

# THE SITTINGBOURNE COURIER



ISSUE 2

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# WELCOME

Hello and a big, warm welcome to another issue of The Courier.

It was pleasing to receive positive responses after Issue 1 – from both readers and advertisers.

We will always strive to accommodate as much local content as possible and we're particularly keen to hear from charity groups and organisations. Teams of locals banding together to help one another and the communities they live in form the bedrock of this fantastic country of ours.

We will also be running a competition for amateur photographers to have their shot used on a future front cover – stay tuned to our Facebook page for more on that soon.

We hope you weren't too badly affected by the damage from recent visitors Ciara and Dennis. With a firm eye on sunnier times, we've got some information in this issue on that fantastic Summer festival – Iwade Rock.

Many thanks for your continued support and all the best over the next 3 months.



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# 1920s Weekend

## A CELEBRATION FOR THE 20s

**Look forward to a new pilot festival, a range of entertainment, events and activity at venues in Sittingbourne.**

Including three performances commissioned by Swale Borough Council in a pop up venue adjacent to Swale House which will host; 20's Themed Old Time Music Hall on Friday 10th July, A Jazz and Dance Evening featuring Sue Caroline and The Andy Wall 1920's Ensemble on the Saturday evening and a 'Murder Mystery' performed by The Company Uprfront on the afternoon of Sunday July 12th. Ticket sales will open and further information will be published soon, look out for updates.

Other elements of the 20's Weekend will provide the opportunity for the towns venues, attractions, businesses and local organisations to showcase what the town has to offer with a 1920's theme.

There is also an aspiration to welcome a 'Vintage Fun Fair' to the town and work is close to completion to make this happen, a 1920's Rolls Royce and an SKLR steam engine hopefully on display too.

With the town's regeneration scheme due to complete and a phased opening of a new Travelodge, cinema and restaurants throughout 2020, the weekend of events provides another reason to come and have another look at Sittingbourne as a destination.

Work continues to pull together a comprehensive programme of events and activities and details will be published as soon all those

that wish to contribute have had time to submit details.

Some of the heritage attractions have pledged to take part to tell the town's 1920's story, as well as a number of leading community groups to ensure this event provides plenty of entertainment for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Start making or order your 20's costume now! Organisers would love to see the town centre full with costumed characters, vintage vehicles and market.

There will be prizes for the 'Best Dressed 20's Shop Window' and also a 1920's dress code for some of the entertainment and spot prizes for those dressed in 1920's costumes. With groups and organisations taking part, parade, stroll and promenade along the High Street and take in an additional offer in the town over the weekend.

So plenty to look forward to and to plan - now is the time to save the date and remember to keep an eye on this webpage as we receive more confirmation of events taking place as part of the 1920's Weekend in Sittingbourne.

For 1920's costume inspiration and research go to Vintage Dancer website for some great ideas for both men and women and be a part of this event. You could win a spot prize!

**If you would like to get involved or have any questions call 01795 417399 or email [tourismsupport@swale.gov.uk](mailto:tourismsupport@swale.gov.uk)**

# 1920

## SITTINGBOURNE HERITAGE MUSEUM

The Sittingbourne Heritage Museum has been in existence for over 20 years now. It was established by Peter Morgan M.B.E., a retired schoolteacher who had been gathering artefacts and memorabilia related to the town of Sittingbourne, Milton Regis and the surrounding area for some time, People would knock on his door and offer him items that they thought belonged, not on the scrap heap or rubbish dump, but in a museum.

Sittingbourne grew as a stopping place along the road from London to Dover and large hotels with stabling were established. Milton Regis was a port where goods could be brought in and out. Then the industries that established themselves here, brick making, and papermaking, which also led to ship and barge building on the creek. Sittingbourne continued to be a market town in an agricultural area through all of this and a regular cattle market continued until the late 1960s.

With the aid of many volunteers and an extremely good benefactor, the Museum was established as a charity, in a former shop in East Street, Sittingbourne and opened to the public in 1998 Today, the Museum is still there, although a better, more central position in the town is being sought, along with other organisations. There is an opportunity, says Allen Whitnell, current chair of the Museum Trust, to bring together many elements that our town needs, in a central location with an efficient and sustainable basis.

The Museum contains an interesting mix of displays and artefacts which illustrate the growth of the Sittingbourne area, the lives of its people and its industries. Themes of the town's coaching Inns, Brick Making, Papermaking, The Creek, Barge building are features strongly.

One of the Museum's most significant exhibits (indeed this is of national and international significance) is a cabinet containing The Plough finds – a collection of purposefully hidden items which were discovered in an old pub just across the road which has now been demolished. Among these items is a woman's corset which is the oldest example found in England. This and other items from the collection have been studied at various universities here and is receiving interest from as far afield as Melbourne University. The corset was lent to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford last year for an exhibition centring on superstition and purposefully hidden items.



Apart from the generosity of its landlord, and several other benefactors, the Museum depends on its volunteers in order to open to the public. So much work is involved in researching, cataloguing, and preserving the Museum's collection that there is a backlog of items waiting to be dealt with. Of course, donations keep coming in the front door, artefacts, photographs, maps, documents and clothing and this museum, like any other also has to make decisions about what can be kept and what should be passed on, perhaps to other museums. The work, for those involved, is fascinating and absorbing, but never ending!

As well as these active volunteers, there is also a network of supporters and subscribers, some of whom no longer live in the area, who regularly send donations to help keep the museum running. They expect no reward for this other than that the Museum continues its work, but they do receive a monthly newsletter and a quarterly journal containing essays related to the area's heritage. The research involved in writing these essays is another task undertaken by enthusiastic volunteers.

A group of researchers meets once a month to study various aspects of the local history, and often the results of this research will be published as a book by the Museum. To date, the Museum has published 17 separate titles which are available from the Museum's website or from other well-known online retailers. These titles include studies such as Sittingbourne High Street, The Inns Taverns and Public Houses of Sittingbourne, The Convent of the Nativity School, The Beat Groups of Sittingbourne and so on.

The Museum's website gives a good overview of what Sittingbourne's past was all about and also offers searches of its databases for the genealogist. Milton Regis Union Workhouse admissions, for example is one often accessed by on-line visitors who come from all over the world.

Admission to the Museum is at 67 East Street is free of charge, and from 7th March this year it is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1.30 to 4pm. It is also open on Saturdays from 10 till 20pm and for groups can be opened by appointment.

Website: [www.sittingbourne-museum.co.uk](http://www.sittingbourne-museum.co.uk)  
Email: [Secretary@sittingbourne-museum.co.uk](mailto:Secretary@sittingbourne-museum.co.uk)



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# 60 STONE PITBULLS HERE FOR TAG CHALLENGE

Rumble Promotions return for another great night of over the top wrestling action on Good Friday April 10th at Kemsley Village Hall after a packed Christmas Cracker show at the end of last year.

Featuring fan favourite Syd Manelli Kent's star and Rumble Champion, who defends his title in a Championship Title match against Popular Londoner James Mason, who has recently been signed by WWE to be part of the British trainers at the NXT UK HQ in North London.

There is an exclusive appearance of European tag team champions the 60 stone Pitballs, who will be returning from their travels across Europe with the aim of squashing their opponents in double quick time.



Another Londoner Josh Faulkner will be out to improve on his growing number of admirers plus their will be thrills and spills as the colourful comedy star The Trash Man takes on the always aggressive Steve Phoenix.

There is a top card and early booking is advised.

If you have been before you know what a great night it is, if you haven't come along and enjoy the evening.

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## OVERCOMING DOGLESSNESS AND HELPING TO EASE SOCIAL ISOLATION: BARKING MAD ALTERNATIVE TO DOG OWNERSHIP CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

The Medway, Maidstone & Swale branch of a canine company founded in 2000, to provide home from home dog care instead of kennelling, is helping to celebrate 20 years of people experiencing health and well-being benefits due to an alternative to dog ownership.

Jennifer Davies has been a 'host' dog sitter for Barking Mad for nearly fourteen years and believes that her hobby has changed her life. She said,

"The best thing about hosting is – UNCONDITIONAL LOVE! I always get a lovely good morning greeting with lots of tail wagging and I am much fitter. I have lost five stone in weight. Having a dog is much the same as having a baby – people talk to you and make a fuss of the dogs. I have met so many new people with dogs and without.



My first doggy visitors were Todd and Jazz, two salukis. In the evenings, Jazz would curl up by my feet and Todd would be beside me with his head on my shoulder, gazing into my eyes. I was totally hooked – who wouldn't be?

I have a son who lives in Guernsey who I visit regularly and I like going on holidays with my friends. If I had my own dog, this would make things more complicated. With Barking Mad, I always say I have all of the pleasure and none of the expense or worry about what would happen if I became unwell."

It has been scientifically proven that patting and walking dogs can help people to feel more relaxed and less anxious. This makes a huge difference to emotional and physical well-being. Those caring for a dog are also less likely to be socially isolated, research suggests.

'The Pet Factor – Companion Animals as a Conduit for Getting to Know People, Friendship Formation and Social Support', states that,

'Companion animals can be a catalyst for several dimensions of human social relationships in neighbourhood settings, ranging from incidental social interaction and getting to know people, through to formation of friendships.'

Owner-operator of Barking Mad, Medway, Maidstone & Swale, Andrea Jenkins, said: "As Barking Mad celebrates its 20th anniversary, our proudest achievement is the happiness which holidaying dogs have brought to the lives of our host families. We match friendly dogs to hosts' preferences and lifestyle, for their holidays and short breaks. It's ideal for retirees, home-based workers and teachers in school holidays.

We take care of everything, including chauffeuring dogs to our hosts' homes with all their essentials and providing 24/7 support. Hosts experience all the benefits of dog companionship without any of the emotional or financial responsibilities of full-time pet ownership."

To find out more about becoming a Barking Mad host, you can call Andrea on 01634 81740 or visit [www.barkingmad.uk.com](http://www.barkingmad.uk.com).

Barking Mad is part of the Franchise Brands plc group of companies and is the UK's favourite dog holiday company, as verified by TrustPilot. Contact Barking Mad at [www.barkingmad.uk.com](http://www.barkingmad.uk.com) to find your dog's home from home today.



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## CONSCIOUS CRAFT EVENING



**FRIDAY MARCH 27TH AT 6:30 PM**

**Gardening World Limited, Lower Hartlip Road, Newington**

Creative Minds is a mindful crafting enterprise run by Lizi Gambell. Each evening has been lovingly designed to create a harmonious environment and a creative, mind stimulating experience. All set within a safe space with the focus of nurturing one's creativity and mental wellbeing.

This event is to create The Mindful Terrarium. £15.00 per head. A non-refundable booking fee of £5.00 is required by PayPal to book and the rest to be paid by card or cash on the evening.

Terraria have been created since the 1800s to house beautiful specimens of flora and fauna. They become very popular in Victorian England and were used to ship plants to Australia, after months of travel, the plants arrived well and thriving.

Lizi likens the glass container of the terrarium to that of our own body. We need to be aware of how we look after and create our own environment to be able to thrive and survive. Each layer of the terrarium is attuned to our own layers of emotions, energy chakras, outlooks and beliefs. As the session builds layer by layer, so will your understanding of your own mind, body and energetic states in which we all live.

This price includes everything you need to create a beautiful living terrarium, including a little extra something to make it shine! Teas, Coffee, a healthy snack and a big hug from Lizi. Facebook @lizigambell

## RED RIDING HOOD - AVENUE THEATRE VARIOUS DATES AND TIMES

**Avenue Theatre Sittingbourne**

- Wednesday 1st April at 7.30pm
- Friday 3rd April at 7.30pm
- Saturday 4th April at 2.30pm and 7.30pm

Pantomime fun this Easter with Avenue Theatre Productions, written by Peter Long and Keith Rawnsley. Updated for 2014/2015 by Peter Long.

Tickets £9.50 Adults, £8.00 concessions, £30.00 Family (2+2).

BOOK TICKETS ONLINE - 6.5% booking fee applicable. Box Office: **01795 471140**

There will also be a relaxed performance on Thursday 2nd April at 5:30pm - house lights will be on, no flashing lights, lower sound, less scary wolf. A free carer ticket with this performance, please call the box office on 01795 471140 to book if your party includes a carer, leave a message if the office is closed.

## TEYNHAM LITTER PICK

**FROM 10:00AM, SATURDAY 4TH APRIL**

**Teynham Community Hall**

Starts at Teynham Community Hall. Light Refreshments will be provided for those taking part. Part of the Great British Spring Clean

## SITTINGBOURNE INVICTA 10K



**SUNDAY 17TH MAY**

The route follows rural roads through the delightful undulating Kent countryside. The race starts on the school playing field and then follows country roads along a measured route before returning to the school. There's just one short stretch of off-road running where some caution is required. Starts at The Dog House, Sittingbourne, Kent <https://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/homepage.php?ClubID=1660/>

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR NEXT EVENT...**

hello@hofmedia.co.uk | 01227 723223

Pupils, staff and teachers that attended St John's High School in Sittingbourne between 1958-1994 will have the opportunity to roll back the years at the end of the month with a "Mega-Reunion", to be held at Central Park Stadium on Saturday 28th March. Organiser Ian Maggs filled us in:

*"I'd been considering holding a reunion for a few years but was unsure how to go about tracking everyone down - then I came across a Facebook group for St John's School with over 500 former pupils on it. That was the deciding factor. Although I enjoyed school, I was never serious enough, except for music and playing guitar. I still see some of the old faces around the Town, but most people seem to have moved away, so it would be lovely to see as many people from as many different eras as possible. The interest has been great - we've got people attending from all over the UK and abroad, including Canada! There'll be a DJ playing all the hits from '58-'94, and a great live band - The Kix - playing New Wave and Ska from the Mid-70's. There'll be plenty of room away from the music for people to catch up and chat, too. Partners are also welcome".*

Some tickets are still available from The Yellow Stocks Micro-Pub on Sittingbourne High Street between 1pm and 8pm, every day. Any remaining tickets will be available on the door, but the event has a strict 600 limit, so buy now to avoid disappointment. The Courier wishes all attendees a great evening on Memory Lane.

## THE KIX

PLAYING LIVE AT

**St John's High School  
Sittingbourne**

**MEGA REUNION**

**1958-1994**

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Summer is fast approaching, with everyone looking forward to some well overdue sunshine and respite after all the wind and rain we have been having lately. The light at the end of the tunnel is formed by the fantastic array of summer events on offer in Kent. Iwade holds a Charity Music Festival every two years – Iwade Rock.

The next planned event is 25th July this year, and ticket sales have certainly been very good since their initial release in September 2019. Heralded as Swale's No1 Music Festival by its patrons, the event is organised by local Iwadian couple Keith and Nicola Reynolds.

The Event, now in its 7th outing, started off in 2011 in the grounds of The Iwade Village Hall. 2012 and 2013 it saw its attendance rise and a larger venue was clearly required. 2014 saw the festival's first outing in a new venue - The Timu Academy, Iwade's primary school. In 2016, and now a bi-annual event, the festival moved to its current home of The School Lane Playing Fields - the now home of The Iwade Herons Football Club.

The event has plenty to keep the children occupied, including a small fun fair and bouncy castles. There is a great choice in high quality food and drink vendors – painstakingly researched and sourced by Keith himself. Needless to say of a summer festival, plenty of the outlets are there to keep the thirst under control, from Gin and Pimms to Prosecco, craft ales and Kentish Cider. Cost of tickets are currently in their second wave and are priced at £10 for adults (16 and Over), £7 for Children (2-15), infants 0-23 Months go free but still require a free ticket.

There is a family option of a £25 ticket which will allow 2 adults and 2 children entry into the event. You can also hire a Gazebo pitch to ensure that you get a prime position next to the stage in some all important shade! (More information along with terms and conditions for ticket sales available on [www.ticketsource.co.uk/iwaderock](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/iwaderock)

All monies raised from the event go to charity after the festival running costs have been paid, this year's beneficiaries are:

The Iwade Herons are a local football club and non-profit organisation so the Festival like to give back to the village and support the club with some financial help.

They use the money raised at the event to help purchase equipment, educate its managers and coaches and provide a fantastic end of season Presentation Day for all of its players, supporters, sponsors and families.

Mind are a fantastic Charity working alongside those suffering with Mental Health Issues. Keith chose this particular charity as only too recently there has been a spate of mental health illness issues and suicides in the national headlines. Mind were the perfect organisation in helping prevent these issues from rising. Mental wellbeing is an important part of everyday life, in work and at home and everything in between.

The Festival, on 25th July this year, opens its doors at 11am with Live Music starting at 12 Noon and finishing up at 10.30pm. The line-up is as follows:

- 12:00 – Echo 90
- 13:00 – Thom Cakebread Acoustic
- 14:00 – The Choos
- 15:00 – The Pastel waves
- 16:00 – The Ovines
- 17:00 – Slide Oasis
- 18:00 – The Lost Search Party
- 19:00 – Stereoironics
- 20:00 – Utinni
- 21:00 – Marylebone Jelly

For more information on anything about this event and future festival events put on by Team Tango please head to either:

[www.iwaderockfest.co.uk](http://www.iwaderockfest.co.uk) – Event Website  
[www.facebook.com/iwaderock](https://www.facebook.com/iwaderock) - Event FB Page  
 @iwaderock on Twitter  
 For tickets please head to:  
[www.ticketsource.co.uk/iwaderock](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/iwaderock)

The event prides itself in being a family friendly, non expensive day out. Where else can you see 10 quality local and national touring bands for less than the price of 2 pints of beer?

Well worth the trip out to Iwade if you fancy a great day out listening to some fantastic bands, soaking up the sunshine and enjoying a cool cocktail!



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# AN ANNUAL FIESTA

I've always loved an annual. From **Bunty to The Blue Peter Annual**, they were crammed full of interest and fun.

As I grew older my taste in annuals has become more horticultural. One little pack of seeds is now my gardening equivalent of the Beano - a brief shelf-life and packed with colour.

Hardy annuals are the most obliging. They don't need a propagator or a greenhouse, or even a windowsill; all they need is a sunny spot and some well-drained soil. Just sprinkle the seeds in the ground and you can look forward to a fiesta of summer colour for very little work.

The choice of plants and hue is wide. If blue is your thing try a soft shade of love-in-a-mist, or a vivid blue cornflower, or the most gorgeous tiny phacelia. For pinks try a fluffy clarkia or delicate godetia. Nasturtiums span the colour wheel from cream through yellow and orange to deep red.

Annual doesn't mean small either. Both larkspurs and amaranthus are tall and elegant, and cleomes which also provide height probably only need to be planted once as they are prolific self-seeders! Look around your garden for gaps in beds and borders which are in a sunny spot

and well-drained. Don't plant when it's cold or the soil is wet and sticky. Wait until the weather is mild and soil is damp and crumbly, then fork it lightly to break it up. Use a rake to create shallow furrows, sprinkle the seeds over and rake them gently in, raking across the furrows to cover them. Bigger seeds like nasturtiums can be pushed into the soil a couple of centimetres deep and 10-15cm apart. Label the area so you know what should come up.

The biggest enemy of the newly-planted hardy annual seed is the domestic cat! They love a patch of freshly raked soil, and will happily do their business in your handiwork and then kick up all your seeds without a second thought. Thwart the moggies by laying twiggy pea sticks over the area (and particularly twiggy and thorny prunings will do!). Remove them with the shoots are big enough or stand them up and use them to support the taller annuals.

Thin them out a little to one plant per 10cm and water them if the weather is very dry. You don't need to feed them, they flower best when the soil is not rich. Food and manure will favour leaf production whereas we're after flowers and lots of them! Happy gardening!



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