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Welcome and Ho! Ho! Ho!

Welcome to the first of our Christmas newsletters and whilst some of you understandably may be thinking "Bah Humbug!", BAG has decided that now is the right time to start spreading some much needed Christmas cheer to get us all through the last dregs of 2020!

We have lots of information for you in this edition including how to keep your mind and body well on these cold, dark winter days and crafty ideas to beat the winter blues. Our thanks go to all those who have sent in contributions to the newsletter as well as all of our coordinators who will be distributing it across the village. If you have something you'd like to see in the next edition, please feel free to email me at heather.morley@hotmail.co.uk.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy this issue and keep well!

Notices

- Who needs to go and see the Christmas lights in Oxford Street or Exeter this year when we have the **Great Beer Christmas Lights Festival** right on our doorsteps? We all love seeing twinkly lights on a cold winter's evening and so this year we would like to encourage everyone across the village to put their Christmas lights up early ready for a synchronized village wide turn on, 2nd December 2020 at 7pm sharp! Please join in if you can and help to make our beautiful village even more lovely.
- If anyone in Fore Street or The Causeway needs help to put up their outside Christmas tree, can they put a note through **Nigel Groves'** front door and he will assist.
- **Christmas trees** will be sold on Saturday 21st November outside the Mariners' Hall between 10.00 and 12.30. Trees will then be available from Woozies.

Financial Help Available

Are you and your family struggling financially? Perhaps you have been unable to access government support schemes which have been made available to others, through no fault of your own. There are still ways you may be able to get help quickly:

1. Financial Hardship Fund from EDDC.

East Devon has been allocated £192,100 for residents who are struggling to afford food or other essentials. This help could be by delaying Council Tax payments, financial support for housing payments, access to emergency short term support through shopping vouchers, food bank referrals, utility top ups, paying for essential travel needs, or advice about support services. To apply for this funding, the link is:

<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/benefits-and-council-tax/information-financial-hardship-fund/>

Alternatively, you can send an email to hardship@eastdevon.gov.uk with your name and phone number.

If you don't have internet access, we can send an email for you and ask someone from the Council to contact you directly – please contact Lee on 07890 948262. You don't need to give any financial details, just your name and telephone number, and your call will be treated confidentially.

2. If you need immediate financial support, Beer Action Group has a voucher scheme set up with the Top Shop. Vouchers are available through the Primary School and directly from Lee – any contact will again be treated in confidence. Please use this support if you need it – we understand asking for help is often very hard, but these are unprecedented times and, as a community, it is right that we support each other through this.

Further details, including other financial support, is available on the EDDC website. They have a Coronavirus Community Support Hub and, for those not online, the team can be contacted on 01395 571500 during office hours, or on the emergency out of hours number, which is 01395 516854.

- Now is the time to get practicing your **Christmas Carols** as we plan to be singing them together on Christmas Eve across the village! Not necessarily in tune or in time but with great joy and gusto at least! More to follow so get practicing now!
- We would like to encourage everyone to join in with some **community bell ringing** on our doorsteps on Christmas Eve from 6pm onwards. This is a really lovely initiative that is spreading right across the country so let's join in!
- The 2020/2021 **flu vaccination** is available for 65+ years in the Beer Pharmacy with the under 65 years following soon.
- **Olio** is a great mobile app for food sharing. Its goal is to reduce food waste and it does this by connecting those with surplus food to those who need or wish to consume such food. Olio is the number 1 Free Sharing App – Fight waste. Help your neighbours. Save our planet.

Beer's Care Cards for Christmas initiative

After the success of our Care Cards during the last Lockdown, the lovely people of Beer are swinging into action again! The Managers of the Care Homes in Seaton have told me they can't wait to see what we do this time!

Lots of you have provided beautiful photos of Beer in the snow. Alan Back has been a star, and used them to create our very special Beer Christmas Cards and some collages.

Lots of fabulous volunteers are busily writing cards to care home residents in Seaton, plus some former Beer residents in care homes further afield.

Thanks also to all the children of Beer Primary School, who are joining in by drawing and writing their Christmas greetings!

In this second period of Lockdown, with Christmas speeding towards us, it's so good to spread a little of our unique Beer spirit.

Thank you all so much!

Maddy x



Shops and restaurants' update

The information in the last newsletter is largely still current but with the following updates:

Top Shop - Now closing at 16.00 on Sundays throughout the winter rather than 17.00.

Chocolate n More - Opening hours now 10.00 – 12.30 not 14.00

Steamers restaurant - Takeaway meals being provided on Wednesday afternoons at 16.00 and Sunday lunchtime at 13.00. Details on Steamers' Facebook page or Andy can be texted on 07900 036231 for further information.

Colin

Beating the Winter Blues

As we enter another week of our winter lockdown, I am aware that some people may be beginning to feel an increasing sense of isolation and being 'trapped' inside their homes. The relationship between our environment and our sense of wellbeing is an important one; learning to create a warm, nurturing space engenders a feeling of caring and being cared about.

Several years ago, my job required me to spend time in a Norwegian town some 70' north of the Arctic Circle. Although by the time I arrived the days were lengthening, it was still only reaching twilight for 3-4 hours per day and extremely cold! Despite the cold, the thing that struck me most was the lovely golden glow emanating from both inside and outside spaces.

I realised that rather than dreading the dark and cold months, the Scandinavians' have learned to make the best of this time of year by finding ways to enjoy spending as much time outdoors as possible. Simple things such as threading white winter lights everywhere in trees and bushes along with storm lanterns with lit candles to illuminate windows, doorways and outside tables. People routinely don thick coats, wrap themselves up in cosy throws and enjoy warm drinks outside in their gardens and parks. Those who cannot be outside, wrap up warmly and sit by open windows for a while to breathe in the fresh air and pass the time of day with anyone close by.

There is no doubt that we all feel better when the Christmas lights start to appear in streets and our neighbour's windows – perhaps this year we could adopt some Scandi style and thread as many white lights around our village as possible a little earlier than usual?

Let's try to wrap up warmly and sit outside or, if we can't go out, wrap up in a blanket and sit by an open window with a warm drink for a short while as often as possible; perhaps we may even be able to have a quick catch up chat with our neighbours from the safety of our gardens or windows too!

Take good care everyone!

Debs x

Be(!!)er Keep Moving!

It's colder, the weather is worse, and who knows what COVID will do next, but none of those should change the simple fact that we need to keep moving in whatever way possible. Movement, and its scarier friend exercise, are vital for a healthy life, both mind and body are substantially influenced by how much we get ourselves shifting about. Physical activity can improve your quality of life, help manage stress, improve your sleep, and also reduce your risk of all sorts of conditions including type II diabetes, depression, and cardiovascular disease.

Guidelines recommend accumulating 150 minutes of moderate physical activity every week. Whilst this might sound a lot there are many daily activities that can contribute, such as a brisk walk, carrying shopping, gardening, and climbing the stairs. Importantly you can build up to this guideline in 10 minute bouts, which means you don't have to set aside lots of time in one go. If you can't meet the guidelines then don't worry as some is good, and more is better.

Movement doesn't have to be complicated nor boring. Here is a simple way to keep yourself active:

- Draw the alphabet with every part of your body;
- Start with your foot, either standing on one leg or sitting, and move it as much as you can to write your ABCs;
- Don't rush, take your time and really feel the movement, working as far as you feel comfortable;
- Work through body part by body part, you are mostly looking for articulation around each joint, but do what feels right for you;
- Try and work through the following once a week:
 - Ankle
 - Knee
 - Hip (nice big wiggling movements)
 - Spine (take it easy here)
 - Shoulder
 - Elbow
 - Wrist
 - Neck (again, nice and easy)
- Pay attention to what feels tight and what feels weak
- Relish in any improvement of your movement!

Jack, Wild Balance (Personal Trainer and Soft Tissue Therapist)

Christmas Craft Corner



Why not make fabric parcels this year for your presents! They can then be kept (and treasured) and used for a different purpose after Christmas. Bottle bags could become peg bags, fabric envelopes could become pyjama cases and

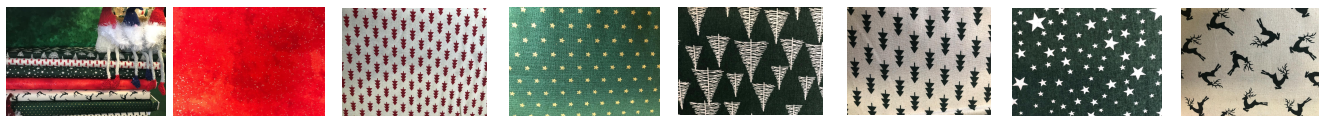
sew on. Please let us see your creations so we can share on the Beer websites.



Kim at The Cloth Shop has kindly sourced some lovely Christmas fabrics (see below for examples) that you can purchase for your crafting. If you would like to buy any, please text Kim on 07767 778248 and she will get back to you.



Happy Haberdashery!



Last but by no means least...

A very Happy Birthday to Joy Wellby who turned 100 this week. Lockdown makes it really hard to celebrate in the usual way but Joy was still able to enjoy a tour of the village and to wave to the many Beer residents who turned out to cheer her on. Thanks to everyone for making such a lovely effort and many congratulations to Joy and her family!

