



# MODBURY MESSENGER



illustration - Margaret Eccleston

For the People of Modbury & Brownston

Volume 20, Issue 255 - July 2020

## Tour de South Hams (for Beginners)

It was around six months ago when I first considered having an electric bike. Friends and neighbours advised on the variants and many hours were spent trawling the internet.

With my impending retirement hastened by Covid 19 work restrictions, I began a more earnest search, and once the showrooms were open I was able to test ride several models at local dealers. Pretty soon one was in the boot of my car, complete with shiny blue safety helmet!

My first tentative outing, having not ridden a bicycle for many years, was up to Blackdown Rings. A great start, along roads that at the time were traffic free due to lockdown restrictions, seeing over hedges to distant views I had certainly not seen when out walking.

Second outing, more confident now and ready to test the performance up the steeper hills - to Loddiswell, Aveton Gifford, St Ann's Chapel, Bigbury and back via Prigden Hill. Again, all along quiet lanes. I'm enjoying this now! Flying along, getting my daily exercise with not too much effort. Wind in my hair (poetic licence, no hair and wearing the helmet)!

I've been for a surprise visit to my sister in Thurlestone, via Loddiswell, Hatch, and Churchstow, avoiding all the main roads. Unfortunately she was out! (her first excursion in the car since April lockdown).

My most recent expedition was a 2-hour round trip to Ivybridge - Marridge Cross, North Huish, Avonwick, South Brent, Moorhaven, Bittaford, Filham Park, Penquit, Ermington Woods, Sheepharnham (not up the hill, too many cars now!)

I am so enjoying my adventures. Despite living in Modbury for 65 years I am finding roads I have never been on and places I have never seen. The freedom is great, so much fun, plenty of exercise, and yes I have ridden up Aveton Gifford Hill.

**Leo Simpson**



Leo and his electric bike

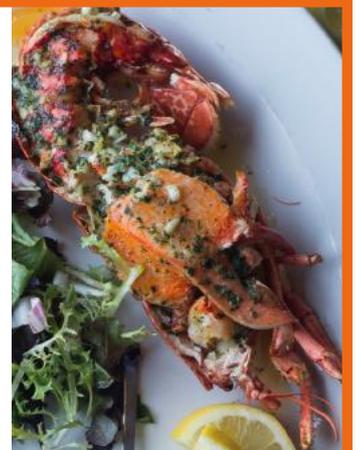


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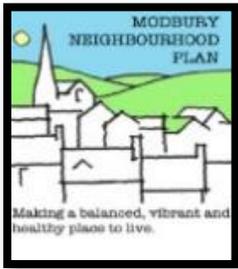
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## Comments invited by SHDC on Modbury's Neighbourhood Plan



You will have seen in the June Messenger that the Neighbourhood Plan, having been approved by Modbury Parish Council, has been formally submitted for scrutiny by South Hams District Council (SHDC). It has been accepted and is now classified as the 'Submitted Plan'. This means it is now in the hands of the District Council and the Parish Council has no authority to make changes.

**MODBURY**  
PARISH COUNCIL

The next stage in this lengthy process is that SHDC will soon announce a 6 week consultation period for the community to make any comments on the plan. Any comments must be addressed to SHDC and not the Parish Council. Relevant contact details for comments will be on the official notices announcing the start of the consultation and on the websites detailed below. Copies of the Plan can be downloaded from the Neighbourhood Plan and Parish Council websites (see below). The start date of the 6 week consultation period will be published, as soon as it is known. This date will also be published on each of the two websites referred to above as well as on notices posted in the Parish Office window (the office remains closed due to Covid-19) and on the Parish notice board.

For those who have not closely followed this challenging procedure, it has taken over 5 years to reach this point. The Neighbourhood Plan Group, on behalf of the Parish Council, have relentlessly and diligently followed a very complex procedure set out by Government and it is a credit to their dedication and professionalism that we can finally begin to see the end of this process. However, there are three stages still to go:

- SHDC's 6 week public consultation with the community.
- Subsequent review by an independent examiner.
- A referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan run by SHDC and voted on by the people of Modbury.

The date of the referendum cannot be announced until the two prior stages have been completed. Therefore, the consultation is an opportunity for comment but it is not the vote.

Neighbourhood plans are primarily, but not exclusively, about how land is used and developed for the period up to 2034. Once ratified (or 'made' in the jargon) it becomes the reference point for planning decisions which are made not by the Parish Council but by SHDC as the local planning authority.

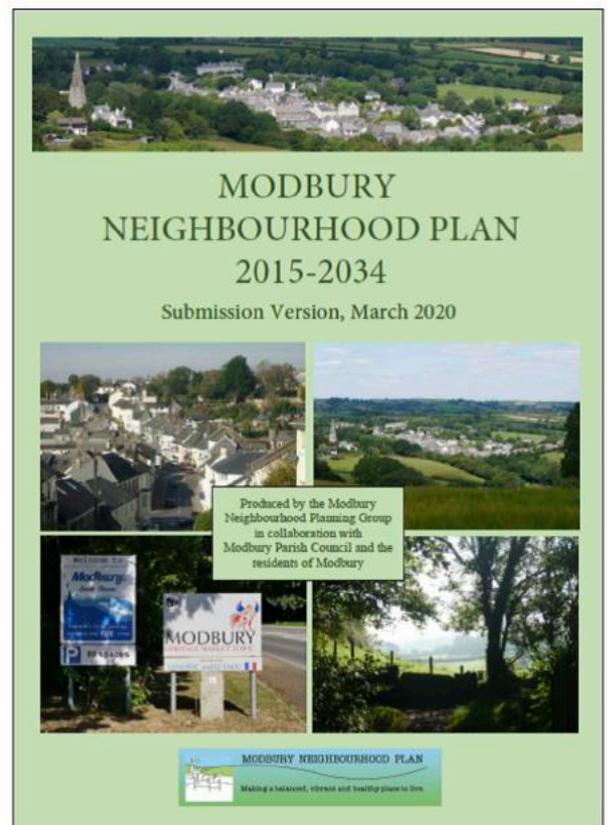
From the outset, the Neighbourhood Plan has been guided by the express wishes of the community as conveyed to us through surveys, public meetings and consultations. It is not 'our' plan it is 'your' plan. The role of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and the Parish Council has been to develop a plan that encapsulates and enables Modbury's future to be shaped in line with the wishes of the majority of the people of Modbury. Inevitably, there will be aspects that not everyone agrees with and issues that others would have preferred were either omitted or given greater emphasis. But at its most fundamental, this is local democracy at work because what it expresses is the will of the people.

I would urge everyone with an interest in Modbury's future to take time to download and read the Neighbourhood Plan which can be found at:

[www.modburynpg.co.uk](http://www.modburynpg.co.uk) or [www.modburypc.co.uk](http://www.modburypc.co.uk)

Members of the community who do not have internet access can make a request to the Parish Council for a printed copy of the Neighbourhood Plan. Simply make your request in writing, giving your address and confirming that you do not have internet access. The request should be posted to: Neighbourhood Plan, Modbury Parish Council, 2 Galpin Street, Modbury PL21 0QA or simply pop it through the door of the Parish Office. Those self-isolating can obtain assistance by contacting the Emergency Support Team on 01548 897 534 (*dial the full no not just the last 6 digits and leave a message. Your call will be returned by the volunteer on duty*). A volunteer can deliver your request and obtain a printed copy for you. Due to cost, printed copies are only available to those without internet access.

**Peter Watts, Chairman  
Modbury Parish Council**



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Sundays from 3pm – 4pm Thursdays from 10am – 11am

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pray

### CHRISTIAN COMMENT: Certainty Amidst Uncertainty

Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the United States, once said, "in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." The events of the last few months, as the coronavirus has spread across the world, have taught us how uncertain are the things we rely on. Companies with full order books are suddenly unable to trade, holidaymakers are trapped abroad, the nation is plunged into lockdown. We may have the privilege of gardens and open countryside, but those living in flats in a high-rise city building are trapped indeed. Simple tasks like shopping become queues to maintain "social distance" (whoever dreamt up that phrase?).

Most contagious is the deep-seated fear of catching the virus, which leads in some people to an upsurge in mental illness. Doctors, nurses and other front-line workers work long hours caring for those suffering from infection; many are saved and recover, but sadly many do not, and for their families, life is changed for ever.

We long for the day when everything will be back to normal, but what is "normal"? Is it going back to how things were before we even heard the word "coronavirus"? Does it mean changing what we have begun to get used to doing now? The reality is that the world has changed and we cannot turn back the clock. But we need some certainties to enable us to move on wisely and successfully.

In an uncertain world, people look for something safe to cling on to. In Henry Francis Lyte's hymn "Abide with me", first sung at his funeral in 1847, he wrote "change and decay in all around I see" and provided the antidote "O Thou who changest not, abide with me". He recognised that God is unchanging, and that his promises are eternally true. He promises forgiveness for every failure and wrong-doing. He promises to guide and strengthen all who follow him. And he promises an eternity of joy and peace with him when this life ends.

There will be many challenges in the future; old ideas will become redundant as new ideas spring up. There will be many competing voices, some prophesying doom and others peddling the latest fad, and it can be hard to know who to believe, what to follow. When we are anxious about the future, or feel weighed down by the burdens of life, the Lord Jesus calls us to come to him, to turn all our worries over to him, and in this way to experience his peace, a "peace which passes all understanding". It's not an escape from life's problems, but the ability to overcome them. Christianity is not a crutch to prop people up, but a firm foundation on which to build a full life, enabling us to face the storms of life with confidence.

**Michael Tagent**

### Phil Speight

12.04.40 - 09.05.20

Thank you, to all of you for your kind thoughts, wishes, cards, flowers and gifts. The wall of love that lined Church Street as we passed by was an extraordinary tribute and very touching. We were all blown away - it was heart-warming to know how well loved Phil was.

**Catherine and family**



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**Please telephone for details of services during lockdown**



## Modbury Parish Council Report

This meeting was held remotely via Zoom at 7.00pm on June 9th 2020 with ten Councillors and the Parish Clerk taking part from their homes. South Hams District Councillor, Bernard Taylor and Devon County Councillor, Rufus Gilbert also attended online. Four members of the public also took part in the meeting from their homes. The meeting had been advertised on the Parish Council website, as will all future online meetings.

**Public Forum:** During the public forum a member of the public suggested that under the new system of 'pop up cycle ways' could the possibility of one being put along Barracks Road be investigated. This was discussed but dismissed as the road is not wide enough.

**Council Meeting:** Eleven planning applications were up for review by Modbury Parish Council, a number being multiple applications for the same item. All were supported except two: one in Back Street and one in Moon Lane which were objected to.

The formation of the Palm Cross Allotments Management Committee and the rotavating of the said allotments was ratified by Modbury Parish Council.

The Modbury Neighbourhood Plan has now been formally submitted to South Hams. See the article on p. 3 for more details.

A suggestion by a parishioner of putting a beehive in the Millieum Meadow Orchard was discussed and the Parish Council is to go back to the person with their comments.

The Parish Council has been given a grant to make Modbury a safer place for shoppers and all pedestrians and to help recover from the Coronavirus Crisis. A sub-committee has been set up to see what is the best way to spend the money.

**County Councillor's Report** - Rufus Gilbert said the County Council had been approached by a parishioner concerning the issue of a footpath along Barracks Road and Dark Lane and a related Highways Section 30 agreement. Colin Whybrow, Modbury Parish Council, advised that this may have got confused with other similar issues. Rufus Gilbert asked the Council to clarify the position with the parishioner and this was agreed.

**District Councillor's Report** - Bernard Taylor reported that SHDC is in the process of awarding discretionary grants to help business to cope with the Coronavirus crisis. For more details go to <https://southhams.gov.uk/businesscovid19>The meeting ended at 8.43pm.

**Chris Barnes**

### Contacts:

**Police Community Support Officer:** Sergeant James (Jim) Timmis

Email: James.TIMMIS@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

**County Councillor (Salcombe Division):** Rufus Gilbert. Tel: 01548 856659

Email: Cllr.Gilbert@southhams.gov.uk

**South Hams District Councillor (Charterlands):** Bernard Taylor Tel: 01548 830844

Cllr.Taylor@southhams.gov.uk

### MODBURY PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE

2 Galpin Street, Modbury PL21 0QA, Tel: 01548 830222  
parishclerk@modburypc.co.uk

**The Parish Office is closed during the coronavirus crisis. The Parish Clerk can be contacted by email**

**Planning Applications:** Notices of planning applications lodged with SHDC are displayed on the Parish Noticeboard outside the Post Office. Copies of plans relating to these applications can be inspected at the Parish Office during the above office hours.

**Contacting Parish Councillors:** Parish Councillors attend the Parish Office, on a rota basis, on Saturday mornings from 10.00 -11.00am. Should you have any parish matter you would like to discuss come along to the Office or call in to the Office and speak to the Parish Clerk, Sacha Hager. Alternatively you can write a letter or speak at the public forum held at the beginning of each monthly meeting of the Parish Council, on the second Tuesday of each month (except August) at 7 pm in the Mars Pavilion at the QE II Recreation Ground.

The Editorial Committee reserve the right to précis/abbreviate any copy submitted for inclusion in the Modbury Messenger. The contents of the Modbury Messenger may not be reproduced in any form without the prior written permission of Modbury Messenger CIC.

**PERSONAL  
ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
(Births, Deaths,  
Marriages, Thanks etc)

£5 per insertion—Max. 50 words

## NATURE TALK: Red Kites



Very unusually, in my experience of over 35 years in the South Hams, there have been multiple sightings of Red Kites over Modbury and Ermington, in the last 4 weeks or so. I initially thought that these were migratory birds returning to the UK from the south of Spain, where some overwinter. I have even seen them years ago passing over the Straits of Gibraltar to northern Africa in the autumn. These recent South Hams birds, though, have been spotted over a period of several weeks, and are reportedly still around in the Ermington area. So, are we lucky, are they hanging around to breed, possibly moving out of overpopulated areas of the UK where they have been introduced?

I remember seeing my first Red Kite in the 1970s, when I drove to a remote area of central Wales specifically to see them, as at that time, the only resident, yet small group of kites in Britain, was in that area. Time after time we saw a large raptor thinking, "is it a kite" only to realise it was another buzzard, until a kite came into view. There is no mistaking them! They have a totally different flight to buzzards, which soar on thermals with their shorter, wider and heavier wings held in a shallow V shape, and only occasionally flap them. Kites flap their longer wings lazily and gently, almost like large butterflies, and their longer forked tail is very distinctive. Buzzards have a much shorter, wedge shaped tail.

So far this year I've not been lucky enough to see one of the local ones, but in this area, about four years ago, Boony and I saw one over the wilds of Dartmoor, and last year, one over Bigbury golf course. The re-introduction of kites into the UK since 1994 has seen great successes in some areas. As a Trustee of the Charity, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, I was frequently at their HQ in Buckinghamshire, and it was a common sight to observe up to seven red kites at a time, hunting lazily over the countryside there. A wonderful sight, and many locals there put out food for them, so pleased were they to have them around.

I wonder if we will be fortunate enough in the South Hams to have these beautiful birds beginning to breed here. They nest in trees usually, and are scavengers, feeding on carrion located while hunting over open grassland and fields. Live small prey, such as birds and small mammals, is also sometimes taken. If they do stay, they will be a wonderful sight in our Devon skies.

**John Bower**

## THANK YOU ----- THANK YOU

Thank you to all those Modbury Traders in our hour of need who came up trumps sourcing food, getting it delivered, ensuring nobody was in need. Thank you to the wonderful Post Office team who sorted out people's problems always with a smile.

Thank you to Modbury Pharmacy who never blinked providing prescriptions, pills and all requirements.

Thank you to Spindlebrook Farm who quickly set up a delivery service and point of collection for those wonderful vegetables.

Thank you Modbury Health Centre who stood by our community providing care and help to those which could have threatened their lives.

Thank you Modbury P.C. for setting up the volunteers scheme to help those in need.

WHAT A GREAT COMMUNITY. Thank you --- Thank you

**During lock down many of you will have turned to your local shops who were outstanding in ensuring you were supplied and looked after. Please continue with your support and do not return to the supermarkets.**

**The community shops face a very difficult future and will need all the support they can get. PLEASE KEEP SUPPORTING THEM.**

**Burda Gage**

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## They have kept us going. . . now it's our turn

Essential shops in Modbury have been a lifeline for our community throughout the lockdown, enabling us to be able to live lives as near to normal as possible in these very abnormal times. We didn't need to venture out of the town if we didn't want to.

This was only possible because the owners of those essential shops and people who work in them, were prepared to put the people of Modbury before themselves and convert their ways of working at the drop of a hat

to serve us. We owe them a huge thank you for going 'above and beyond' all through the lockdown. Modbury folk played their part in accepting the new routines that had to be imposed and maintaining social distancing. If ever we needed a demonstration of the value of our local traders we could not have had a better example than the last few months.

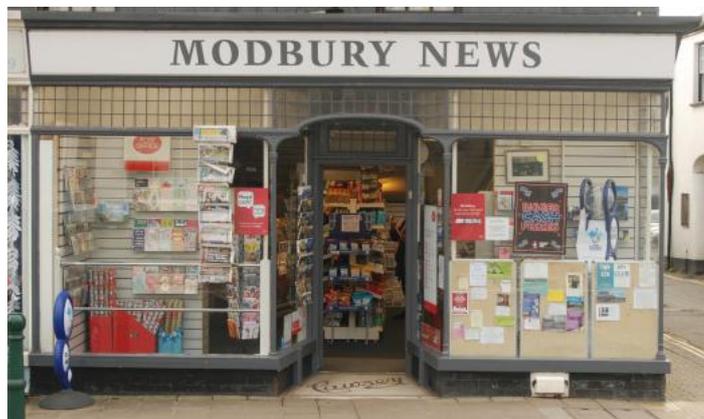


### Modbury Co-op

Nicky's team at the Co-op, always the anchor store for Modbury, had to cope with increased demand and struggling supply chains but as far as it was possible they kept the shelves filled and inevitably put themselves at risk at the till before protective measures could be put in place.

### Modbury Pharmacy

There could not have been a more essential service for many of those having to be shielded through self-isolation, than Modbury Pharmacy. In partnership with our brilliant Health Centre, the pharmacist and assistants had to cope with an unprecedented demand, but they did everything they could to provide essential prescriptions despite frequent disruption of supplies from the wholesalers.



### Modbury News & Post Office

If anyone ever thought the Post Office was just a place for buying stamps and sending things, Justine and Peter have shattered that myth. Pensions, banking, cash were suddenly a priority for all those instructed to 'Stay Home.' Many of our older residents still run their lives by cash and when so many of our local banks have closed, the Post Office has been there for them. . . and us.

### Pickles Hardware

Nikki and Richard at Pickles have a real flair for sourcing. When the UK was running out of sanitiser, gloves and more recently, masks, Pickles managed to find them and keep Modbury supplied. People found they had more time on their hands so started to fix those important jobs around the house that needed doing, making a start on the garden and joining the national obsession with baking; all possible thanks to our fabulous, tardis-like home and hardware shop.





## Mackgills Delicatessen

High on the essentials list in time of lockdown was food. Adam at Mackgills was determined to ensure that if you couldn't go out to eat, you could still enjoy a tasty treat or two at home. It can't have been easy having to cope with all the shop-based changes while figuring out which of your suppliers were still operating and how to maintain supplies especially on perishable products. Thank you, Adam, for the flour and yeast supplies when all the supermarket shelves were empty.

## Aune Valley Meat Company

One of our star shops decided that the easiest way to serve the town was to take the bold decision to take their products to the customer rather than the customer coming to buy them. Aune Valley must have turned their business model head over heels to change from a normal counter-based shop service to what soon became a slick and efficient online and telephone delivery service. Good to see Adrian and Co back in the shop though.



Other local food suppliers also took up the challenge of direct deliveries with Spindlebrook Farm providing their fabulously fresh veg boxes and How Now Dairy extending their milk deliveries to include artisan bread, eggs, coffee, juices and more. We may have stayed home but many of us have never eaten so well.

We owe all these traders, along with take-away restaurants and the converted-to-take-away pubs who joined them, a massive vote of thanks.

There can be no better way to show that thanks than to continue to give these lifeline businesses our trade. **They looked after Modbury, now Modbury must look after them.** We need them. We need all those closed businesses to return too and start contributing again to our daily life and bring us closer to a new normal.

**Colin Whybrow**

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## Have Your Say on the Renewal of the Memorial Hall Play Park



A walk-in consultation on the renewal of the play park was all set to happen in the Memorial Hall when the lockdown came and the event had to be postponed at the last minute.

The Play Park Committee is keen to restart the process rather than lose more time. Like many situations created by Covid-19, new ways of keeping things going have had to be found.

Restarting the consultation process means communicating with the community via social media, the Parish Council website, posters in the town, the Messenger and other media channels.

The graphics that were being produced for displays in the Memorial Hall have now been converted to a

presentation and the questionnaire adapted to be able to be downloaded, completed and returned by email or delivered or posted to the Parish Office.

The Memorial Hall Play Park is a popular location because of its close proximity to the school and provides a secure environment. We want to create a new and better play area for children of pre-school age and those under 12 but we want your input before we start to plan it.

Everyone in the community is welcome to put forward their view, hopes and opinions. We would particularly like to hear from families whose children will use the new play park and the children themselves.

In order to give everyone plenty of time to consider their views we will be opening the consultation period around mid June. Responses from interested members of the community are required by 31<sup>st</sup> July.

It has to be assumed that social distancing requirements will remain in force during this time, making face-to-face consultations extremely unlikely. We will keep the position under regular review but safety of the community will be our paramount concern.

You can download the play park consultation presentation and the questionnaire from the Parish Council website [www.modburypc.co.uk](http://www.modburypc.co.uk) and it is also available from [www.modburyfc.org.uk](http://www.modburyfc.org.uk).

Please take a look at the presentation before completing the questionnaire, it is designed to get you thinking about the many aspects of play parks that need to be considered and offers some interesting examples of the types of play park that have been designed around the country and elsewhere.

The questionnaire can be downloaded, completed and either scanned and emailed back or sent or delivered to the Parish office at 2 Galpin street, Modbury PL21 0QA. The email address is [playpark@modburypc.co.uk](mailto:playpark@modburypc.co.uk)

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## A Message from the Modbury Flower Fairy

Dear Modbury Residents

I am preparing to flit away back to my woodland home, but before I do I want to wish everyone well, especially the people who have received the surprise flower posies and biscuits; I am certain you deserved them. Now that there are so many people around again I am afraid I can't risk being seen, as I might turn into a goblin.

Secondly I'd like to tell you all something that good fairies know. Kindness is an antidote to stress, and kindness boosts the immune system of both the giver and receiver. Think about it.

Ta Ta



MFF



## Going Back to Work

These have been really strange times. Staying at home and not seeing family and friends. None of us expected this at the beginning of the year. I thought that you might like to hear what it's like going back to work after being locked down so long.

I am Jackie Thomas from Ivybridge Podiatry. Technically I have not been closed the entire lockdown, but for most of it I was open for emergencies only, which are few and far between in my practice. Most emergencies are seen by the NHS. A couple of weeks ago I opened to moderate risk patients, and I ventured out with some trepidation. My whole routine had been turned upside down. I now have to take my own bookings rather than using my reception service, because I need to triage my patients' into a RED, AMBER and GREEN medical risk status as well as checking that they are free from Covid-19. My appointment times are longer now, to allow patients to facilitate social distancing and avoid the need to meet with other patients in the waiting room and to allow me to thoroughly disinfect the clinic room chairs, desks, computer, card reader, door handles, hand rails, doorbell etc.

PPE has been a nightmare. I am sure that you are all aware that there have been acute shortages in the supply of PPE and hence the price has rocketed. Some things like wipes, aprons and masks can be up to 10 times the pre Covid prices, so shopping around is essential and delivery times are long and unpredictable. It is also hot and uncomfortable to wear. Deaf people are struggling to communicate with me, so we are resorting to sign language and paper notes, but where there is a will, there is a way.

However, I am very pleased to be back working again and I am doing my best to process my backlog of cancelled patients as quickly as possible. Many of my patients are relieved to finally get to see me to sort out their uncomfortable feet. Please do get in touch if you need assistance, I will see you as soon as I am able, but subject to your triage status. I am sure that you can understand that I need to see urgent foot problems before mild ones. I am doing all I can to make it a safe enjoyable treatment for you.

**Jackie Thomas**



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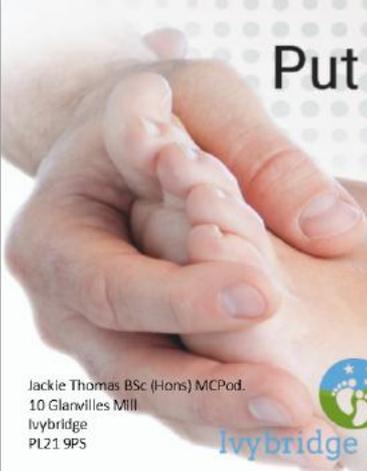
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Tel. 07766 447979

## Modbury WI

The Devon Federation of Women's Institutes celebrates its centenary in June and had an extensive programme of events planned to mark the occasion. Individual members are however planning lockdown events of their own, at a distance, which no doubt will involve Devon cream teas and possibly the best china.

The current Modbury WI has only been in existence for five years, but there was previously one here for many years of which there is photographic evidence in the archives. Until we are certain of when we can meet again we cannot publish our new programme, but members have been busy during this down time making hospital scrubs and bags, headbands and masks for the NHS and carers so the time has been put to good use.

Please contact me if you would like to know more about the WI in Modbury on [rosiejane.parker@gmail.com](mailto:rosiejane.parker@gmail.com) or visit [www.thewi.org.uk](http://www.thewi.org.uk) and [devon.thewi.org.uk](http://devon.thewi.org.uk) for further information.



Rosemary Parker

### Modbury Messenger August Copy Date 10/07/20

The copy date for the August 2020 Modbury Messenger is 10th July. Please email all articles, notices of events and paid advertisements to [modburymessengercic@gmail.com](mailto:modburymessengercic@gmail.com).

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**[modburymessengercic@googlemail.com](mailto:modburymessengercic@googlemail.com)**



## Modbury History Society

At the time of writing the world is slowly returning to its new normal, however the gathering of groups for meetings seems far off so we cannot plan the new History Society programme with any certainty.

The June Meeting was due to hear Dr Tod Gray of Exeter University speak about The Slave Trade in Devon, about which he has written a book, which seems particularly

apt currently. Dr Gray tells me that he is currently broadcasting 15 minute pieces on aspects of Devon history every weekday on BBC Radio Devon at 1.10pm. The broadcasts will run through June and possibly July and are a great replacement for planned lectures and Dr Gray hopes they will alleviate the sense of isolation some people are feeling.

Dr Gray has also drawn attention to the daily blogs being sponsored by The Devon and Cornwall Society, based at the Devon Heritage Centre in Exeter, in which leading local heritage specialists describe how life in quarantine has made them re-evaluate history. The blogs are running throughout June and July and can be found on the Devon and Cornwall Society's Facebook page.

I hope in the next edition to be able to publish the 2020/2021 History Society programme, but no doubt that depends on all of us keeping alert to ensure the 'R' rate goes down.

Rosemary Parker

## walk&talk

Walks will resume when we are advised we can by the government.

### Modbury volunteer walk leaders:

Sue Rogers (831289)  
Catherine Speight (830195)  
Deena Farrell (830692)  
Jean Wright (810029)  
Louise Evans (Active Devon)

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## NATURE TALK: The Life and Times of the Hedgehog

Everyone loves hedgehogs, don't they? They are such delightful little creatures, grunting and snuffling round in the undergrowth, all prickles and beady eyes. Quite a few people have reported seeing hedgehogs in Modbury this spring, possibly related to an increase in numbers due to lack of traffic, or more plentiful food in the fine weather. But how much do we know about them and their lives?



Hedgehogs hibernate in winter in piles of leaves, logs, under sheds or in other sheltered places. From roughly March to November, hedgehogs are nocturnal nomads, and in an urban environment they may travel up to 2 miles in a night, moving between gardens to forage for food or find a mate. You may think you have one hedgehog in your garden, but in fact there may be several eating your slugs and those of your neighbours, provided they can travel freely between gardens. They are solitary creatures except in the breeding season, and love to eat beetles, caterpillars, slugs, worms and other invertebrates. Adult hedgehogs can weigh as much as 2 kg and have up to 7,000 spines on their back and sides! They also have a small tail, which many people don't realise.

Hedgehog hazards include badgers, dogs, slug pellets, other pesticides and garden ponds (hedgehogs are excellent swimmers but will drown if the pond has steep sides and they can't climb out).

Hedgehogs usually start breeding in May, the pregnancy lasts about 35 days, and they normally produce 3-5 young. The baby hoglets begin foraging after 3-4 weeks and leave home to find their own garden/s when they are about 2-3 months old. This is when they are most at risk from predation and from being killed on the road. The female hedgehog may then mate again and produce a second brood of hoglets. These autumn hoglets are often too small (less than 600 gms) to safely hibernate and may need your help with shelter and food. In rural locations badgers are a particular threat to hedgehogs of all ages, and can uncurl and kill a rolled up hog.

If you want to help hedgehogs here are some things to do:

1. Don't use pesticides in your garden
2. Encourage insects by growing nectar rich flowers, composting, providing log and leaf piles, and growing some areas of long grass



3. If you have a pond, make sure any creatures falling into it can climb out again by having a sloping side or brick steps out
4. Provide hedgehog corridors between gardens; talk to your neighbours and see if you can make a small hole in a boundary fence or wall, approximately 13 cms. This allows them to move freely to feed, find a mate and new territory.
5. Provide fresh drinking water, and cat or dog food to supplement hogs in early spring and autumn.
6. Take care to check for hogs before strimming or burning garden rubbish, and don't leave netting or litter lying around, which could trap hedgehogs.
7. If your dog may attack hedgehogs keep it on a lead in the garden after dark.

Hedgehogs are an endangered species and current numbers are estimated at around 1 million in the UK.

For further information and advice see Devon Wildlife Trust or British Hedgehog Preservation Society websites. Good luck with your hogs!

**Caroline Bower**

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## Ivybridge U3A

The Chairman and Committee would like to say hello to all our members and hope everyone is staying well and safe.

In line with Government guidelines we are still unable to hold our usual meetings but your committee are still functioning via online conferencing and as soon as practical will have your U3A up and running again. Group leaders will let their members know as soon as they can safely meet and please visit our website, posters or your local magazines for up to date news.

**Ann Oakins**



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