sankey@basingstoke-canal.org.uk or visit www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk



Stay creative with The Lightbox

With sadness, The Lightbox closed to the public in March following government advice.

In the midst of an exciting cultural programme of workshops, talks, tours and events, as well as the blockbuster exhibition, **David Hockney: Ways of Working**, this was hugely disappointing for both the staff that had dedicated so much to the success of the show, and the visitors who had yet to see it.

However, the wonderful people of Woking have offered their unwavering support over the past few months. The Lightbox Members, visitors and volunteers have demonstrated what it means to be part of the charity's community, and The Lightbox team would like to extend their whole-hearted thanks to everyone who has donated, offered advice and words of support, and purchased memberships.

More difficulties will arise upon reopening, when there will be running costs to pay and likely a much-reduced income. This makes it even more necessary to raise funding now, to sustain the charity through difficult times ahead. If you are able to donate, please do so by visiting www.thelightbox.org.uk

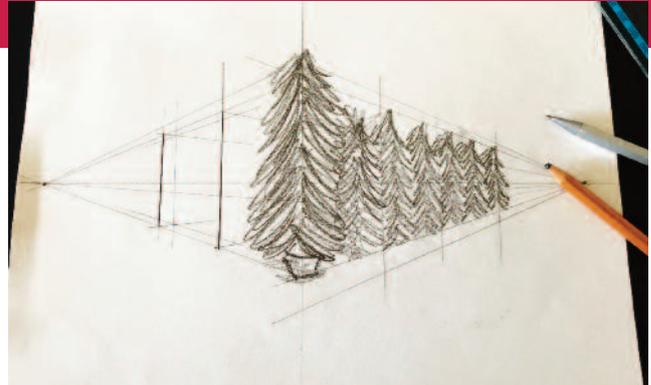
During closure, The Lightbox has remained active online, highlighting the benefits art has on our wellbeing.

The organisation strongly believes that art has the power to make you feel good, so we've put together a series of articles and step-by-step guides for creative crafts to keep the kids busy at home, tips on how to draw for both beginners and more advanced artists, fun challenges for the whole family, and plenty more – all free to use and available on our website.



To find out more about what's coming up at The Lightbox, to buy a membership or to make a donation, please visit www.thelightbox.org.uk

**in accordance with government guidelines allowing The Lightbox to reopen to the public.*



An exciting announcement!

Originally due to open at the beginning of May, the much-anticipated Raphael: **Prince Albert's Passion** has been fortunately rescheduled and will open early October*. The exhibition tells the fascinating story of Prince Albert's passion for Raphael and his creation of the Raphael Collection at Windsor Castle.



Raphael, (1483-1520), Christ's Charge to Peter, c.1514, offset from a drawing in red chalk over stylus. Royal Collection Trust © Her Majesty Queen

It reveals how Raphael caught the imagination of the Prince Consort, who embarked on a pioneering research-based project into the work of the Renaissance master, making copies of his work using the newest technology available – photography.

The Raphael drawings from the Royal Collection are at the heart of the exhibition and several of them will be shown in a specially designed space. Most of the drawings in the display were made in preparation for major commissions, but they are important as individual works of art and reveal the artist's working methods.

The wonderful world of nature in your garden

For many, our gardens offer a tranquil space for relaxation, enjoyment and a chance to get closer to nature. Joanna Foat from Surrey Wildlife Trust reveals her top tips for welcoming more wildlife into our gardens.

Wildlife gardening can be sheer joy at spotting your first orange-tip butterfly or the head-scratching doubt when you realise you haven't got a clue how to sow wildflower seeds. But pushing yourself to dig a new pond is worth every second when you realise all the wildlife it will welcome to your garden.

With more than 20,000 hectares of gardens in Surrey, covering 12 per cent of the county, they are vital to the survival of our wildlife. Just imagine if every garden in Surrey did one extra thing for wildlife!

So to help you get started, take a look at these great top tips!

1. Everyone can do it

Yes, everyone! Whatever your age, health condition, background and no matter where you live. Even if you've only got a window box or balcony and gardening magazines leave you cold.

2. Planning helps

Follow a simple plan for your wildlife garden – it will help you pick it up more easily. Don't try to transform your garden in one weekend as you may remove essential wildlife features. It's best to take your time in the garden, noticing what is already there first.

3. Don't worry if it's difficult at first

Everyone struggles with a new project to begin with. Sometimes it's hard to find the time to mow the lawn or do the weeding, let alone create a magical secret garden. So don't mow the lawn or do the weeding. Watch the dandelions and weeds bloom and the bees arrive. It's easier than you think.

4. Make wildlife gardening social

The idea of talking about wildlife gardening might make you cringe when you look at the wildlife wasteland of your concrete patio. But finding a wildlife gardening buddy or joining a wildlife gardening group such as 'Surrey Wildlife Gardening' Facebook group will make it more fun.

5. Getting the right kit

Wildlife gardening can be very cheap. You can wear old clothes and you don't even need to buy plants or expensive equipment, if all your budget can stretch to is a few wildflower seed packets.

6. Little effort brings big rewards

You can do as much or as little as you want in your garden. But nature takes its time. There is a beauty in watching your garden day by day. Little by little, small changes will create an appealing wildlife haven where birds, bees and butterflies flock to feed, drink and shelter.

7. Your wildlife gardening needs

Just as wildlife needs food, water and shelter in your garden, so do you. Don't forget to stop for refreshments as gardening can be quite physical work. If it's raining wear a coat and wellies and if it's sunny wear a hat and protection from the sun.

8. Take time to enjoy your garden

Enjoying your garden is an essential part of the process, giving you time to reflect upon what is working in the garden. It's during these times of rest that you will experience the unexpected joy of seeing a new wildflower appear or a damselfly nymph emerging from your pond.



9. Wildlife garden wellbeing

The more time you spend in your garden, the more you will grow healthier and happier too. Study after study shows that gardening and being in touch with nature brings enormous benefits to both physical and mental wellbeing.

10. Take our quick online quiz

Surrey Wildlife Trust's wildlife garden survey is a great way to get started and offers you simple tips and advice for how to add water, food and shelter

features, as well as organic management ideas which will help wildlife to thrive.

Take the survey online at

www.surreywildlifetrust.org/wildlife-garden-quiz

Find out more...

To take Surrey Wildlife Trust's garden survey, their handy garden illustration and discover a whole host of online resources, visit

www.surreywildlifetrust.org.uk

Food

Caterpillars eat a lot and grow at an astonishing speed before they become butterflies or moths. Why not leave some weeds for them to munch on? Could you sow wildflowers to provide nectar for bees and butterflies? What about adding a vegetable patch or herb garden? These are great for pollinators too. And don't forget to feed the hedgehogs.



Shelter

Birds need safe places to shelter. So do hedgehogs, bees, minibeasts, amphibians and reptiles. Could you create a log pile, plant a hedgerow or tree, build a bug hotel, bee or hedgehog home? Most bees are solitary and search for little holes for nesting sites to lay their eggs. If you provide shelter for wildlife, they will come to stay in your garden.

Water

Water is essential for all life. It isn't just frogs that need water – so do birds, bees and the rest. The two most important wildlife features for a garden are



a wildlife pond and a container pond. So even if you don't have much space, add a bucket pond and a shallow water dish with pebbles for wildlife to drink.

Organic management

Allow a live and let live approach to wildlife. If you tolerate a few pests in your garden in the short term, they welcome pest predators in the longer term and more diverse garden wildlife. For instance, ladybirds and hoverflies just love aphids. Companion planting can be beneficial for pollinating and protecting plants from pests too.



COOKING UP A STORM!

Revisit Woking Food & Drink Festival success

There's no Woking Food & Drink Festival this year, but that doesn't mean we can't revisit some of the best bits. There are so many good reasons to cook up a feast!

Our 2019 festival headliner, Persian and Middle Eastern chef and award-winning cookbook author, Sabrina Ghayour, has kindly shared one of her intensely flavoursome recipes with us to help keep everyone's taste buds tingling.

Grilled Halloumi Flatbreads Serves 4

Ingredients

2 250g blocks halloumi cheese
2 tbsp Greek-style yoghurt
5cm piece fresh turmeric, peeled and finely grated
1 garlic clove, crushed
Finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed lime
Squeeze of lime juice
Drizzle of vegetable oil
Pul biber chilli flakes, to garnish
Maldon sea salt flakes and black pepper, to taste

Harissa yoghurt:

250g Greek-style yoghurt
1 heaped tsp rose harissa

For the flatbreads:

30g unsalted butter, melted
175g plain flour
100ml semi-skimmed milk
2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 tsp garlic granules
1 tbsp olive oil

For the salsa:

½ small packet (about 15g) of fresh dill, roughly chopped
4 preserved lemons, deseeded and very finely chopped
1 tbsp dried barberries
1 avocado, peeled, stoned and roughly diced
2 tsp nigella seeds



SIMPLY
SABRINA GHAYOUR

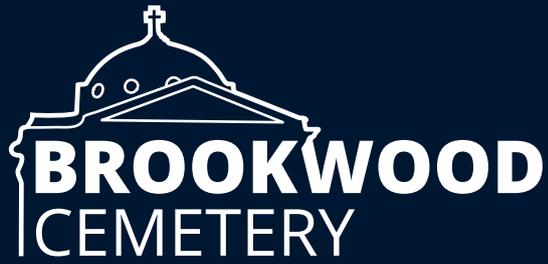


EASY EVERYDAY DISHES
FROM THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
Persiana

Method

1. Cut each block of halloumi into four thick, equal slices. Put the yoghurt, grated turmeric, crushed garlic, and lime zest into a bowl, then add the lime juice and mix well. Season with salt and pepper. Leave the halloumi slices to marinate while you're making the flatbreads.
2. Put all the flatbread ingredients, except the oil, into a mixing bowl, and mix until a firm dough has formed. Wrap the dough in clingfilm and leave to rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.
3. To make the salsa, mix the ingredients together in a small bowl, season with salt and pepper and set aside.
4. To make the harissa yoghurt, mix the ingredients together in another bowl, season with salt and pepper, and chill until ready to serve.
5. When you're ready to cook the flatbreads, preheat a large frying pan over a medium heat. Divide the dough into four equal portions, and roll out each piece into a thin round, about 25cm in diameter. Brush the hot pan with olive oil and cook the flatbreads, one at a time, for about 45–60 seconds on each side, or until lightly browned.
6. In the same frying pan, heat a drizzle of vegetable oil over a medium-high heat. Add the marinated halloumi slices and fry for about one minute on each side, or until nicely browned.
7. Divide the halloumi between the flatbreads and dollop a generous amount of the harissa yogurt on top. Add the salsa and some pickled onions, then sprinkle over some pul biber. Roll up and serve immediately.

Scheduled for release in August 2020, Sabrina's new book *Simply* also includes a collection of unmissable dishes in her signature style, influenced by her love of fabulous flavours and delicious food that can be enjoyed with minimum fuss.



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within our community.

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