



# Evington Echo

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Keeping you up to date with Evington's news  
Issue 284

The newspaper of Friends of Evington Charity No. 1148649  
June and July 2020

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**Protect Your Community. I wash my hands & avoid large crowds. #COVID19**



## LUCY'S CHALLENGE

During these horrible times that we are going through, with the coronavirus pandemic, some good things have come about as a result of it. Take for example Captain Tom Moore and what he achieved at his age and the tremendous amount of money that he has raised for the magnificent NHS.  
Continued on page 2.

Designed by Zinkal Solanki and Jason Chauhan



## The Friends of Evington Trustees

Helen Pettman, Craig Ward,  
Paul Archdeacon, Nilesh Chauhan  
Jason Chauhan and Gurpreet Kaur

### The Echo Team

**Editor** Helen Pettman 07910431044 or 2204525

evingtonecho@gmail.com  
helenpettman@gmail.com

#### Graphics

Jason Chauhan

#### Finance

FofE trustees and Doug Gillain (Examiner)

#### Distribution

Chris Hossack 2415153  
Harry Pettman 2204525  
Ben Sherriff 2739709  
Terry Owen 07478766191

#### Proof Readers

Julia Hughes, Addy Tyler, Ralph Ireland

[www.evingtonecho.co.uk](http://www.evingtonecho.co.uk)  
[evingtonecho@gmail.com](mailto:evingtonecho@gmail.com) facebook:  
evington echo

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### LUCY'S CHALLENGE CONTINUED

Captain Tom has been an inspiration to so many other people and has made them think of ways that they can do their bit to help in these times. There are so many efforts being performed by so many. Lucy's Challenge is the heroic effort that I would like to tell you about. This effort did involve a human in part - Lucy's Mum - but the hard work involved was performed by Lucy. Well many of you will have seen her on her daily walks in Evington Park. Lucy is a very energetic English Springer Spaniel, who is very much her own dog in every sense of the word. I often wondered who the boss was but know what the answer to that is, having watched Lucy run her Mum ragged on many occasions. Lucy might not be too vocal, normally, but she listens a lot and takes things on board. Recently, she had heard her Mum talking about the cancellation of the London Marathon and how people were going to do their own thing in isolation to raise money for various charities. These activities would represent the twenty-six miles of the marathon

and would involve performing twenty-six activities that would be sponsored in order to raise money for charities.

After a great deal of thought Lucy came up with an idea of how she could get involved and help the present situation. The problem was how to convey her idea to her Mum, as communications between the pair of them often got blurred. In the end, Lucy managed to tell her Mum that she had thought of a challenge that she could perform in order to raise money for charity and do her bit to help out in these difficult times. Her challenge was to get her Mum to throw her favourite ball for her to fetch back at least twenty-six times. Up to now Lucy had never done that many ball fetches before. Some days Lucy only managed to fetch a few times but, if it was wet or cold, just to annoy her Mum she would do more in order to make her poor Mum suffer the poor climatic conditions. So the pair of them agreed that, on the Sunday when the London marathon was supposed to be run, they would embark on their mammoth ball fetching challenge. Luckily, there were a few days left for the pair to perfect the art - not that it was really necessary as for many years this routine had been performed by the pair in Evington Park, as many park visitors will have witnessed.

I did not actually see the event live, due to present rules, but it was videoed, as proof. As an aside, if there was a dog's Olympics, I'm sure that ball fetching would be a major event. At some point I will contact the Olympic Committee and put this idea to them.

Back to Lucy's challenge. The Sunday had finally arrived. As luck would have it for Lucy's Mum, it was a lovely warm day but this did worry her a little; as I have already said, Lucy preferred wetter and colder conditions so that her Mum suffered being exposed to the elements more. Lucy decided that, for once, she would be on her best behaviour as she so wanted to do her bit to help others. So Lucy's Mum threw the ball, being careful not to hit any trees or bushes. Lucy went bounding after the ball with great enthusiasm and collected the ball and returned it to her Mum. Quite why Lucy has to spin around when she reaches her Mum one will never know, but that is just her way of doing things. Much to Lucy's Mum's surprise this went on for twenty-six throws and returns. She so hoped that she had not double counted, but never mind - at least twenty-six throws and fetches had been achieved. By now her arm was getting a little tired so the ever-mischievous Lucy made her do a twenty seventh throw - one for luck. Well done Lucy for this great sporting feat that you have performed and we are all so proud of you! Howard MORE ABOUT THIS ON PAGE 4.

## EDITORIAL

Evington people have been staying indoors and following guidelines when taking daily exercise. Many of the local groups and individuals have been devoting their time to helping. See Sukh Mani Path group on page 5. Mrs Jaedev Kaur Gill's fundraiser on page 11 and Spreading the Love crochet group on page 12.

The front page picture and page 2 write up highlights the wonderful efforts of Lucy and her mum, Liz. Charities with paid staff are going through a hard time and Charity Link is a dedicated charity for helping the most vulnerable in our society. See articles on page 4.

Many volunteers have come forward to be ambassadors in their local streets. The Mutual Aid plan is to have one volunteer in every street who will keep a look out to make sure nobody suffers locally because they are unable to access help and support for getting food, medicines or someone to talk to. (See article on page 5) Evington Mutual Aid group links up with Leicester Covid support groups and Voluntary Action Leicester. Evington Mutual Aid network have delivered leaflets in many streets in Evington ward, but there are still a few gaps. If you live outside of Evington and wish to help then contact Voluntary Action Leicester or email Leicester City Council on [c19support@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:c19support@leicester.gov.uk)

The May/June edition of the Evington Echo was delivered through local shops. The uncertainty at that time made circulation through our volunteer network difficult. Many thanks to the shops who helped promote the Echo. We will be delivering this copy of the Evington Echo in the usual way and many thanks go to all our distributors who are willing to help.

This issue has a lot to say about the Campaign to stop the downgrading of the General Hospital.

The Campaign goal is (1) to stop the downgrading of the General Hospital and keep it as an acute hospital.

(2) To keep the new Maternity Hospital at the General Hospital. (incorporating a midwifery unit).

(3) To build a new midwifery unit at the Leicester Royal Infirmary.

(4) To have meaningful consultations.

The Evington Echo website is now another useful resource for information for our local community. As usual, the latest magazine is available as a pdf on this site.

Helen

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## EVINGTON VILLAGE VIRTUAL SHOW 2020

Though there is to be no fete and show this year it has been decided to run a virtual show for horticultural sections only:  
D Cut flowers, E Pot Plants, F Vegetables, G Fruit.  
N Front Garden

This will enable people to show photos of what they have grown this year.

The show will be informal and non-competitive. Please use last year's brochure as a guide (see website). Photos should be sent as an email attachment to [jmpelmore@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jmpelmore@yahoo.co.uk) Please send in photos during the period Saturday 1st to Wednesday 5th August so as to be available for viewing on Saturday 8th August. A landscape format should be used and preferably sent as a jpg file maximum size 1Mb. Cut flowers and pot plants should be photographed against a plain background, preferably black and vegetables and fruit photographed on a white paper plate.

Viewing will be via the [www.evingtonecho.co.uk](http://www.evingtonecho.co.uk) website and it is hoped to put selected photos in the September/October Echo.

For further information or to register an interest please email John Pelmore or phone 270 9881

### JOIN OUR BOARD AND HELP FRIENDS OF EVINGTON (1148649)

Friends of Evington provide support to a number of Evington's voluntary community organisations through one or more of the following: (1) safeguarding (2) The Evington Echo, which reports community news in this local area (3) Community gardening projects under the banner 'Evington in Bloom' and working with other organisations which include local 'It's Your Neighbourhood' groups, The Royal Horticultural Society / East Midlands in Bloom / Hilltop Allotments / Graceworks and Leicester Environmental Volunteers.

We are looking for volunteers to join our Board. We are particularly interested in those people looking for a new challenge with the following experience, skills and knowledge of one or more of the following:

- \*Fundraising and bid writing
- \*Website
- \*Marketing
- \*Minutes secretary

You will need to be committed to our vision and values and keen to get involved. Being a trustee will hone your leadership skills and develop your knowledge of governance and responsibilities of a charity. We welcome applications from all and especially those who have overcome significant adversity in their lives. No previous Board experience is necessary.

Time commitment. Approximately one day a month and you will need to be available for six meetings a year and one strategy day. (Some of these will be on-line meetings). Trustees are members and will have the opportunity to join in the community activities as well. All reasonable out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

The closing date for applications is Thursday 2nd July 2020. Please send a written application enclosing a CV to [friendsofevington1@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofevington1@gmail.com) or 10 St. Denys Road, Evington, Leicester LE56DT.

Interviews will be held as soon as possible. You can find out more by downloading our Induction Pack at <http://www.evingtonecho.co.uk/friends-of-evington-induction-pack-1-0/>

## TONY O'BRIEN (1936 - 2020)



Tony O'Brien was a much loved and respected local councillor for Evington from 1982 to 2007. He was dedicated to the needs of his constituents, finding time for everyone who consulted him and carrying out his duties with much humility and dedication. Many of his constituents called him "a real gentleman". The singer Frankie Vaughan opened Evington Boys Club, the Common, Evington in 1964. Tony organised and helped build the gym at the back of the building and helped set up a volunteer committee to run the club. He was a member of the Evington Boys Club committee for 45 years and Chairman for 25 of those years. He also supported many other community initiatives for young people in Evington, believing that young people need these facilities to help them live worthwhile, non-violent lives. He also recognised that older people also need facilities to help combat loneliness and isolation.

Tony had lived in Evington for 38 years and both his children were educated there from Whitehall Infants to City of Leicester School. Tony was a retired Post Master who ran the Post Office in Highfields for 32 years. He also served the City of Leicester as a County Councillor and served the bench as a Justice of the Peace in Leicester for 30 years until his retirement at age 70 in 2007. He was a member of the Leicestershire Police committee for 5 years and a member of the Northern Health Trust, where he campaigned tirelessly on behalf of Leicester hospitals.

It is sad to hear of the death of a long-standing representative and champion of Evington. Dad is survived by his wife Pauline, daughter Gail, son Philip and three grand children.

He will be sadly missed by all.

Philip O'Brien



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CHARITY LINK  
(WWW.CHARITY-LINK.ORG)



Charity Link has been working to support people in financial hardship in Leicester since 1876. Now working throughout Leicester, Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire, Charity Link provides essential items to help people in need including food, grants for utilities, clothing, beds, cookers, fridges and washing machines.

The charity works to ensure that everyone has a decent standard of living, no matter what crisis, illness, disability or difficulty they may be going through. It supports people of all ages, backgrounds and ethnicities, including vulnerable elderly people, the victims of domestic violence, those affected by family breakdowns or bereavements, disabled people, carers, and many local families struggling to make ends meet.

Having helped people in Leicester through many difficult times during its 140+ year history, Charity Link has been busy offering support to those in need due to the Covid-19 crisis and the charity has already seen an 11% increase in the number of clients needing its help. In the first six weeks following the lock down, 51% of requests for help were from those directly impacted by Covid-19 and during that time the charity helped 561 people, 238 of which were children. The charity expects the number of people needing its help to continue to rise over the coming months. This increase in need comes at the same time that the charity expects a 50% loss in fundraising income, due to the cancellation of events, a reduction in supporter activities, donations and other income streams.

This is why Charity Link was so delighted that Liz and Lucy decided to take on their fundraising challenge to help raise vital funds to support their work.

Charity Link works in a unique way, untapping funds from charitable trusts across the UK. This means that for every £10 donated it can actually provide £50 of essential items to local people in need.

Liz and Lucy would love to raise even more to support Charity Link's work. Please donate at [www.justgiving.com/campaign/charitylink](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/charitylink) and leave a message of support for Liz and Lucy so that the charity knows the donation is in support of their efforts. Or send a cheque, made payable to Charity Link to Charity Link (Liz and Lucy), 20A Millstone Lane, Leicester, LE1 5JN.

Rachel Markham  
Communications & Fundraising Officer  
Charity Link  
222 2218. Please phone before 3.00pm and not Thursdays.)

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/charitylink](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/charitylink)

## LUCY'S CHALLENGE - THE FACTS

As many dogwalkers in Evington know, Howard never allows facts to get in the way of his wonderful stories - so I'd just like to correct a few misleading impressions!



Fact number one: Lucy had had plenty of practice before taking up the 2.6 challenge on the 26th April. Since

the beginning of lockdown, she has been getting her morning exercise by running for her ball in the garden each day. In the early days, she was running about 50 times in each session

but, as soon as the challenge started, she decided to cut that down....so we often had to have 2 sessions instead of one! Howard is right that she is the boss, I must admit!

Fact number two: Lucy was actually challenged to run 260 times - not 26! - but she was given 7 days to achieve the target. It was tough and go whether she would manage it (especially as she went on strike twice!) but, in the end, she actually completed 275 runs by the seventh day.

Fact number three: It was actually Rachel Markham from Charity Link who suggested that Lucy should tackle the 2.6 challenge and we agreed to set a target for her of 260 runs/retrieves over 7 days. When I saw the report in the Leicester Mercury about a new 'There With You Fund' being set up to support people who are suffering enormous hardship as a result of the current situation, I contacted Charity Link to see whether Lucy could earn some money for them while she was running up and down the garden. Captain Tom was, of course, the inspiration for this. From previous experience, I knew that Charity Link was a very worthwhile and well-run charity.

## The Results:

I'm delighted to say that a huge number of people have been very generous and, so far, £973 plus gift aid has been raised for this very worthy cause. I am extremely grateful to everyone who has supported Lucy in her challenge. The money will be used to help people who are in extreme need at this time.

Charity Link has agreed to keep Lucy's page open in the hope that more people will be inspired by Lucy's effort to contribute to the Fund. If you would like to help Lucy raise some more money and, perhaps, reach £1,000, you can find guidance for doing that at the end of Rachel's article about Charity Link. on this page.

Liz Warren



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## HELPING HANDS FOR THE NHS SUKH MANI PATH GROUP



The Sukh Mani Path group has been going for 18 years at the Guru Amar Das Gurdwara in Leicester. Kamlesh Kaur, Harjinder Kaur, Kulwinder Gill and Baljinder Athwal are good at sewing. Supported by all the other ladies in this group, they have been making laundry bags and headbands which have been distributed to various hospitals and care homes, mental health institutions and Two Steeples Medical Centre, Wigston. So far they have given away 386 laundry bags and 303 headbands.

### EVINGTON MUTUAL AID

Evington Mutual Aid was set up, like other mutual aid groups, in order to have a local volunteer in every street in Evington ward who will keep a look out in their street and make sure nobody 'falls through the net' and is unable to access help and support while they are self-isolating. Local volunteers receive helpful information through the Evington network which is coordinated by Hannah Wakley. Our MP, Claudia Webbe, has been active in supporting this scheme throughout Leicester East. She says, "It works because it is about communities coming together at a street level who know each other." Voluntary Action Leicester offer help in recruiting and signposting volunteers throughout the city and county.

The mutual aid volunteers help their neighbours with all sorts of errands, from picking up prescriptions and groceries to walking dogs or even just being available for a chat when someone is feeling lonely. They have even helped to find a bakery that will deliver a birthday cake to someone whose family live in Scotland and wanted to help their grandad celebrate! The group is aiming to make sure that no-one feels alone during this difficult time.

There are still a few streets in Evington that haven't got a volunteer, particularly in the Rowlett's Hill area and around Downing Drive. If you live in Evington and you are able to volunteer to support your community, please contact Hannah h.r.wakley@gmail.com

## NISA LOCAL EVINGTON VILLAGE STORE

The local community appreciate the fact that this store has remained open during the Covid-19 crisis. Some local people have commented as follows:

"The staff and the shop are amazing and a real life-saver during the lockdown. You've all done an amazing job and should be so proud. Well done."

"Love this brilliant shop and all its friendly staff. Carry on with the good work and a big thank you to you all."

Richard Kent at Nisa Local says:

"I just wanted to say a massive thank you to all our staff, who have all worked extremely hard and put themselves at risk as key workers during the Covid-19 crisis. Also to Nick and his wife who volunteer their time delivering to our customers in isolation."

Having taken advice from our governing body the Association of Convenience Stores in regards to keeping our staff and customers safe during these testing times, we have implemented a one-way system, which is clearly signposted with arrows on the floor.

Please respect that all key workers are taking risks in order to serve the public. The rules have to apply to everyone. Please be extra patient and appreciate all workers who are serving the Community."

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**CROSSWORD ANSWERS - grid on page 14**

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**Down**

2. ABROAD, 3. KELP, 4. COPY, 5. FETE, 6. MAXIMS, 7. AMBASSADORS, 9. SCOTCH BROTH, 13. REACT, 14. BIRTH, 15. VAULT, 16. SEINE, 18. ARCTIC, 19. EVOLVE, 22. BOAR, 23. FLAT, 24. ODER.

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Page 5



# Letters

## WW2 SACRIFICES

Dear Editor,

From Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia and across Africa to Jamaica, Guyana, the Caribbean to lands we call India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh, we must also remember the sacrifices of these heroes in opposing Nazi genocide.

Name and address supplied.

## HELP SOLVE A PUZZLE

Dear Readers,

I am writing to you in the hope that you can help me solve a puzzle.

A few days ago, I received through my letter box a black and white postcard addressed to a Miss L. M. Rastall, at my present address. Not much of a surprise, I thought, she must have lived here before I moved in so I can easily send the postcard on. However, I was surprised when I read the date written above the message: it said Bolzano, Italy, 27.8.65 ... So it took 55 years to reach its destination (!!!).

The card carries 2 stamps for the total value of 55 liras, but I cannot read any more info on the stamps themselves. I would like to be able to contact the family of Miss Rastall and let them have the postcard. In the message, the sender (Sarah) says that she is in Bolzano with some friends from Liverpool, climbing in the Dolomites, and she asks her friend to send her a letter.

Can your readers please help me trace either Miss Rastall or her friend Sarah? Maybe there's someone who remembers the family?

Thank you very much for your help.

Mrs A. Neal, 144 Spencefield Lane, tel: 07557220757 email: sandraneal@hotmail.com

## HOW COVID-19 HAS CHANGED OUR LIVES

With the number of cases in Leicestershire currently standing at 962 and the entire nation under strict lockdown, life has inevitably changed for a majority of us. In weeks, shops have been stripped of dire essentials that only two months ago we took for granted. Our once-bustling Evington Village is now gloomy and deserted: there are no longer any dogs on their leads or children clumsily riding their bikes. Instead, both dogs and children pace their gardens, occasionally engaging in their home-schooling work (the children of course). Even most of the usually buzzing shops remain unlit. I'm certain it wouldn't be overly dramatic to say that it feels as though life as we know it has changed overnight. We have been forced to familiarise ourselves with the idea of everything taking place on a screen, from school to meetings. Sunday has lost its significance because every day feels like one; life is now utterly mundane.

Furthermore, those that simply leave their homes, not that they should be doing so unless it's for essential work or exercise, are forced to explain why, by the police! A particularly striking incident I recently read about involves a man from Leicester who was caught by the police on the motorway back from London with his two kids. When questioned what he was doing, he claimed that he 'was buying bread from London as it is £1 cheaper than that of Leicester.' Although a ridiculous excuse, it did strike me just then how serious this has become.

Before all of this, I travelled to London nearly every week and now, it's practically illegal. Currently, our lives are confined to our gardens and houses, I've even found a new part of my garden that I'd never seen before! However, we have always taken the world outside our homes for granted so let this be a lesson that we should appreciate it more.

Simran Radia  
14.04.20

## WIN A FREE 1-HOUR COACHING SESSION.

See article on the Evington Echo website 'Has Covid-19 affected your career?'

## CORONAVIRUS AND CARE HOMES

Dear Editor,

The national news about this Coronavirus pandemic in England has been scary and the local scene with deaths in care homes and our three local hospitals follows the same pattern. Care home deaths alone (not counting hospital deaths) from 10th April to 1st May has been 57 deaths in Leicestershire Care Homes and 25 deaths in Leicester City Care Homes. It is difficult to know if these figures still underestimate the devastation caused by the awful pandemic. It is so terrible for all those families that have lost a loved one.

Name and address supplied

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MAYOR VIA RADIO RAMADAN

The City Mayor started with a kind message to people celebrating Ramadan this year and said it had been a very challenging time for everyone. The video link showed Sir Peter Soulsby working in his front living room at home, which had been made into his office. He had borrowed folding tables, and had 2 PCs and 3 screens. (The City Hall is in lockdown). He said he felt like he was in charge of The Star Ship Enterprise and it was working in a very different way. The City Council has had to adapt quickly and at the beginning there were virtual meetings with leaders of all his management teams every morning. Now (2nd May) there are less crisis meetings but more update meetings and meetings to monitor progress.

The Mayor said that he was proud of the way that the community had come together in Leicester with many organisations offering to help the wider community so effectively and willingly. Sir Peter said how people within their groups were pulling together, and explained that the Council couldn't have done it on their own.

He said Council money was prioritised for emergency food, food parcels and hot meals, so all could be fed. Also there was money so the homeless could be off the streets and properly housed. He said he didn't begrudge any of the spending in these unique and unprecedented times. Also funds have been given to every ward so that councillors can talk to local people and decide what best needs

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doing in their particular situation, responding to local needs. The next stage is looking at the process of the gradual relaxation of restrictions, so that the Council can pick up the pieces well and plan for the future. The aim of the planning is that the community and economy will come out stronger. So what will this 'new normal' look like?

### 'The New Normal'

It will be well structured with emergency food in place. Homeless people housed. Support for people in social isolation, support for volunteers and monitoring and evaluations to make sure it is all working well. But what about schools? The Council want to see children back in school, but it shouldn't be a place to pass on the virus. He said it is a blessing that children don't seem to be the group at risk, but they shouldn't be able to pass on the virus to any at risk groups. The Mayor also spoke about the impact of the virus on the BAME community, but said it was difficult to get reliable figures as the national level had been overwhelmed and the levels of infection of a particular group or ethnicity is not reported in a usable format.

The Mayor recommends people to use the following email, (or get someone to email for you) to [c19support@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:c19support@leicester.gov.uk)

This email takes 200 enquiries a day. It responds quickly and can point you in the right direction.

### CONTACTING POLITICIANS

For information about contacting Councillors in Leicester wards Tel: 454 6360.

To contact Claudia Webbe MP  
Tel: 0207 219 3000  
[claudia.webbe.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:claudia.webbe.mp@parliament.uk)

To contact Jonathan Ashworth MP  
Tel: 0207 219 3000  
[jon.ashworth.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:jon.ashworth.mp@parliament.uk)

## RESULTS OF THE WRITING COMPETITION FOR CHILDREN UNDER 15 CALLED 'A STORY ABOUT YOUR PET OR IMAGINARY PET'

Aaryan, 1st prize  
Reuben, Skye and Zesham 2nd prize jointly

### AARYAN'S STORY - MY IMAGINARY DOG CALLED RILEY!

If I had a dog, I would call it Riley no specific reason why I want him to be called Riley I just like the name! I want a puppy which is black and fluffy. Black and medium just like a baby panther almost. Hopefully he would be energetic and playful. I would love it if he was playful because then we could play in the garden and play football. I would take him round the block every single day! My mum would teach me how to wash him because we had a dog before, so she would know how to wash him feed him and even pick up his poo! EEEEEEEEEEEWWWWWWWWW! He would sleep in my room and he would sit next to me on the sofa. I would teach him cool tricks and how to fetch and roll over. Oh, and I could teach him how to stand up on his back legs. Riley would learn how to tackle the ball off me in a game of football. If he is a fast runner which he should be because he is a lab, we could have races. I would teach Riley how to jump up on the table and nick my food if I don't like it and then he can eat it, genius! It's a genius! Will he get spoiled if I do that to him? Anyway, if he is naughty, I would put him in the shower because I am pretty sure dogs don't like having showers but if he does, I would not give that much food for the next meal. Ok maybe that is a little cruel. I would only give him 3/4 of the food he is meant to have. I will tell him not to bite not to bark when were out. I would try and catch up with my dog because apparently labs are a fast breed. If I can't catch up, I will tell him to walk. If I get the dog I am after I would like him young and cute, so I have time to train him and teach him tricks so when he is big, he is at his full potential. I will really look after my dog if I get him. People say it is hard to look after a dog, but I am up to the challenge, I am ready to take it on!

### JUDGE'S COMMENTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Aaryan: This is a well-imagined story, written in a good racy style which immediately engages the reader. He conjures up a lovely picture of a lively dog and he certainly sounds 'up for the challenge'!

Reuben: This too is a well-imagined story with lots of detail conveying his understanding of the responsibility as well as the fun of owning a dog.

Skye: This is a charming tribute to her dog, Bobby, telling us about happy memories and giving us a sense of the beautifully warm and very special relationship she had with him.

Zesham: Zesham gives a delightful account of how he learnt an important lesson and the enormous pleasure he now enjoys from owning a lovely dog.

You can read all the stories on the Evington Echo website: [www.evingtonecho.co.uk](http://www.evingtonecho.co.uk)



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# CAMPAIGN FOR AN NHS THAT IS FIT FOR PURPOSE - CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE DOWNGRADING OF LEICESTER GENERAL HOSPITAL

## CORONAVIRUS CRISIS HIGHLIGHTS ERROR IN DOWNGRADING OF LEICESTER GENERAL HOSPITAL

### As the MP for Leicester East, I wholeheartedly oppose the downgrading of Leicester General.

I am concerned that it will have a detrimental impact for the residents of Leicester East and for people living across our city.

In November 2019, University Hospitals of Leicester (UHL) NHS Trust received £450million funding from the government to reorganise its acute hospital services. This money will be used to close the General Hospital as an acute hospital and consolidate acute services onto two sites – Leicester Royal Infirmary and Leicester Glenfield Hospital. Two thirds of land at the General Hospital site will then be sold for other use.

### Virtually no detail about these plans has been put into the public domain.

The lack of transparency from the government has been alarming. The NHS has a statutory duty to consult on any closure, and as your MP I will be pushing to ensure that this consultation is meaningful.

**There are valid concerns that the number of beds proposed for the new-look General are entirely inadequate**, and that these projections are based on the unrealistic hope that community care will be able to make up for this shortfall. Given the crisis we face in social care, this is highly unlikely, and will place vulnerable people in Leicester East at further risk.

Government policy over the last decade has been to keep cutting the number of beds and to downsize hospital capacity so that it barely caters for our population. This was proven to be a dangerous mistake even before the current Coronavirus outbreak. The concept of a 'winter crisis' has been normalised by this government, but this was not a regular occurrence under previous administrations. The Conservatives have stretched the NHS to breaking point, meaning it is running over capacity even without any exogenous crises. By consistently underfunding our NHS, they have not only placed valuable NHS staff under tremendous pressure but have also left the entire population vulnerable to the impact of unprecedented public health crises.

### We are now seeing the consequences of underfunding hospitals such as Leicester General.

What the coronavirus crisis clearly shows is that it is not enough to plan just for minimum need. The NHS also needs to have some leeway – with funding and planning which can enable it to deal with national emergencies. The current shortage in ventilators and personal protective equipment for NHS staff is a key example of this.

I am immensely grateful to all our NHS staff and social care workers in Leicester East who are working tirelessly to help deal with the crisis. They rightly should be applauded, but they deserve much more support than they are currently getting from the government.

**I believe that we need a collective approach to this crisis, the biggest of our lifetime, and one which sees a step change in how our public services are valued and funded after a decade of savage cuts.** We need to fight for real funding for the NHS with decent pay and conditions for its staff. The fragmentation of our NHS has left all of us more vulnerable. This current crisis demonstrates the need for a properly funded health service that can withstand unexpected crises. As your MP, I will continue to fight on your behalf to ensure the government are prioritising our public health and safety

Claudia Webbe



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to campaign against the downgrading of the General Hospital and the sale of two-thirds of the land, which includes many hospital buildings.

In England we have one of the lowest number of hospital beds compared with other high-income countries and only a fraction of the intensive care beds found in other countries like France and Germany. All this was before the Covid-19 outbreak.

Government policy in recent years has been to keep cutting the number of beds in relation to the size of the growing population. This is a dangerous mistake. Underfunding has placed valuable NHS staff under tremendous pressure. For those who become seriously ill with the coronavirus it will be hospital staff and hospital beds and intensive care beds which save their lives.

We need to fight for real funding for the NHS, decent pay and conditions for its staff and for frontline workers to have more influence over the planning of our services.

What the coronavirus pandemic shows is that it is not enough to run services for minimum need. It shows that care in the community is not an adequate replacement for actual hospital beds.

UHL's plans to close the General as an acute hospital, and to spend a huge amount of money without creating any extra capacity, should now be dead in the water. But we need to be vigilant in case they try to resurrect this plan.

We need to fight for an NHS that is fit for purpose. Care workers deserve nothing less!"

## MATERNITY PROVISION IN LEICESTERSHIRE

According to a report in the Leicester Mercury on May 11th, the managers of UHL NHS Trust are currently looking at the possibility of adjusting some of its plans in the light of their experience in the current Covid 19 crisis and will be consulting the public about their ideas in the very near future. I imagine that capacity will or should be top of their agenda.

The same edition of the Leicester Mercury also reported, however, that the Government has agreed to write off the historic debts of hospitals, thus saving UHL NHS Trust £350 million plus interest. Added to the £450 million grant awarded to it recently, the UHL NHS Trust appears to be in a good position to spend wisely now for the benefit of future generations. I would urge the managers, therefore, not just to look at clever money-saving schemes but to adopt a people-first policy and, in particular, to take a thorough look at their plans for maternity provision in Leicestershire, taking into account recent research into best practice in this area. Interestingly, they would find that the best people-centred approach has been shown to be the most cost-effective.

If the plan to build the new maternity hospital on the LRI site goes ahead, Dr Denis Walsh, Associate Professor in Midwifery, University of Nottingham (now retired), estimates that there will be upwards of 11,000 births per year, making it one of the largest hospitals in the UK. "This results in an assembly-line model of birth that loses the personal touch and leads to a higher level of complaints from women. It also leads to higher levels of interventions – so expect caesarean rates to go up. In addition, mega units like this are more expensive to run," he maintains. His comments are based on research conducted by Dr Walsh with several colleagues and published in 2017 under the title 'Mapping midwifery and obstetric units in England'.

In their report, Dr Walsh and his colleagues point to earlier research which showed that "outcomes for low risk women were better and care was less costly if births were planned in midwifery units rather than obstetric units, without compromising the safety of babies. In particular, having a baby in a midwifery unit reduced caesarean section rates by two thirds. There was also a reduced risk of instrumental delivery or of receiving medical interventions, and significantly greater likelihood of having a normal birth. The linked economic study also found that cost per woman was less than traditional labour wards and care more cost effective."

It would therefore seem wise to increase the use of midwifery units. UHL NHS managers, however, are preparing to relocate the stand-alone midwifery unit in Melton – how and to where is not clear – and to try out a new stand-alone midwifery unit on the General Hospital site, giving a target of at least 500 babies to be born there within the first year and threatening the immediate closure of the unit if that target is not met.

Dr Walsh supports the idea of a stand-alone midwifery unit on the General Hospital site but he adds "it will be set up to fail if they trial it for one year and expect 500 births to happen there over that time. It should not be a trial. They should promote it as necessary provision to meet NHS's own policy on choice of place of birth for women. Then they should aggressively market it to women who, by and large, are unfamiliar with the model. The Trust should performance-manage themselves on achieving a target of 500 births over a 3 year- period by investing staff, training, facilities and promotion, making it a flagship service. This is the only way it will succeed and there are excellent examples of this approach in other places in England."

Clearly, a stand-alone midwifery unit would only succeed if it had the full support, understanding, encouragement and commitment of the UHL NHS managers. Sadly, it would appear that that essential understanding and commitment is currently lacking. It is possible that the managers would find it easier to provide the necessary support and encouragement if the new midwifery unit were to be located closer to the Infirmary on the site currently designated for the new maternity hospital. The new maternity hospital could then be built on the site of the General Hospital with an along-side midwifery unit incorporated into the plans.

It is abundantly clear that the UHL NHS managers need to invest more thought and money into providing the best possible maternity provision in Leicestershire for the benefit of future generations.

We must campaign to ensure that the plans of UHL NHS Trust take into account the capability of its management and give due consideration to the evidence about how to achieve the best possible outcomes for mothers-to-be and their babies both now and in the future.

**We must campaign for the new maternity hospital (incorporating a midwifery unit) to be built on the site of the General Hospital and the new midwifery unit to be built on the LRI site.**

Elizabeth Warren

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## SAVE OUR NHS INVESTIGATES

With the Covid 19 pandemic putting immense strain on our services, on April 11 Save Our NHS Leicestershire launched an initiative to ask carers in residential and domiciliary settings to speak up about their experiences.

The responses the group received have now been written up into a report [copied below] and sent to all ten MPs in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, as well as directors of social care in the city and the county. The report asks that they intervene in order to address some of the extremely urgent issues being raised.

Tom Barker, Secretary of Save Our NHS Leicestershire, said:

"We launched the initiative to try to help give these essential workers, whom we admire immensely, a voice at this extremely difficult time. We are not claiming the responses we have received are representative but we are worried that they are raising issues of significant concern.

"Some of the stories that have been shared with us are extremely sobering and we believe require immediate action from government ministers and local decision makers."

### REPORT ON CAREWORKERS SENT TO MPS AND LOCAL DECISION MAKERS

I am writing to you on behalf of Save Our NHS Leicestershire (SONHSL) to ask you to intervene in the concerns being expressed by carers in residential and domiciliary settings.

A number of carers have contacted SONHSL in the past fortnight with the following concerns. We are not claiming that what has been reported to us is representative as we

have no means of knowing this but we do believe what carers have told us and we are concerned that any carers are experiencing what they have described.

Some carers are too frightened to speak publicly as they believe this will threaten their employment. There is also concern that the needs of carers working as employees of individuals through direct payments may not be being adequately considered and addressed.

Some carers are reporting a lack of responsiveness on the part of their employers or managers in relation to concerns being raised by carers and even a reluctance by managers or supervisors to discuss the risks staff face, the concerns staff have and the implications of official guidelines for carers in specific care settings.

There is a concern that some employers do not know how to manage the crisis and, where senior management are remote from local managers, do not seem to be enabling local managers to implement the guidelines. There is a concern that some care organisations do not know how to change the way they do things in the light of the crisis. Some care managers, or coordinators in the case of domiciliary care, do not seem to be familiar with government guidelines or with the rights and entitlements of staff, including in relation to something as basic as statutory sick pay. Some carers have experienced disbelief when they have reported symptoms and the need to self-isolate.

There is a fear that Covid-free residential settings are being required to take patients with Covid symptoms or recovering from Covid. There is evidence that carers' objections to this, because of the risk to other residents and to themselves, are being side-stepped with agency staff brought in to care for Covid sufferers. Thus in some parts of the care sector casualised elements of the workforce are being

expected to undertake the riskiest work and as they are even more likely to move from setting to setting increasing we believe the risk of spreading the virus.

Carers in domiciliary settings might be working in 10-20 households each week and working alongside other carers who also working in 10-20, often different, households each week. The risk of infection spread is causing alarm. There is evidence that some carers are not being informed when service users have experienced or are continuing to experience Covid symptoms.

Specific issues raised include:

The need to reduce as far as possible the number of carers working with a single service user.

Being advised by the employer not to use face masks in domiciliary care unless the client is ill when it is not always possible to know whether this is the case.

The need to discuss with families the risks of formal care relative to those associated with informal care in the coronavirus context.

The need to try to avoid family members and formal carers being in the presence of the service user at the same time.

The absence of extra personal protective equipment (PPE) when the employer is the cared for person and the risks of sharing live-in facilities with other carers where 24 hour care is required in such settings.

The dangers posed by taking mobile phones, which are used in some companies as a means of enabling carers to access records, into different care settings when mobile phones are very difficult to clean.

The absence of additional time allowed for washing hands and donning/taking off PPE.

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## SAVE OUR NHS (CONTINUED)

The concerns described above are exacerbated by a more general problem of Insufficient personal protective equipment and the absence of testing, particularly since carers have been relatively marginalised in public debates and policy prioritisation. The lack of testing for carers and care home residents is continuing to cause concern.

A number of broader employment related issues have been raised with us by the carers who have contacted us which are not directly related to Covid-19 but which exacerbate the difficulties and fears carers have. We do not detail these here but it is clear that the comparative casualisation of the sector makes it difficult for carers to protect themselves and their clients effectively.

We are concerned that these problems persist given that the dangers of the coronavirus and how it spreads have been understood for some time. We fear that the government is taking a reactive rather than pro-active approach and the problems of this are compounded by the highly fragmented nature of social care. However, mounting pressure from key workers and the public is playing an important role in changing this approach. We are asking you to exercise additional pressure on the government in assuring that these urgent issues are addressed.

Tom Barker, on behalf of Save Our NHS Leicestershire campaign officers at tom.p.barker@gmail.com or 07896 841 902..

## RAISING MONEY FOR THE NHS

Local resident, Mrs. Jaedev Kaur Gill, who has worked as both a nurse and a health visitor, has coordinated a fundraising appeal for the NHS, which raised £30,000. £25,000 was given to the NHS and £5,000 to Leicester City Council. Donations came from members of the Guru Amardas Gurdwara/Leicester Sikh Centre and listeners to Kohinoor Radio.

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## MY PANDEMIC LIFE BY ZESHAN ANWAR AGE 9

When this whole lockdown started I wasn't that scared, I didn't need to be. But as schools and clubs shut down, I realised how Covid-19 could affect me and this made me really worried and kind of scared. I tried to occupy myself and with all this free time, I tried my hand at some new hobbies.

I had previously really wanted to start a YouTube Channel to allow people to learn things I knew. So, at the start of the lockdown I decided to finally launch this alongside my cousins. We started uploading videos and this was mainly around the government's advice on how we could all stay safe and protected. In order to vary the content, we then started posting 5 minute craft, cooking and origami videos. Time went by really quickly as I was having lots of fun making and editing these videos whilst also teaching others!

Our 'how to make pancakes' and 'jelly' videos were very popular, so please make sure you go and check that out. The channel is called 'NextGen live learn lead'. It would be really appreciated if you subscribe and like the videos as this channel is for all people of any age.

Home schooling is really different and I seem to have a lot of free time as I get through the work very quickly. That said, I really do miss my teachers, friends and talking to everyone in class and having direct help from teachers, instead of having to learn myself. On the flip side, I have learnt more about how to use computers, so I am really happy, as this will help me go forward.

I also find it very peculiar not being able to go to my clubs anymore. Before all this, when life was normal, I loved sport and attended a variety of clubs and that kept me active. I loved having a busy schedule of sport, but now it's very different. Sometimes, from my bedroom, I stare outside the window and just see hundreds of roofs and green fields that are empty. I stare at the roads counting the cars and I watch the birds flying peacefully across the sky. At night, I watch the stars glistening. I can't wait for things to get normal again.

Ramadan has now also started. Although, I do not fast, we have lots of yummy foods in the evenings like burgers and chips, steak, lamb and all of this is homemade which makes it extra special and more yummy. When it is sunset all our family come together and pray and then we eat. Sometimes I make some of the desserts that I have learnt. We play loads of fun games in the evening like UNO, cards, twister and ludo which is my favourite game. It's really fun and it makes me really happy and helped the time pass during this quarantine.

In short, I am having fun in the lockdown with my family but it is also a little scary so I can't wait till the lockdown ends and the virus disappears so that I can do what I normally do as I really miss all the people I know and all the activities I used to do! The change may not be quick, but with every passing day I pray and hope that we are slowly getting back to normal.  
Zeshan Anwar  
Year 5

## OTHER PLACES TO FIND HELP

NHS 111 online - check if you have coronavirus symptoms  
Mind - confidential support for people with mental health problems.  
Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm)  
Samaritans - confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.  
Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline)  
UAVA - support for anyone who has been affected by domestic abuse and or sexual violence.  
Phone: 0808 80 200 28. (Monday to Saturday, 8am to 8pm).  
Text support: 07715 994 962 (calls to this number will not be answered)  
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## SPREADING THE LOVE



Evington Crochet 4 All group, were asked to 'spread the love' by a local hospital who tasked them to crochet some hearts for patients and their families. The mini heart pairs were made so a patient at the hospital could have one heart and their family member the other just to let them know that their family members were close even though they could not be by their bedside during this Covid-19 pandemic period.

The Crochet 4 All group, who stay in contact with each other daily via a Whats App group, had a virtual lesson from Abdul, the group lead, who showed them how to make the hearts. Group members then went off and made their hearts, shared their progress and their pictures with each other all whilst #Distancesocialising. This resulted in the Crochet 4 All group producing a colourful array of hearts they made for the hospital. Staff from the hospital were so pleased with the hearts that they would like the group to make them some more.

So, If you would like to try and have a go at making some hearts, for your nearest and dearest, to let them know you are thinking of them, the pattern is as follows:-

You need wool, single or double knit, and a 4mm crochet hook:

You make a slipknot then chain 4 stitches to start your heart

Double treble in the first chain x3 times

Then treble in the same chain x3

Next do 1 double treble stitch in the same hole

Then...3 treble stitches in the same hole again

Next chain 3 double treble stitches in the same hole

Then...chain 3 stitches and lock the chain in the centre of the heart to finish it off by chaining one then cutting your wool.

That's it, 1 heart done! Now make heart number 2!

Make sure your pairs are of the same colour wool...enjoy your handiwork and share with that special someone close to you!

Please take care and if you need to chat give us a ring or drop us an email.

Stay Safe,  
Deborah Harris  
Community Connector Coordinator (Leicester Ageing Together)  
Vista, 16 New Walk, Leicester, LE1 6UB  
Tel: 0116 2498850  
Mobile: 07517450726  
deborah@leicesterageingtogether.org.uk

## GOODWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH



Our church building may be closed but our church family is active and committed to serving those around us at this challenging time. You will be able to find our services through our website at

<https://goodwoodevangelicalchurch.org.uk>

Our Messy Church, an activity usually on the first Sunday of the month at 4.00pm, has also moved online. We are also keeping in touch with those who come to Coffee Morning which in normal times meets on Thursdays from 10.30am – 12 noon.

We realise that this is a challenging time for us all, and we are committed to praying for one another and those around us. If you would like prayer for anything, or any further information about the church, please contact Stephen on 07902 946 004, or email [stayleics@sky.com](mailto:stayleics@sky.com) Stephen

## ST DENYS CHURCH IN LOCKDOWN



A lot of people have asked me how St Denys is coping in lockdown. Sadly, as you may have seen, the church building had to be closed like many other places and so we have had to find new and creative ways to continue to worship, pray and serve.

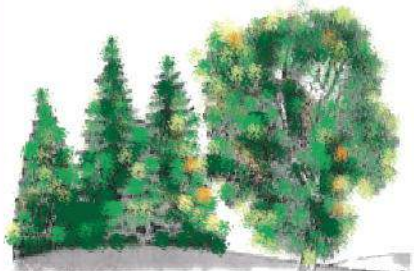
With many people not online, we quickly set up a phone chain to ensure that everyone was kept in touch and had someone checking on them regularly. A weekly bulletin has also helped to keep people connected. A phone line was set up to play recorded sermons and services (0116 4647740) and nationally there is an excellent phone service called Daily Hope 0800 804 8044. Many people are also enjoying listening to services on the radio and TV.

For those with computer access, we began to meet using Zoom. Now we use Zoom for daily prayers, a weekly coffee morning, Sunday services and weekly Bible study and discussion meetings. People love being able to see one another's faces and look forward to the breakout rooms for chat and coffee after the Sunday service.

Doing church online means people can join us from all over, even from Australia and the

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[www.evingtonchapel.org.uk](http://www.evingtonchapel.org.uk)  
For further information contact: 0116 2412087  
"We preach not ourselves,  
but Christ Jesus the Lord"



Philippines! Church members in their 80s and 90s have been encouraged and helped by family to join us and are loving learning new things and being able to do church differently. We don't always get it right and things don't always go to plan, but that's ok, it's a steep learning curve for everyone!

Our social media continues to be very active thanks to Erica who manages it, and our youth worker Sarah runs weekly games and quiz nights as well as worship and prayer for our young people. The church now has a You Tube channel with reflections and a Whats App prayer chain was set up for the whole church and is proving very popular. It has been a great place to share prayer requests as well as celebrate answers to prayer.

Having noticed that lots of people were walking through the churchyard on their daily exercise, we put up a prayer trail with prayers written especially for the pandemic. It also includes a new 'Denys the Dragon' trail for children. We are grateful to volunteers and the Parks team for maintaining the churchyard and making sure it continues to be a place of beauty and peace for visitors of all faiths and none.

Individual church members are looking after neighbours where they can, we continue to take funerals and support the bereaved, and we try to stay in touch with local care homes, businesses, schools and other organisations, not least the amazing Mutual Aid group with its terrific volunteers from across the community.

So the church is as alive as ever, although changing rapidly, and as the Queen said on VE Day, "the streets are not empty, they are filled with the love and care we have for one another". That is certainly my experience of what I see happening in Evington and my hope and prayer is that together we will continue to build on that long after this crisis is over.

If you want to join in any of the St Denys activities, you can find the recent bulletins on the website [www.stdenys.org.uk](http://www.stdenys.org.uk).

Anthony

## PARKS OF LEICESTER – ABBEY PARK

The January '20 presentation at the History and Heritage group welcomed Mick Eaton, Leicester City's horticultural adviser, who started his apprenticeship in Evington Park 43 years ago. The first instalment of his talk was about the seven graded sites in Leicester (<https://www.evington.echo.co.uk/seven-graded-park-sites-in-leicester/>)

Abbey Park – The only designed park in Leicester that was designed from scratch



57 acres of marshy land was purchased by Leicester City Council in 1876 from the Earl of Dysart for a flood relief programme and a public open space. A competition was held and voted on by the public and the Victorian architect, William Barron won. It was described as an island oasis in the midst of industrial Leicester and six years later Spencer's Guide to Leicester wrote: "A broad expanse of the smoothest and pure-tinted greensward is bordered with exquisitely arranged flowers, backed by clumps of trees of varied form and hue, surrounded by shrubs, native and exotics, which have attained most luxuriant form and dimension." For active



The park was opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1882.

amusement there was the large recreation ground, boating on the river, archery, lawn tennis courts and bowling green. Also refreshments were available on easy terms. James Tait had been employed to design the bandstand, rustic bridges and



Courtesy Leicester Mercury - above picture

summerhouse.



In 1925, the Earl of Dysart offered the Abbey grounds, on the other side of the River Soar, which now cuts the park in two, to the town council adding another 32 acres of land.

This was then used as a work creation scheme for the unemployed. The land was built up, so another competition invited several architects to put forward designs. The enlarged Abbey Park was opened in April 1932 and then incorporated the remains of the excavated old abbey and the ruins of Cavendish House.

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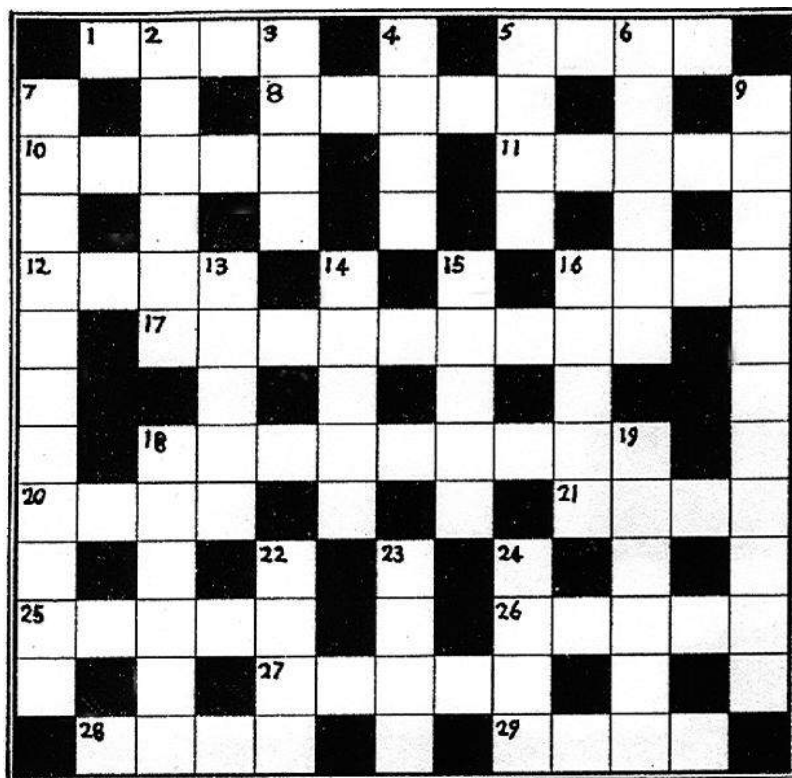
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#### ACROSS

- |                  |     |                  |     |
|------------------|-----|------------------|-----|
| 1 WOOF           | (4) | 26 DUTCH POTTERY | (5) |
| 5 GLORY          | (4) | 27 ASTONISH      | (5) |
| 8 WEAR AWAY      | (5) | 28 WOUND MARK    | (4) |
| 10 WALL PAINTING | (5) | 29 WAS SORRY     | (4) |
| 11 POISONOUS     | (5) |                  |     |
| 12 OPEN          | (4) |                  |     |
| 16 BAWDINESS     | (4) |                  |     |
| 17 PLEDGES       | (9) |                  |     |
| 18 WELDING GAS   | (9) |                  |     |
| 20 FLIT          | (4) |                  |     |
| 21 ALWAYS        | (4) |                  |     |
| 25 PROPORTION    | (5) |                  |     |

#### DOWN

- |                 |      |                      |     |
|-----------------|------|----------------------|-----|
| 2 OVERSEAS      | (6)  | 19 DEVELOP           | (6) |
| 3 SEAWEED       | (4)  | 22 HOG               | (4) |
| 4 IMITATE       | (4)  | 23 APARTMENT         | (4) |
| 5 BAZAAR        | (4)  | 24 EUROPEAN RIVER    | (4) |
| 6 ADAGES        | (6)  |                      |     |
| 7 CONSULS       | (11) |                      |     |
| 9 NORTHERN SOUP | (11) |                      |     |
| 13 RESPOND      | (5)  |                      |     |
| 14 ORIGIN       | (5)  |                      |     |
| 15 CRYPT        | (5)  |                      |     |
| 16 FRENCH RIVER | (5)  | Complied by R. Tracy |     |
| 18 POLAR REGION | (6)  | Answers on page 5.   |     |

### GETTING YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER

At the moment many people are concerned about their health and that of their family. They may also be anxious to ensure their affairs are in order, particularly with regard to arranging a Will or perhaps reviewing their existing Will.

Prior to Covid 19 this was a relatively straightforward procedure, with meetings undertaken face to face in my client's own home. Unfortunately, under current circumstances it has become considerably more challenging. Fortunately Will writers and Solicitors have been categorised by the government as 'Key workers' and thus may continue to offer our services during this unprecedented time. Of course it is important to be mindful of official governmental advice on social distancing and self-isolation, particularly with more vulnerable clients, such as the elderly or ill.

Delaying drafting a Will is clearly risky, so we have had to look at changing our working habits, such as meeting via telephone or if possible videoconferencing. This allows us to obtain the information that is needed to prepare a draft Will, which can then be emailed or posted to our client for their approval. Not being able to conduct a face to face meeting undoubtedly poses more problems in respect of assessing a person's capacity, checking for undue influence as well as identity checks.

The rules with regard to the 'execution' of a Will is also proving particularly challenging. In England & Wales, a Will is not valid unless it is signed by the testator in front of two witnesses, who must both see the testator sign. The witnesses must then sign the document in front of the testator (Wills Act 1837). In the current circumstances it is difficult to comply with the government's guidance to reduce social contact, while also arranging for Wills to be validly signed. One option is to post the Will documents to the client and ask them to make suitable arrangements for witnesses to visit them. I must admit that I have always preferred to attend the actual signing and witnessing of a Will myself to ensure that the correct procedure has been followed. In recent weeks I have had to consider innovative ways of dealing with the situation and have attended to the signing and witnessing in client's front gardens, their garage or even at an open window to ensure each party can keep the necessary distance from one another yet still adhere to the strict requirements of the Wills Act.

A solution to this may lie in technologies such as Skype, WhatsApp, Facetime or Zoom. The government are currently considering emergency legislation and it is possible that we will get a change in law for example to authorise video execution of Wills. In the meantime, it is a case of making use of what we have to do the best job possible for our clients, avoiding any potential issue later down the line.

If any readers have any concerns or queries with regard to the above, or would like advice as to any other service I provide, please feel free to give me a call on 0790 5748073.

In the meantime please take care and stay safe!

Gerard James

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## INTRODUCING SMIGGIE (CONTINUED FROM FEB. MARCH EDITION)



In Smiggie's world everything needs a good chewing and that includes my flesh as well. I have been well informed that the baby teeth are normally gone within nineteen weeks. Not so long now! Fortunately she chews other things as well. A scrap of newspaper is something that needs to be rushed around the house with and thrown in the air. It's something that needs to be shredded and tossed. It's something to hang out of her mouth and to be worn with pride. Who needs expensive flash toys when you can have a scrap of newspaper?

Another great fun thing for her to do is to dive off things without a care in the world for life or limbs. The garden is a brilliant place to jump. The bigger the drop, the more fun it is to her. Why use steps when you can just dive

down them and land on the lawn with a thump? As for the lawn, what a field of chewing material! How sweet that grass tastes to her! And as for those weeds, she thinks that they all need pulling up. Plant pots are a real joy and need to be moved around or jumped into. And the hose pipe is a real challenge and wonder, especially when it spurts water at her.

As for eating, Smiggie feels the need to speed eat. I started off by putting her dry food in a saucer for her. Trying to get the saucer of food onto the floor without her sending the food flying was nearly impossible due to her eagerness to get at it. The food would be demolished within seconds. Her style of eating was to Hoover the food up as quickly as she could.

In order to make her chew the food, I have now abandoned the saucer and just scatter her food around the kitchen floor so that she has to pick each biscuit up separately and sometimes chew it before going on to get the next biscuit. I feel that in some small way I am helping her to digest her food.

Next it was a trip to the park to let Smiggie see the big world. I carried her for the first time, but this displeased her and she would throw in the odd nip with those super sharp baby teeth. Well, we survived that trip and Smiggie now knows what is there for her.

Oh how we get on – and both need each other so much. Christina, she has in no way replaced you, but has helped me through these hard times. All my love forever and always and goodnight to my very best friend.  
Howard.

## SHOPPING IN EVINGTON VILLAGE

Nazar BBQ House are open for collection and delivery from 4.00pm to 10.00pm. Tel: 2490006.

At the time of writing J & A Pharmacy is open as usual and the Post Office inside the shop is open from Monday – Thursday from 1.00pm – 6.00pm.

For Ginns and Gutteridge Funeral Service, see advert on page 13 or tel: 2734684 for local shop.

The Main Store and Premier Superstore are open as usual.

Bennett's Home and Garden Store are trialling opening, but their advert on page 16 says they are open for deliveries. Tel: 273 7116.

Nisa Local is open as usual. Tel: 273 8616. For orders over £15 there is free home deliveries in the local area. See advert on page 5.

The Cedars, Main Street (part of King Henry Taverns group) have had a corner shop for 53 days during the virus. They are now concentrating on making the pub safe for re-opening (fingers crossed) for the beginning of July. They will be continuing the corner shop when they reopen. For more information visit their website at [www.king-henrys-taverns.co.uk](http://www.king-henrys-taverns.co.uk) Their help-line number is 07470143334

**CARERS DIRECT HOMECARE**  
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50 Main Street (The old co-op shop)  
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Carers Direct Home care (est. 2012) are renting this building and moved from New Walk to a safer venue. They look after vulnerable adults in the community who need care because of illness or mental or physical health, who may be at risk of exploitation and harm. They work directly with NHS and Leicester City Council Adult Social Services.

Carers Direct Home care would like to recruit local people for personal care jobs. An application form can be picked up from 50 Main Street any time from 8.30am to 5.30pm. Experience is desirable but not essential as full support is given. Police record checks should be clear. Also the company will require a full employment history for the last 10 years. Carers Direct pay a National living wage, give full holiday pay, and mileage tax relief at 45p per mile. It is helpful if you are multilingual.

**Please mention the Echo when replying to advertisements**

## HEDGEHOGS AT NIGHT IN MY GARDEN.

PHOTOS BY JON TYLER



Look closely, an impatient mouse is pacing up and down in the background waiting to get to the food bowl! The next night it was even braver and came and pinched food from right under the hedgehog's nose!

You can see the mice coming in the dark - their little eyes reflecting like train headlights. Jon's hedgehog cam reveals many visitors - at least two hedgehogs, a pair of foxes, a whole family of mice and (obviously) most of the neighbours' cats.  
Addy Tyler

### SMALL ADS

Trade and professional rate £2.50 for a maximum of 25 words. All other rates; 50p for maximum of 25 words including telephone number, except for adverts selling items over £1,000, which will cost £5 for a maximum of 25 words. Please write clearly and leave your ad. with payment, in an envelope marked Small Ads at Bennett's Home and Garden Supplies, 30 Main Street.

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ChildLine  
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Action on Elder Abuse  
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Respect - Men's Advice Line  
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