

In response to local demand for green spaces to promote health and wellness of residents and environment, a local initiative organised by local residents has resulted in the successful establishment of an Urban Oasis at Westcliff Park.

Westcliff Park Urban Oasis

Keith Ross @Ramsgate birds (Westcliff Park)

Westcliff Park is a private 3-acre estate with communal gardens in Ramsgate overlooking the English Channel. The estate is the home for around 46 families, mainly of pensionable age, who, as a compact friendly community, enjoy an active 'community spirit'.

While we were in lockdown last year a group of the residents got together to setup an 'Urban Oasis' Biodiversity group using Zoom meetings, with the aim of further encouraging wildlife. With the enthusiastic support of resident volunteers, we installed several bird drinking stations, a variety of bird nesting & bat boxes and a few insect hotels and log piles and planted wild flowers.

The biggest project was to create a wildlife pond with the transformation from a disused BBQ area has been amazing. Not very long after it was completed we had Damsel flies arriving and mating over the water. Ponds are known to be the best way of attracting wildlife so who knows what will turn up over the coming years? Thanet as an area has very few mature tree's left so we are very fortunate to have some wild woodland around its edges that attract and are home to a wide range of birds & mammals.

Over the years I've kept a bird list of our garden visitors. It now numbers 51 species. A highlight from last year was when a neighbour contacted me to say there was a Sparrow hawk in the garden. I looked out the window to



(c) Tim Spencer

see a juvenile Cuckoo (they can be easily mistaken) perched on a branch. What a great addition to our garden bird list!

We have a number of bird species nesting in our garden including Blue Tits, Sparrow Hawks, Ringed necked Parakeets and Green Woodpecker. A photo of our Parakeet chicks even ended up in the BBC Countryfile calendar.

The same nest hole was used by a pair of Green Woodpeckers last year so I wonder who will use it this year? **See the back page for a guide on how to create a community Urban Oasis!!**



"Research clearly shows the benefits of nature based activities, allowing us to connect us with nature in meaningful ways that go beyond passively viewing nature for physical and mental health.

"Physical activity boosts our sense of wellbeing and taking time to notice the natural world can help us feel less isolated and anxious. With lockdown restrictions easing, there are groups and activities across the city that people can safely get involved with. You can also meet up with friends and family.

Try the 'Five Senses Experiences' from our Awakening Walks series. We have five senses and if they are used fully we become more aware and more engaged with our surroundings."

Simon Pollard of simplelifeld.co.uk

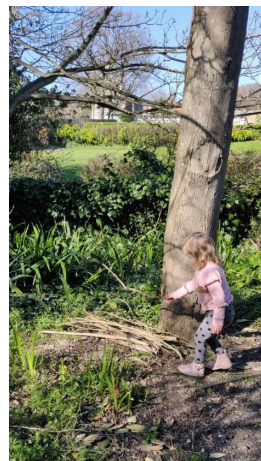
Chairman's message

The purpose of HABIT was outlined in the agreed terms of reference, agreed by the Steering Group in 2019, committing to: ***"Focus on the desired outcome by achieving effective communication, commitment and collaboration whilst reaching agreed goals. These are: To raise awareness that promotes health and well-being, in education, training, business, community and employment."*** In short, that outcome was to: ***'Help people who live in Thanet to live happier and healthier lives'***.



more physical exercise. Selected GP surgeries will be trialling travel for some patients as part of social prescribing. We will update you in our summer edition.

With warm wishes for a healthy and happy Spring,
Brian Urwin
Founder/Chairman, HABIT and CEO, Think Healthy Me



Making a log pile, to create a healthy lifestyle for insects

When considering launching this newsletter the HABIT steering group discussed the importance of effective communication and the need to integrate Social Prescribing together with the importance of community empowerment to get the best result from this new initiative. This is why we decided to combine Health and Well-being with putting unity into community to make it 'good news'.

I wish to thank our readership for their positive contribution to this spring newsletter. We have received such a good response that we have run out of space. We assure contributors that their welcome articles will be included in our next edition.

We have been requested to provide information on the United Nations 'sustainability' initiative which outlines 17 Goals, 9 Billion People and 1 Future. The UN 2030 goals serve as a route map towards a Healthy Planet. We are all involved. See www.2030now.com for more information. More about UN2030 in the Summer edition of Changing Habit.

In our last newsletter Olly Leicester, an NHS Social Prescriber kindly outlined the interesting work he is involved in. We have learnt of a recent social prescribing government initiative in that selected Local Authorities' have been requested to trial the benefits of encouraging patients to travel. They have allocated funding and consider that this will increase movement and hence

About Social Prescribing

In brief, NHS link workers working within GP surgeries will refer patients to service partners within and beyond the NHS whose support will help to improve patient wellbeing. Any referral will be the result of concerns raised by the patient about "what matters". Referrals may be to council departments, independent support groups and charities. The principal objectives are to support patients'

- - economic resilience
- - in becoming more active
- - in managing mental wellbeing
- - to become healthier
- - in living well and more independently
- - to become more socially connected

Social prescribing link workers are gradually becoming an integral part of the multi-disciplinary teams in GP practices across the UK, with over 4,500 already in place. This is the biggest investment in social prescribing by any national health system in the world.

In this way, the NHS aim to provide : "Personalised Care, giving (patients) the same choice and control over their mental and physical health that they have come to expect in every other aspect of their life."

The purpose of this newsletter is to:

- Share good wellbeing business practice
- Making Thanet a happier place to live, work and visit
- Strengthen communication in Thanet by putting 'unity' into community
- Share good news, business initiatives and uplifting Thanet community experiences
- Encourage next generation involvement and share opportunities

STARTING NEW HEALTHY HABITS : SOME TIPS



- Drink two litres of water a day – try using the Water Minder app to encourage you to drink more water!
- Be colourful – In what you wear (look cheerful!) and especially with what you eat. Colour not only looks beautiful on the plate but each type of vegetable or salad item gives you the benefits of different nutrients.
- Exercise wherever you are. Take regular breaks for a little exercise; walk to the coffee machine, walk upstairs, and say "Hi" to your colleagues. These all increase your steps per day! Try the Steps app as this records your daily number of steps.
- Acquire extra Vitamin D – We all need it! Even standing outside for a few minutes in the sun helps your body to absorb the vitamin D from your diet.
- Time with Nature. Spend time with nature (this includes time with a pet) and the great outdoors. Be mindful and take in the sounds of birds and the scenery around you. This helps to remove stress!
- Meet friends in the park, or countryside. Another way to de-stress and take in nature while having a catch up. Why not arrange that long awaited catch up today?

Eating disorders week 28th Feb - 6th March

Nutrition and Hydration week 14th - 20th March

Social Prescribing day 10th March

Bradley O'Connell, Co-Editor 'Changing HABIT'

Birchington Women's Institute

International womens' day 8th March

We inspire women through experiences, knowledge and skills. These are passed down through generations and continually updated to reflect the lives of women today.

Wellness and Friendship could not be any more important than it is right now, it's time to put the last two years behind us and look ahead instead. So when I re-established the new Birchington WI and Facebook Group, both Wellness and Friendship were at the top of my 'to do' list for the community...and it's working!

As a Gut Wellness Coach for IBS and Weight Loss, I have teamed up with fellow Yoga and Fitness Coaches, and together we are hosting a series of small and achievable healthy Challenges throughout the year inside the Facebook Group, to help motivate and bring friendships to the ladies in the local area.

The Wellness Challenges range from physical to mental tasks, all of them helping members to feel positive about life, helping them to form new healthier habits for their mind, their body, and their goals for 2022. The members are posting their pictures, engaging and supporting one-another in response to the mid-week Tips and Check-ins, and includes a fun end of week Finale, giving members the chance to tot up their virtual medals (ticks) and share their successes.

If you are interested in joining our friendly Facebook Group to take part in the Weekly Wellness Challenges, please visit our website:
www.birchingtonwi.wordpress.com

Elizabeth Davidson WI Birchington Co-ordinator



theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

We welcome stories from our readership informing us of good news stories related to their own health and well-being. If you would like to contribute a story or know of something happening that you would like us to report on, please contact Bradley at brad@thinkhealthyme.co.uk. Deadline for articles for the Summer issue is 30th April, 2022.



Crime Prevention Officer organises memorial clean-up in Margate

A Kent PCSO is hoping his efforts to keep Thanet tidy will encourage others to play their part too. PCSO Adrian Butterworth was determined that the memorial in Trinity Memorial Gardens, Margate was looking at its best in readiness for last year's Remembrance service. As a Royal Artillery veteran, the cause was also close to the PCSO's heart.

Following a comment from a resident about dried grass across the paving, Adrian spoke to other agencies to see if they wanted to get involved: "I just took the idea by the reins and drove it forward. Obviously the council would normally have carried out the maintenance of it, however I just thought it would be nice to give something back to the community."

The clean-up was carried out on Wednesday 3 November 2021 and saw boots on the ground from Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Thanet District Council and Kent County Council, as well as Margate's Mayor and local councillors, who were all happy to pick get the job done. Veterans from Age UK also came along to help out with the work. PCSO Butterworth is hoping that his actions will inspire others to consider whether they can do something similar in their own communities.

He said: 'As a crime prevention officer for Kent Police, I know that keeping areas tidy, clean and free of rubbish encourages people to take pride in where they live. If a place is unkempt, covered in litter or graffiti and looks uncared for, it can attract further anti-social behaviour and crime.

'A simple activity such as this can have a big impact on where you live. Everyone was keen to help out, and by working together Trinity Memorial Gardens was looking lovely within a few hours. The grass was mown, plants were pruned, litter collected, and the paving stones around the memorial were cleared of any weeds and moss. In Minster they decorate the village with knitted poppies and after speaking to a councillor, it was very kindly offered that the remaining unused poppies could be used to decorate the two street lamps leading up to the memorial in Trinity Square. I want to thank everyone who got involved to spruce up the area, it was a real team effort.'

Creating an urban oasis to benefit the community and improve biodiversity can be fun and easily achievable, working together with like-minded neighbours. See the resources signposted below for clear advice on how to proceed:

- Chat with local residents and businesses, encouraging them to share their needs and ideas. Remember to keep notes! Ask for help. Keep in mind that people have differing amounts of time, energy or strength.
- Ask your council about any available support.
- Write to all neighbours for support. Using your team's combined creativity and common sense, considerately work through any concerns raised.
- Visit similar projects elsewhere and seek advice.
- Once you have local agreement to the project, the team must agree on priorities for a design.

Next, you need to establish

- Who will take on which task
- What the budget is
- Fundraising and financial management
- Schedules for sowing, planting and maintenance

At the end of the project, you will have created a beautiful space that is a haven for people and wildlife alike, improving the appearance and feel of the area. Better still, your neighbourhood will be a more connected and happier place to live.

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/how-to/how-to-set-up-a-community-garden>

<https://seewhatgrows.org/start-community-garden-neighborhood/>

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/kindergarden/CHILD/COM/COMMUN.HTM>

