

The Fletching Parish Magazine

£1

APRIL 2024



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CHURCH AND VILLAGE NEWS, FEATURES, DIARY & EVENTS

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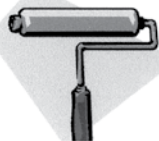
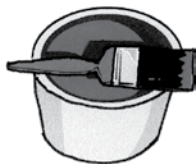


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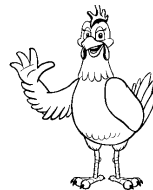
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A Ghost Story



I have a confession to make: I am the ‘Ghost of Sutton Flats’.

Sutton flats are a deck access tenement in Salford, built in the 1930s and right on the edge of my former parish there. Some of the flats are connected by an external metal frame of steps and galleries, and it was on those metal stairs one March evening in 1989 that I became a ghost.

I had been called by a young couple to bless their new home because crockery kept moving around and they were feeling spooked by it. I knew both the families, had christened the baby and was therefore happy to oblige. Dressed in black cassock and cloak, striking quite a dramatic pose in the dusk, I was walking up the metal steps towards their flat. Coming down the stairs and galleries from an upper floor were the cheery steps of someone keen to be out for the evening. I was walking up the stairs making a steady clang clang with my shoes. Coming down the stairs the sound was more clippety-clop, clippety-clop; the sound of someone young and in good spirits.

We reached the second-floor metal gallery at the same time. I was just about to say good evening, when she screamed very loudly, twice, turned and bolted. I heard a door slam on an upper floor and then silence. It took me a moment to work out why. To me a black cassock and cloak are uniform and mundane, to other people, especially in the dark, potentially startling. I carried on with my appointment, blessed the flat, admired the baby, drank a beer, went home and thought no more about it.

A couple of weeks later while having a pint in the Church Inn after Sunday Evensong, the landlord asked me if I’d heard about the weird events at Sutton Flats. He told me all

Letter
from
the
Vicar



The

Fletching
Magazine

about it. Apparently, a figure, immensely tall, possibly 7 feet, and floating slightly off the ground, dressed as a priest from the old days, was terrorising the residents.

I didn't come clean at the time. Perhaps I felt that Sutton Flats needed all the romance and legends it could get. Anyway, now it's in the open and I can feel easier.

I've experienced things over the years which have startled and occasionally scared me. I am too dim fully to understand these things but too smart to ignore them. I know the world is full of strangeness. However, at Sutton Flats, any strangeness there might still be, is not down to me.

I also hope sincerely that any mysterious, black cloaked figure you might meet around the parish *is* me.

David Knight, Vicar of Fletching

**St. Andrew and St. Mary the Virgin,
Fletching**

Calendar of Services for April 2024

Sunday, April 7th, Easter II

10 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday, April 14th, Easter III

10 a.m. Holy Communion

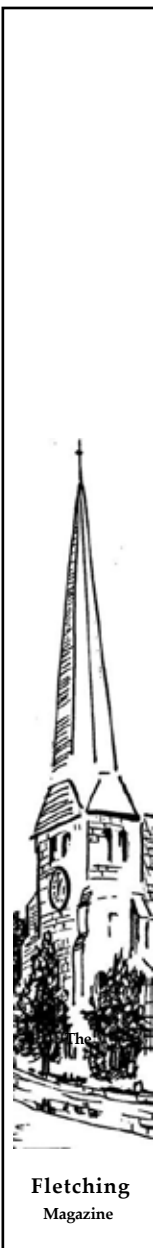
Sunday, April 21st, Easter IV

10 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday, April 28th, Easter V

10 a.m. Holy Communion

For all up to date service information please keep an eye on the church website: **www.fletchingparishchurch.co.uk**



To make arrangements for Baptisms, Marriages,
Funerals please contact:
Rev Dr David Knight, Vicar of Fletching,
The Vicarage, Mill Lane, Fletching, TN22 3SR.
07787 860 667 fletching.vicar@gmail.com

Fletching Church email list

If you would like to receive regular news and
information about Fletching Church by email please
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Churches in our Neighbourhood

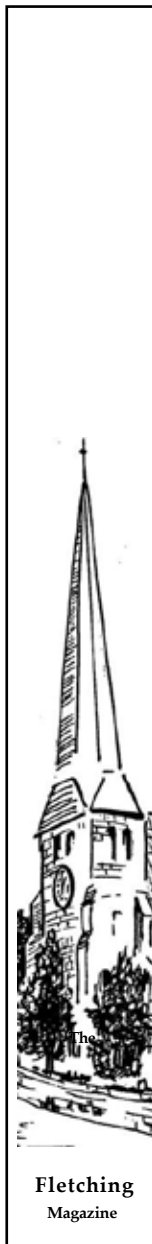
Cornerstone Church (Methodist and United Reform)
Sunday Services 10.30am, 76 New Town, Uckfield.
Further information 01825 749771
For information concerning the following churches
Roman Catholic Churches 01825 724003
Uckfield Baptist Church 01825 791165

Church Flower Rota

April 14th/21st Altar and Porch: Rachel Banbury
 Lady Chapel and Table: Carol Burgess
April 28th Altar and Porch: Gillie Cuppage
 Lady Chapel and Table: Liz Sargent

Church Cleaning Rota

Week commencing 8th Kate Minch and Jo Greenis
19th Team Two Start 12.30pm



April Events in the Church

4 th , 11 th , 18 th , 25 th Organ practice	2pm
5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th Bell ringing practice	7.30pm
20 th International Organ Day and Dubois concert	
Organ concert	Doors open 7pm
25 th Friends Talk, “Churchill and SOE”	7.30pm

St. Andrew and St. Mary the Virgin FLETCHING CHURCH ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

on

Sunday, 28th April 2024

At 11.30 a.m.

In The Church

Following Sunday Service

ALL ARE WELCOME

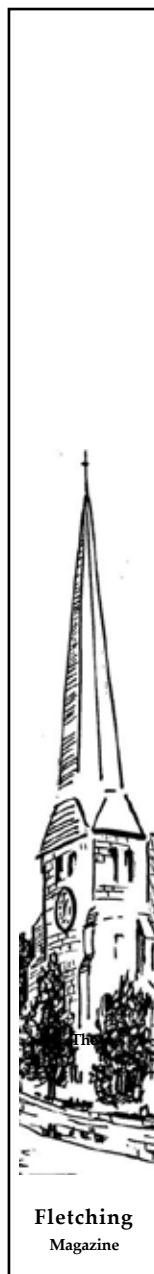
To be eligible to vote you must be registered on the Church’s Electoral Roll,
Forms can be found in the Church.

Community Library in Fletching Church

In conjunction with Fletching School, we are delighted to announce the opening of a small but perfectly formed community library in Fletching Church. It’s an honesty library, so it’s open for you to borrow a book, enjoy it and return it on the basis of trust. For your part, please try to return books as soon as you’ve read them and, if something terrible happens to the book (coffee spill, dog attack, small child with crayon) we’d be grateful if you’d replace it. Church is open all the time and the book cabinets are at the back. The one on the right is for adults, the one on the left for children. Enjoy! Coming soon, a regular story time for children, with refreshments served. We’ll keep you posted.

Church Officers

- Vicar:** **David Knight**
The Vicarage, Fletching TN22 3SR,
(07787860667) fletching.vicar@gmail.com
- Hon. Secretary:** **Juliet Ross**
Hobbs Cottage, Golf Club Lane,
Piltown, TN22 3XB (01825 729132)
ross.juliet@gmail.com
- Hon. Treasurer:** **John Shaw**
18 Forest Park, Maresfield, TN22 2NA
(76 1699) johnkshaw@yahoo.co.uk
- Verger:** **Liz Sargent** (790458)
Moyses Farm, Fletching, TN22 3SA
- Church Administrator:** **Richard Hannay** (01825 705005)
4, Corner Cottages Fletching, TN22 3SS
fletching.parish@gmail.com
- Electoral Roll:** **Peter Ross** (729132)
pjross@gmail.com
- Gift Aid Secretary:** **Peter Wigan**, Hungry Hatch,
Fletching TN22 3SH (723415).
p.vwigan@btinternet.com
- Tower Captain:** **Tim Evans**, (01273 400835)
- Church Flag:** **Vaughan Thomas**
St. James's Cottage, Fletching (723275)
- Flower Guild Administrator:** **Anne Streeter**, (07908 653659)
fletchingflowerguild@gmail.com
- Parish website:** **Anne Streeter**, (721391)
www.fletchingparishchurch@gmail.com
www.fletchingparishchurch.co.uk
- West End Church Booking:** **Sophie Bury-Tasker** (07870 874442)
westendbookingsfletching@gmail.com
- Sunday School:** **Emma Hannay** (07966 035578)



International Organ Day St Andrew & St Mary the Virgin, Fletching

International Organ Day 20th April

Come and find out more about the pipe organ, its history and how it works. You can even try the 1880 Forster & Andrews organ yourself. From 10am – 1pm there will be displays, videos, organ ‘tours’, demonstrations and ‘hands-on’ opportunities.

You can also hear the organ in concert in the evening

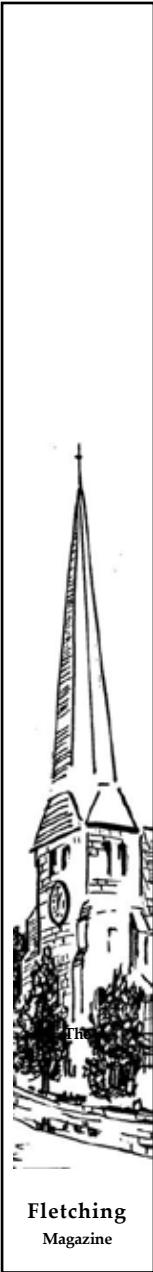
Concert: 20th April 7.30pm: From ‘petit paysan’ to Paris Conservatoire Director, the life and music of Théodore Dubois (1837-1924)

This year sees the centenary of the death of Théodore Dubois, the French organist and composer, who rose from humble origins to become Director of the Paris Conservatoire. He suffered from a certain prejudice much of his life and some still remains today. His extensive range of choral, orchestral and chamber music, as well as songs, operas and organ works is largely neglected, overtaken in the early 20th century by the new wave of Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky and Milhaud. It is now being rediscovered and recorded.

This event will recount the life of Dubois alongside live performances of his organ music and recordings of examples of his non-organ works. It is presented by Peter Bassett, organist, and is based on his MMus research and recital.

Our Living Churchyard

When we met in November with the school to shoot the last of the three films of the churchyard (which you can see on <https://www.fletchingparishchurch.co.uk/church-wild-area>), I was wondering what I would still find there to star in the show. But I needn't have worried: there was a wonderful display of fungi for the children to see. Most plentiful were different species of waxcaps. These are small, brightly coloured



mushrooms (many of which are not edible – admire but don't try!) in shades of red, yellow, green or white – I counted five different species here. Particularly welcome was the pink waxcap, sometimes called the Pink Ballerina. Although far from the rarest waxcap, this has become an icon for the conservation not only of waxcap fungi in general but also because of their habitat, which is restricted to what is called 'unimproved' grassland. I always feel this is a misnomer because it means grassland that has never been ploughed, reseeded or heavily fertilised, and which as a result sustains a wide range of plants and animals. It is greatly encouraging to see these welcome additions to our plot.

How many of you have noticed the flowers on the yew trees that run along the border with the road? They are not conspicuous, but the male trees have insignificant white-yellow globe-like flowers about the size of grape pips. If you gently tap the branch on a dry, sunny day in spring, you will see the cloud of pollen that is released. All parts of the yew tree are poisonous to humans, but the fruit is eaten by birds, such as the blackbird, mistle thrush, song thrush and fieldfare; and small mammals, including squirrels.

And so on to spring. The first flowers to appear are the dandelions. Often, when I'm out and about taking photographs, passers-by will ask me what I'm shooting. The next question is always 'is it rare?'. When my answer is 'no' their reply is usually 'Oh' and they walk on quickly, not appreciating that what may be common and ordinary can also be beautiful and extraordinary. So while most people won't give a second thought to the common dandelion, there is a wide variety of insects that delight in this store of food. For them it is a valuable source of nectar, particularly early in the year when few other plants are in flower. Many of these are very small – beetles, flies, bees, hoverflies, and micro-moths are frequently to be seen - and it is a rare day when I don't find something new, and often very beautiful, on the flowers. But you need to get down on your hands and knees and look closely to find them.

So next time you're tempted to go on safari to look for a lion, make it a dandelion. In the wide-open savannahs of Fletching churchyard. Travel less. See more.

Nigel Symington

Fletching Parish Magazine

Email: fletchingpm@gmail.com

Deadline for May issue: Wednesday 10th April

We are extremely grateful for all your articles, notifications and news. Please send you copy by email, as a word attachment, if possible (450 words), to the Editors at: fletchingpm@gmail.com

NB. Artwork and photos, as well as copy, can be sent to Anne Streeter for the Parish Website (see below).

In the future we are hoping to publish some special editions of the magazine in colour. This could include photos of special events and pictures.

Joint Editors: David Sachon (01825 712530)
Searles, Fletching, TN22 3YB
Joy Burchell (01825 722419)
4, Whites Cottages, Fletching TN22 3SP

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School House Trust

A proposed review of the scheme and governance of this charity.

One of the charities in our parish is called the ‘Fletching School House Trust’. The Trust owns the building to the left of the school (School House) and the site of the school. Income from renting School House to the Education Authority is used for broadly educational purposes in the parish. It’s a good charity and quite a few local people have benefitted from it. However, it needs some updating for two reasons:

- First, when it was set up in the nineteenth century the village was quite a different place than it is now. The original object was, “education benefitting the labouring, manufacturing and other poorer classes”. We’d like to adapt the scheme of the charity to reflect the village as it is now and make it more about supporting general educational needs and, as a secondary object, ‘general pastoral purposes’.
- Second, when it was set up in 1825, the Trust was purely about supporting Fletching School. However, again the village has changed, and so has education. At the time children finished schooling when they left the village school, whereas nowadays children are in education till they are at least 16 and attend secondary school for some years. Obviously, the main focus will continue to be Fletching School, but the trustees would like the opportunity to help other children too when needed, when they get to secondary school, if they are going to a school to meet particular educational needs, or indeed if they are being home schooled.

There’s another change that the Trustees would like to make too, and this time about democratic accountability. When the charity was set up the Trustees were established as ‘the Vicar and Churchwardens’. This reflected the normal customs of the time. However, there should now be greater democratic accountability. The Parochial Church Council is elected each year and we’d like to put these elected officers, or a proportion of them, in charge of the charity. Please get in touch with me if you’d like to make any comments or have a good idea. The deadline for responses is the end of April (this year). You can contact me on fletching.vicar@gmail.com

One last thing to note is that anything we do has to be approved by the Charity Commission. They will not allow us to do anything which is too different from the original principles of the Trust. What we are

suggesting here is a modest set of proposals to reflect the current situation and which we believe the Commission will approve.

Rev Dr David Knight

Fletching CE Primary School

The children have had so much fun recently with their themed days. World Book Day, saw lots of children dress up as a character from their favourite book. There were so many characters from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Gangsta Grannies, fairy princesses and superheroes. It was also lovely to see the staff embrace their love of reading too and dress up! We had a pirate, a Cruella Deville, the Hungry Caterpillar, a Where's Wally and many more. The children were also excited to invite their parents into class to share their reading books and have some quality reading time.

On the subject of reading, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the Parish Council for sponsoring every child in the school. This was a fantastic scheme that provided each child with an opportunity to choose a book they would like to see in their reading areas within their classrooms. The PTA also made a donation for each class to revamp the book corners and foster that love of reading.

An Ancient Greek Day took place for KS2. Another great opportunity to dress up! Dragonfly and Grasshopper children were involved in many fun activities from food tasting, to participating in their very own Olympics.

The children participated in many Science investigations during Science Week. The theme this year was 'Time' as the British Science Week turned 30! In Caterpillar and Ladybird Class, the children made observations of some delicious fruit throughout the week. They observed how it changed and believe us, it wasn't delicious by Friday. In Dragonfly Class, the children explored ice and then created an effective de-icer using salt. Lastly in Grasshopper Class, the children created their own water timers and explored sundials.

Another addition to observing patterns over time were our new classroom visitors. One of our amazing TAs found frogspawn in a puddle on their driveway so donated it to the children who found it fascinating watching them transform.

Dragonfly Class delivered an amazing class assembly to their parents. It was great to hear about all their learning experiences since Christmas linked to their project on the Greeks. One area of great interest was their exploration of hidden disabilities and researching different ways to promote it and educate others. This is their social action project and we can't wait to see how they develop this further.

Grasshopper Class took part in Bikeability. It was really important that the children understood how to be safe on the roads. This was a big focus for them as their social action project is about promoting safer roads.

'Spreading the word' for our annual Garden Trail is well underway. Thank you so much to all our community members who have volunteered to open their gardens this year. We also want to thank the PTA and those who are helping to coordinate this event. It is very much appreciated. We are really looking forward to the day which takes place on Saturday 30th June, 11am-5pm.

Jenni Orwin, Head of School

Fletching Singers Spring Concert

On Saturday 27th April at 7.30pm in St Margaret the Queen Church, Buxted Park, Buxted TN22 4AY the Fletching Singers hold their spring concert.

Themed "Dawn to Dusk" it features Cantique de Jean Racine (Fauré) and The Fauré Requiem plus other works. Soloists Kathryn Jenkin (soprano), Phillip Conway-Brown (baritone), Andrew Wilson (organ & piano), directed by Ansy Boothroyd.

Advance tickets £12.50 at www.fletchingsingers.co.uk , from members, or call 07802 855113. Tickets £15 on the door.



DDay Commemoration – 6 June 2024

The Parish is holding a series of events to commemorate the DDay landings of 6 June 1944 – we do hope you will join us.

We are very proud of the fact that the commemoration is organized by a partnership comprised the PCC, Fletching Parish Council, Fletching CE School, the Royal British Legion (Fletching Branch) and the Fletching Bellringers.

Ring out for Peace – 18.30 (30 mins)

Parish Bellringers will join others across the nation Ringing out for Peace

Commemoration Event – Fletching Church - 19.00 (60 mins)

Music, readings and participation by Fletching Primary School in remembrance of the sacrifice made by so many from our Parish, the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and across the world

War Memorial – 20.00

Act of Remembrance - gathering at the War Memorial

Parish Beacon – 21.15

Lighting of the Beacon simultaneously with beacons being lit across the Nation

Fletching Bonfire Society

Fletching Bonfire Society is proud to announce that planning has begun to celebrate our 170th year since its formation in true bonfire style. We are to hold our torch light procession, bonfire and fireworks event on **5th October 2024**.

However, this can only take place under certain conditions including, raising the necessary funds; completing the jobs in preparation for bonfire celebrations; our management plan and road closure being approved by Sussex Police, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, South East Coast Ambulance Service and Wealden District Council.

In order to meet these conditions, we need more help from existing members and we are still looking to increase our membership.

Membership

All membership is up for renewal. There is no need to complete another application form, please contact Katie on fbsmembership@outlook.com once payment has been made to the following bank account details:

Account Name - Fletching Bonfire Society

Sort code - 60-22-05

Account number - 63214415

100 club

If you would like to join and have a chance to win some money then please email fletchingchairman@gmail.com, to request a number. You can have as many numbers as you would like, numbers are £30 each for a year.

Our 100 will be drawn for the first time in March. Monthly draws will take place when you could win £30, £15, or £10 you will be notified by email should you be a lucky winner. There will be a grand prize draw in February 2025 where you could win a large pot of money.

Badge design 2024

It's 170th year ... We think we need an iconic badge design. So, who has an idea of what it could be?

Any design ideas for a badge for 2024 please send them to fletchingchairman@gmail.com

Upcoming events

Please let either Julie or myself know if you are able to help at ANY of our upcoming events. All and any help is greatly appreciated.

13th April - Jumble sale, Fletching Village Hall. Help is needed to collect and store jumble, sort through jumble, set up the Hall Friday evening, tea and coffee sales, clear up the Hall and sort through jumble that is left.

25th May - Plant sale UNDER PLANNING. This event will not happen unless more help is

secured within the next few weeks!! Again help is required in all areas including looking after plants before the event.

We would really love to keep the Sussex tradition of Bonfire alive, so please help us in any way you can.

Fletching Bonfire Society, fletchingchairman@gmail.com

Fletching Parish Council

Community Speedwatch – volunteers needed

This is a call out for volunteers to join Community Speedwatch campaign so that more speed checks can be carried out in the two approved locations – A272, Piltdown and Church Road/Ruston Bridge Road, Fletching. If anyone is able to give their time to this very worthwhile campaign please contact the Clerk who will put you in touch with the lead organiser.

Keep Britain Tidy (Great British Spring Clean)

The Parish Council would like to thank Bob White for all his hard work in organising the parish litter pick etc as part of the Keep Britain Tidy campaign. Bob has now passed the mantle to David McGibney who will be organising this and future years' events on behalf of the Parish Council. If you would like to support David in keeping the parish litter free, please contact the Clerk who will pass your details on to David. All necessary equipment will be provided.

Splaynes Green Phone Box

Good news – the phone box at Splaynes Green is to remain. Mr Tapp has kindly agreed to reset the phone box so that it stands correctly. Once this has taken place later in the year (when the ground conditions allow) the box will then be repainted, and a new door fitted. The phone box will then be used to display local footpath maps and for a book and seed swop.

Parish Council Logo

The Parish Council has a much clearer version of its logo along with the addition of the words Parish Council. This is all thanks to Grant Sherriffs who very kindly produced the new logo for us.

Wealden District Council – Draft Local Plan consultation – 15th March to 10th May 2024

Your views count! The consultation is now open for the Draft Local Plan. To view information about the Draft Local Plan there is a face-to-face exhibition taking place in Uckfield Civic Centre on Saturday 13th April from 10am to 4pm or you can see a virtual exhibition online via the Wealden.gov.uk website. The Parish Council encourages everyone to look at the draft plan and respond to the consultation.

Annual Meeting of the Parish – Thursday 9th May 2024

The Annual Meeting of the Parish has been booked for Thursday 9th May 2024. This is where you can come and meet the Parish Councillors and hear about what has been happening over the last year. There will also be a discussion on the Draft Wealden Local Plan consultation.

Wealden District Council

Wealden Draft Local Plan consultation dates released

It is time for you to have your say on the developments that will take place in Wealden, which will impact all of us over the next sixteen years and beyond. The consultation dates are now confirmed and will run from 5pm, Friday 15 March to 5pm, Friday 10 May 2024.

Alongside the face-to-face exhibitions of the draft Local Plan, Wealden District Council will launch a virtual exhibition accessed via the council's website so that residents who cannot, or do not want to, visit in person, can still partake in the consultation. Please register using the portal at <https://consult.wealden.gov.uk/kse>. There will also be advice on how to respond to the consultation. It is really important that you express what you like about the draft Local Plan, as well as your objections. Once the consultation

has taken place, the draft Local Plan will gain ‘weight’ in planning law, according to the magnitude of opinion.

The locations of the face-to-face consultations are confirmed below:

Venue	Address	Date	Time
Hailsham Civic Centre	Vicarage Lane, Hailsham, East Sussex BN27 2AX	Saturday 23rd March 2024	10.00AM - 16.00PM
Maresfield Village Hall	Bridge Road, Maresfield, East Sussex TN22 2HJ	Monday 25th March 2024	14.00PM - 20.00PM
Polegate Community Centre	43 Windsor Way, Polegate, East Sussex BN26 6QF	Tuesday 26th March 2024	14.00PM - 20.00PM
Uckfield Civic Centre	Council Offices, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1AE	Saturday 13th April 2024	10.00AM - 16.00PM
Heathfield Community Centre	Sheepsetting Lane, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 0XG	Wednesday 17th April 2024	14.00PM - 20.00PM
Crowborough Community Centre	Pine Grove, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1FE	Saturday 20th April 2024	10.00AM - 16.00PM
East Hoathly Village Hall	Church Marks Lane, East Hoathly, East Sussex BN8 6EQ	Monday 22nd April 2024	14.00PM - 20.00PM
Frant Memorial Hall	The Green, Frant, East Sussex TN3 9ED	Tuesday 23rd April 2024	14.00PM - 20.00PM
Horam Village Hall	Horam, East Sussex TN21 0JE	Saturday 4th May 2024	10.00AM - 16.00PM

There are two controversial sites that require particular attention which are not formal allocations in the draft Local Plan, but which have been included for public comment. They are the Ashdown Business Park Expansion and Owsbury. The former is a vast industrial development that would extend over land the equivalent of 100 football pitches, adjacent to ancient woodland; the latter proposes a 2,000 house residential development in an unsustainable location. It is my opinion that should these sites be included in the final Local Plan, they would have a devastating impact on the area, not least the health and

resilience of the Ashdown Forest, local waterways and the wider environment. I have been particularly campaigning against these potential developments. If you would like to know more please visit: <https://sabreowl.com/>.

Wealden holding Southern Water to Account

Wealden District Council has co-ordinated a group of 20 councils to act as a watchdog to oversee Southern Water and its regulators. The group was formed as a response to a catalogue of failings resulting in: flooding; untreated sewage seeping into people's homes, gardens and roads; on-going discharges into rivers; and an inability to deal with new development. Residents can access information via the website: <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/southern-water-stakeholder-group/>.

Book Event

Finally, you may be interested in attending a talk that I will be hosting with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, in East Grinstead on 15th May. We will be discussing his new book and thoughts on protecting our countryside. For more information and tickets, go to www.eastgrinsteadbookshop.co.uk.

If you have any comments, questions or require guidance, please do get in touch and I will do my best to help. Thank you.

Cllr. Christina Coleman cldr.christina.coleman@wealden.gov.uk
07718 208340

East Sussex District Council

Roads

The battle to improve our local roads continues with occasional small successes as potholes are filled and patching completed. The horrendous weather is making the task more difficult as more problems appear and contractors are chasing their tails to catch up. Despite the gloom, officers tell us that from April to December 2023 70 road improvement schemes have been delivered, 19,000 potholes filled, 132 patching repairs done and 150 minor drainage schemes finished across the whole of East Sussex. Sadly, not such a lot round here.

The A22: The County Council's Consultation document on the 2025 to 2050 Transport Plan appeared fairly bland at first sight and did not make much of a

proposal to make the Uckfield Bypass into a dual carriageway. However, this is one of the major road projects north of Hailsham and is another threat to our local villages. We could get into a sort of doom loop. Traffic congestion is getting worse so we dual the bypass so the arguments for more housing at Owlsbury and an extended Business Park grow stronger. If that happens then of course there will be more traffic congestion, calls for better roads and Lo and behold we are suddenly urban rather than rural. We have to resist this.

Recycling in Wealden District

Increasingly, community recycling facilities in Wealden District are disappearing without any apparent public consultation or information. I have asked about this and been told they are all going to be phased out. It seems to be a strange policy to phase out public recycling sites when fly tipping is clearly increasing. One reason I was given for the closures is that the current sites are overflowing and causing possible health hazards. So, they are popular and well used. Why not empty them more frequently and keep this valued local service going?

Fire and Rescue

The Fire service continues to cope with many challenges including more flooding incidents and also growing requests to help the ambulance staff with very overweight people.

Nevertheless, The Fire Authority has agreed a balanced budget and a £24 million investment programme over 3 years. Savings have been made but we will ensure these will not increase community risk.

One change being made is the response to Automatic Fire Alarms. We have about 10,000 calls per year and of these 36% are AFAs. We have been sending appliances and crews out to these and 97% are false alarms. From April 1st we will no longer attend AFA calls in commercial buildings which are low risk unless we get a positive call to say there is a fire.

One exciting new development in the service is the establishment of Fire Cadet units. They follow the same pattern as police, army, sea and air cadets. The aim is to give the young cadets an understanding of fire safety, how to deal with an emergency, firefighting skills, basic first aid training and general understanding of life skills. We have a thriving branch in Uckfield. We do need a bit of help and if anyone could consider sponsorship, we would be very grateful. We are seeking funds from a number of sources.

Roy Galley

Family Support Network

Time is really flying by this year and we remain at full capacity as more and more families are referred to us weekly. It is concerning just how many families are coming to us already at a total crisis, having been let down by other services, so there is a real pressure on our practitioners to provide as much support as possible.

Despite the challenges we are seeing some real progress with our families, as they begin to improve their housing, financial and confidence issues. Sadly it is still very hard to get appropriate support for the many families whose children have additional educational needs, but we are not giving up and continue to press other agencies for the right help. One parent recently wrote to her practitioner to say:

“Without your commitment, understanding and sometimes firm words when needed we honestly do not know where we would be. All three of the children have got their autism diagnoses and even though this is a little depressing for us, it was answers and being believed - something that was never in doubt.”

Our family activity events are now in full swing – the Easter holidays included our first trip of the year to Arundel Castle cricket foundation and a farm trip in Midhurst where children could bottle feed lambs and take ponies for walks. Our first Dalesdown residential weekend of the year will take place in the middle of April, which we know will be another fantastic opportunity for some of our families.

I'm delighted to let you know about our new fundraising event for this year – the Cuckmere pilgrim path sponsored walk. Replacing our longstanding Easter Monday walk, this event will take place in the May half term holidays and allows participants to take in the 7 historic churches in the Cuckmere valley as well as the fantastic scenery. The attached poster gives further details, and we hope to see lots of you there.

February's work in numbers

- 245 individual visits and 1105 calls with families supporting 257 adults and 209 children
- 34 supported meetings with other agencies
- 50 group sessions held supporting 1010 parents and 436 children
- 123 food deliveries made

Nikki Kerr

FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

Chailey Repair Café

We were seriously busy at the last Chailey Repair Café, where we tackled a seized up printer, a Henry Hoover, an elephant, a helicopter, a laughing buddha who had lost his hands and more than 80 other challenging repairs. Our talented fabrics team will always do their best to repair clothing and zips. Please note that, although we don't have time to do zip replacements, we can nearly always fix them for you!

As we head into Spring, we'll now start seeing your cycles which have been loitering in sheds and need some attention, as well as mowers and garden machinery such as trimmers and hedge cutters (you know - those ones where you have accidentally cut through the lead....??!!). Bring us your garden tools which need sharpening and our state of the art sharpening machine will soon sort those out, as well as your kitchen knives and workshop tools.

Our 2024 dates are easy to remember – we are open every 2nd Saturday of each month between 10am – 1pm (13th April, 11th May and so on). Please remember that we can get very busy, so be prepared to wait and enjoy some refreshments while you do so. Only one item at a time please (although you can go round again if there's time) and try not to arrive too late as we may not be able to accommodate you!

Our 2024 posters and flyers with all our dates are available at the Café, so you won't forget. And don't forget to pick up a free car sticker and one of our smart new bamboo pens so you can spread the word!

Chailey Repair Café is part of a world-wide movement where volunteer experts repair things free of charge – although a donation towards running costs is invited. Anyone can bring along broken items or clothing needing repair from home and have a cuppa and a cake while they wait.

Not sure if we can fix your stuff? Contact us at chaileyrc@gmail.com and we'll see what we can do to help.

See you very soon!!

Bryan McAlley and the Chailey Repair Café team

Newick Cinema

A Community-based Venture for Sunday Evenings

Can't make the cinema?

Our next show is on 28th APRIL 2024. We hope that many of you will be able to come and enjoy "THE BOYS IN THE BOAT". As always there is a licensed bar, teas, coffees, cakes and ice cream plus an interval so that there is an opportunity to meet up with friends and have an enjoyable evening out in the village. Booking in advance will secure seats in the front rows. You can also just come along at 7pm and buy a ticket on the door; the film will start at 7:30pm.

APRIL'S FILM: THE BOYS IN THE BOAT (12A), starring Callum Turner Joel Edgerton DIRECTED BY George Clooney

Based on a true story, during the height of the great depression, the film follows the members of the rowing team at the University of Washington as they get thrust into the spotlight when they compete for gold at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.

Date: 28 April 2024 in Newick Village Hall, Western Road, Newick BN8 4LY
Licensed bar and refreshments from **7.00 pm**. Film starts **7.30 pm**

Tickets: £7.00 (cash only) on the door, or by emailing detailed request to newickcinema@outlook.com Subtitles and hearing loop in place.

Uckfield, Lewes & Newick Arts Society

The Civic Hall, Uckfield, April 10th 2.30

Brian Stater: World Famous Photographer, Images that Shaped our Culture.

We all have our favourite family photographs, mine is of my mother aged about six playing with the family dog on a sunny sandy beach in Wales. Photographs have a tremendous power to take you back to long forgotten times.

Brian Slater will be asking us if photographs can ever be regarded as fine art. The image of the famous 'Girl with Green Eyes' from Afghanistan is certainly beautiful but because we know of its context it compels us to think of the

situation there and wonder what happened to her. In any case are the pictures true? With modern technology everything can be changed and misrepresented. Portraiture, landscape and still life all these genres will be examined. Brian has exhibited at UCL where he is a Senior Teaching Fellow. Like his great hero Henri Cartier Bresson he uses a pre-war Leica camera.

We are in the Civic Hall Uckfield, parking is free and the lecture will start promptly at 2.30. The cost is £7 but if you are interested in joining, please contact me. We are a very friendly society, so please think about it. The cost is, as we are halfway through our programme reduced and for that you get all the lectures, our newsletter, the Arts Society Magazine and the opportunity to go on one of our specially organised visits.

Annette Shelford annette@shelford.net

Chailey Commons Society

At last, a break in the winter rains, and how good it is to see the sun shining brightly. There has been an amazing show of daffodils, and the bluebells are showing strongly in the woodlands. These, together with wood anemones, wild snowdrops, and the yellow Lesser Celandine make a wonderful show, using the light from above before the tree canopy grows over and makes the woodland floor darker again.

We have held the AGM which included a raffle table by the local Guides Rangers, an update on her Ashdown Forest Nightjars Project from Izzy Kennedy and another magnificent display of local old maps and photographs and postcards staged by Tony Turk. This gives us a lovely opportunity to get together afterwards and meet and exchange memories.

Down at Markstakes Common the volunteer group, meeting on Mondays, have continued the winter work of clearing brambles and birch seedlings from another glade. Whilst it has been very wet, this has softened the ground which makes digging easier to remove the roots, using special forked tools, which is an essential part in successful clearing.

Our meetings continue this month with firstly a new special Easter Trail meeting at 2.00.p.m. on Sunday 7th April at the Sports Club pavilion on

Memorial Common. Members and families and children are invited to come along and try a circuit of the common following clues in words and pictures to discover and learn more about the commons.

Secondly, we have a spring bird walk with Adrian on Saturday April 13th starting at 8.00.a.m. at the Pound Common car park. We will be looking and listening for both the resident birds and the early migrants so bring binoculars.

Thirdly, I will be leading a spring walk on Pound Common on Saturday April 27th starting at 2.30.p.m. from the car park. A leisurely stroll of about a mile when we will be looking for the early flowers and plants growing again and anything else which might be of interest.

For further information, visit our website – www.chaileycommons.org.uk or our Facebook page www.facebook.com/chaileycommons/ or friendsofmarkstakescommon.weebly.com

William Coleman 01444 831098

Friends of Chailey Windmill

The Mill and Rural Life Museum will open for the first time this year on Sunday 28th April from 3 - 5 pm. Admission is free but donations are welcome to support this historic landmark building

Question: on November 1944 an Allied aircraft crashed in Great Home Wood not far from the Mill What type of plane was it?

Answer: to be found on the first floor of the Mill.

The South Downs (Sussex Wildlife Trust)

I love heading out at the weekends for a hike over the Downs - but 90 million years ago, this part of the planet wouldn't have been a safe place to be. I'd have been busy avoiding the teeth of hungry aquatic predators like the 10-metre-long Mosasaurs as I cruised through a shallow sea. But it would be much smaller, less fearsome prehistoric organisms that would shape Sussex. The calcium

shells from microscopic marine algae slumped to the sea floor and millions of years of pressure and erosion moulded them into the curvaceous chalk hills that form the familiar foundations of the South Downs.

It only feels like yesterday (well, about 6,500 years ago) that we humans showed up and got to work. The wild Sussex woods were chopped down and eventually sheep grazing became the dominant activity on the cleared hills for many centuries. The sheep-nibbled short downland turf is an internationally rare habitat, rich in flowers and the creatures that depend on them.

And, as chalk downland is such a rare habitat, the species that live here are also uncommon. Our butterflies are a prime example. Species like the Grayling, Silver-spotted Skipper, Small Blue, Adonis Blue and Chalk Hill Blue are restricted to this special habitat.

But it's not just wildlife that benefits. Those porous chalk hills filter, store, and provide us with most of our water. They also offer loads of other free services from flood prevention to pollination and food production. The open countryside around Sussex also offers us immeasurable physical, mental and spiritual benefits. The South Downs were designated a National Park in 2011.



Southerham, Photograph by Nigel Symington

While writing this article, I discovered a letter penned in 1915 by the Lewes naturalist, W. E. Nicholson, expressing concern for the future of the South Downs around Lewes, and especially the rare Adonis Blue butterfly and scarce

Forester Moth that live there. I'd like to think that Mr. Nicholson would be reassured to know that, more than a century later, his beloved Lewes Downs, butterflies and moths are still just where he left them and all flourishing under the care of Sussex Wildlife Trust on their reserves at Malling Down and Southerham.

Michael Blencow

A month on the farm

Well, the calves are popping out on production line of which Mr Ford himself would be proud. With just one disaster, all is going well. We have had a couple who have been very slow to suckle, and this requires pretty intensive nursing. You cannot leave them in the hope they “get it”, but you cannot give them so much milk by a tube into their tummies they aren’t hungry enough to try. It is such a strange phenomenon – they just don’t have the urge or instinct to suck and then suddenly, as if a lightbulb goes on in their brain, they just start sucking as if possessed! Few things are more satisfying.

We have been busy with other things on the farm. Increasingly, we are all understanding better the importance of hedges for wildlife, and also for capturing carbon. And their long roots increase the ability of the soil to absorb water by 60 per cent – and that is something we really need right now! So, where we have weak hedges, or gaps in hedges, we have been in-filling with small whip plants. And, to our great excitement, we have reinstated a hedge that, thanks to a map, we know was there in 1808 – and probably way before that. The field has always been known as the ‘Ten Acre’, when in fact it is eleven acres. The map shows there was an acre at the southern end of the field known as ‘Kiln Field’ – it must have been a brick kiln and Tom Hobbs can remember seeing it, although there is little sign of it now. So, we have reinstated the hedge according to the map and within the hedge planted three trees: an oak, a hornbeam and a golden willow. And that makes it a hedgerow, not just a hedge! All being well, in three years we will see a new and thick hedge being established. Interestingly, the field is incredibly wet where the hedge has been planted and we hope this will help dry it out a little. You can see where we have been working from Down Street near the metal gate so do please take a look and, hopefully, watch the hedge flourish.

It is so wonderful to see the birds returning or becoming more active. We have seen bullfinches, Kingfishers, sandpipers, snipe, marsh tits and sedge warblers – let alone our more common feathered friends. I do commend the Merlin App to you – it can identify birds from their song and is remarkably accurate. So far, we have identified seventy-six different birds on the farm, which is utterly thrilling for us and shows, I think, we are right that farming with Nature is the right way forward.

Lisa Buchanan

Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!



Danger lurks! The Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina*) is now establishing itself in the UK. It's a non-native, invasive insect that's dangerous not just to people—more on this later—but also to all kinds of bees including honeybees, butterflies, wasps and pollinating insects generally. In short, it's an ecosystem marauder.

The insect arrived in France in 2004, when a hibernating queen was accidentally imported in a consignment of pottery from China. It wasn't spotted until it was too well-established to be eradicated. Uncoordinated attempts to limit its spread have been unsuccessful, resulting in the hornet now being established through the country. It then spread to Belgium, Spain and Portugal, and was blown across to the Channel Isles, where a lot of hard work has helped reduce its impact on Jersey and Guernsey.

Now it's here. In 2022, just 16 Asian Hornet nests had been discovered in this country. But in 2023, this increased dramatically to 72 nests in 56 different locations, with Kent and the south-east most affected. One of the 2023 sightings was in Newhaven—just down the road. There have been sightings in many other locations, including as far north as Scotland, and a credible sighting already reported in January this year, sparking fears the non-native insect may become established in the UK.

Experts have pointed out that this is not just a problem for beekeepers but poses a significant risk to public health. Asian hornets are aggressively defensive of their nests, which are often built in hedgerows and brambles, meaning disturbances by unsuspecting individuals could have dangerous consequences.

What we can do

Identifying the hornet is not hard: it has an orange face, yellow legs and a dark

near-black abdomen broken only by a single orange stripe on the fourth segment, near the tail of its body. No other native insect looks like it. Apart from that it's comparatively large and noisy.

We all need to be vigilant and encouraged to report any suspected sightings on the Asian Hornet Watch app, which is available to download on iOS and Android.

In particular, in the spring, the queens emerge from hibernation and starting to build their primary nests. These look like tennis ball-sized paper nests, and are often found in the eaves and roofs of buildings and sheds. So the watchword right now is: "look up!"

One nest found and destroyed now prevents thousands of hornets emerging later in the year—and then hundreds more queens finding their way into hibernation next winter, each of which will found a new nest.

Once reported, expert teams from the National Bee Unit, part of Defra, will then be deployed to track hornets back to their nests, which are then destroyed.

Reporting a possible sighting of an Asian Hornet is quick, free, and easy and has the potential to make a huge difference in the fight against this invasive species.

See it! Snap it! Send it!

Useful Local Telephone Numbers

Uckfield Police	101 ext. 568 226
Village Hall Booking	722075
Fletching School	722356
Griffin Inn	722890
Peacock Inn	762463
Piltdown Man	723753
Denniker Farm Shop and Café	722038
Old Spot Farm Shop	722894
Nose2Tail	07496 879781
(Butcher and deli)	07835 541754
The Old Dairy Farm Shop	790517
Sheffield Park Nursery & Wines	790775
Trading Boundaries	790200
SE water Leak Line	0333 000 0365
Electricity Emergency	0800 783 8866
Newick Health Centre	722272
The Newick Chemist	722203
Parish Council Chairman (R. Hannay)	07966 035575
Wealden District Councillor (C. Coleman)	07718 208340
Piltdown Residents Association (Sandy Bone)	722101
Art Group (Yvonne Thomas)	723275
Cricket Club	724324
Chailey Tractor Club	07971 792449
Stoolball Club	763302
Scouts	01273 476360
Trefoil Guild (Jane Stent)	01273 400632
Youth Club (Heidi Barrow)	724023
Toddler Group (Natalie Chewter)	07973 472871
Forget-me-Nots	07966 035578
Church Flower Guild	721391
Chiropody Club	740206
Fletching Singers (Alannah Dobson)	760709
Wealden District Council	01892 653311
Social Security Department	0800 666555
Citizens Advice Bureau	764940

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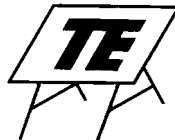
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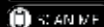
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