

The Fletching Parish Magazine

£1

FEBRUARY 2024



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CHURCH AND VILLAGE NEWS, FEATURES, DIARY & EVENTS

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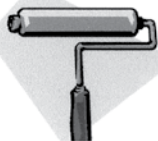
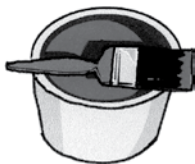


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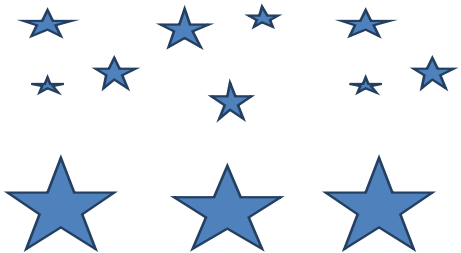


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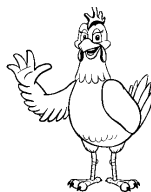
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What we value

Anyone with a birthday near Christmas will know that it can be a bit of a curse. Just before Christmas and you are probably making things too expensive for everyone. Just after Christmas and it can all feel a bit lost.

The only time it worked in my favour was on my 18th birthday. I persuaded everyone who might conceivably have been considering a present for Christmas or birthday, to make it cash. Putting everything together with some slender savings I had just enough to buy my first car.

The Morris Minor saloon remains, in my view, a triumph of engineering. It was virtually indestructible, with an engine housing roomy enough to walk around, wings that were bolted on not welded and a hole in the front bumper allowing the engine to be hand-cranked if the electric ignition failed. With a top speed of just over 60 mph, it would never set the pulse racing, but I loved it.

A wing needed replacing and the elderly paintwork was starting to fail but that was easily put right. I couldn't afford a respray but my father, a City of Salford policeman found some left over 'police station blue' paint, and I could afford a paint brush. I spent hours sanding and painting and the end result, although less stylish than I'd hoped, did at least give the bodywork a consistent colour.

After two years I traded up to a Vauxhall Viva, mainly because it had an electric aerial. I sold the Morris to a teacher in my local school. A born-again Christian, she promptly made her mark and put a 'Jesus is Lord' sign at the top of the windscreen. Shortly afterwards, it was stolen and used as an unlikely (but very reliable) getaway car following a bank robbery in Manchester. The thieves also stole her bible and hymn book, which she viewed as a piece of missionary work.

Perhaps it was because it had such character, or perhaps it was because I had to really work on it, but of all the cars I've owned none has called out in me the same emotional bond as that Morris. I suspect this is true of many things. Things which are too easy leave us untouched; things we have to work at, stay with us and have abiding value.

David Knight, Vicar of Fletching

Letter
from
the
Vicar



Fletching
Magazine

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

Calendar of Services for February 2024

Sunday February 4th (2nd Sunday before Lent)

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday February 11th Quinquagesima

(Sunday next before Lent)

10 a.m. Holy Communion

February 14th Ash Wednesday

10 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday February 18th, Lent I

10 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday February 25th, Lent II

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 contact me, David Knight, at fletching.vicar@gmail.com



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Churches in our Neighbourhood

Cornerstone Church (Methodist and United Reform)
76 New Town, Uckfield. Further information 01825 749771
Sunday Services 10.30am

For information concerning the following churches

Roman Catholic Churches 01825 724003

Uckfield Baptist Church 01825 791165

February events in the Church

1st	Peter Roundell and Committee	6pm
5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th	Chromatics Rehearsal	7pm
16 th , 23 rd	Bell Ringer Practice	7.30pm
20 th , 27 th	School Assembly	10am
24 th	Fletching Singers Workshop	10am

EASTER LILIES

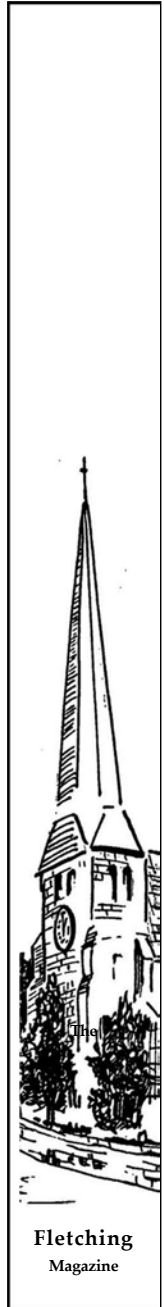


We will once again be decorating the Church this Easter Sunday, 31st March with commemorative lilies. If you would like to donate a lily, or several, in memory of loved ones please let us know by emailing us at fletchingflowerguild@gmail.com.

There will be a list provided in the Church for you to write your name together with those whom you wish to be remembered.

Your donations towards the cost of the lilies would be much appreciated. Please email for bank details.

The Flower Guild



Church Officers

- Vicar:** **Revd Dr 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)
juliet@piltown.eu
- Hon. Treasurer:** **John Shaw**
18 Forest Park, Maresfield, TN22 2NA
(76 1699) johnekshaw@yahoo.co.uk
- Vergar:** **Liz Sargent**
Moyses Farm, Fletching, TN22 3SA
(790458)
- Church Administrator:** **Richard Hannay** 01825 705005
4, Corner Cottages Fletching, TN22 3SS
fletching.parish@gmail.com
- Electoral Roll:** **Peter Ross** (729132)
pgross@piltown.eu
- 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.co



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Church Flower Rota

4th/11th Altar

Rosie Blackmur

Lady Chapel Carol Campbell

Church Cleaning Rota

Week commencing 5th Kate Minch and Jo Greenish

16th

Team Two

2.30pm

World Day of Prayer (Interdenominational)

At St. James the Less, Nutley Church, Friday 1st March 2024, 2.00 p.m.

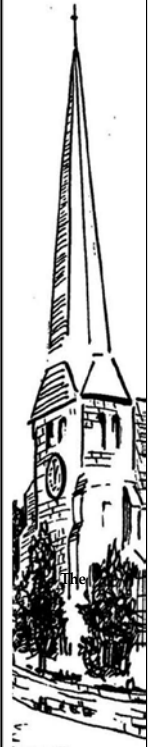
The Theme is Written by the Christian Women of Palestine
"I beg you, bear with one another in love"

As we see and hear the unfolding horrors of suffering of the people of Palestine and the people of Israel, we feel great sympathy. Before 7th October and the beginning of the present crisis, an ecumenical group of Christian women from Palestine, the land in which Jesus was born, prepared the 2024 World Day of Prayer Service.

As we participate in the Service, we are part of a great wave of prayer encircling the globe, which begins as the sun rises over Samoa and ends 36 hours later in the Pacific as the sun sets over American Samoa. We will be joining with people in over 146 countries and islands around the world to pray with and for the people of Palestine, and for peace.

The Service shares the experiences of 3 Palestinian Christian women, from 3 different generations, who witness to the power of bearing together in love, despite difficulties and differences, united in prayer for just and harmonious solutions that will bring an end to human suffering, achieving security and peace for all people around the world.

Refreshments will be served after the Service



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Friends of Fletching Parish Church

SAVE THE DATE!!!

We are delighted to announce that Gilly Halcrow has kindly agreed to give a talk on The Commandoes and Special Operations Executive (SOE), also known as Churchill's Secret Army.

This will be truly fascinating so please 'Save the Date' for Thursday, 25th April. Tickets will go on sale in March but in the meantime for all enquiries please email: friendsoffletching@gmail.com



Fletching
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Christmas Fair

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed in any way to last year's Christmas Fair. It was a huge success for visitors and stallholders alike and the 3 venues of the Village Hall, Church and School were all busy. This year's fair will be on Saturday 7th December from 2 – 4pm as usual. Stallholders can book their pitch with me at any time. If anyone would like to take over co-ordination of the event, please get in touch with me also.

Emma Hannay 07966 035578

Fletching Parish Magazine

Email: fletchingpm@gmail.com

Deadline for March issue: Wednesday 7th February

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).

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

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colemanlizzie@hotmail.co.uk

Parish website: Anne Streeter (01825 721391)
www.fletchingparishchurch.co.uk

After 16 years Dominic Judd is retiring from his role of looking after the advertising. Everyone involved in Fletching Parish Magazine would like to extend our sincere thanks for the brilliant job he did in attracting advertising to the magazine and for his long service. We also thank Anne Streeter for taking on this role.

The Editors reserve the right to reduce or amend any item offered for any issue of this magazine. Views expressed in the articles do not necessarily accord with those of the Editors or PCC. Neither the Editors or the PCC are responsible for any errors or omissions contained in or arising from the advertisements printed herein: these are printed as submitted by individual advertise

Fletching CE Primary School

We are so pleased to be involved with the Church Community Library. We have excited children who love being able to borrow the books and share them with their friends and family. The older children are looking forward to working with the local toddler group by promoting that reading for pleasure and the love of a good book!

Last year we celebrated our school building standing for 150 years, but this year is really exciting as on the 27th January, Fletching CE Primary School officially opened its doors 200 years ago for the very first time. In the Summer, we have lots of wonderful things planned for our children and their families and we can't wait to share the details with you once they are finalised.

Our children in Key Stage 2 had the most amazing day participating in a 'Hands on History' workshop. This term, they have been learning about the Ancient Greeks and the children were given the opportunity to dress up and get involved in a variety of activities, such as rolling out a timeline, dressing a teacher, exploring the armour, warrior training and much more. It was really good fun and made this historical period come to life.

We'd like to inform you of the social action projects the children at Fletching are getting involved in. Ladybirds and Caterpillar Class are continuing their plight in raising the profile and funds for Raystede Animal Centre. Dragonfly Class are getting involved in the 'Britain Get Talking' campaign and will discuss the importance of sharing our worries in order to alleviate mental health issues. They will also be exploring 'unseen disabilities', initially in relation to our community and then the world beyond. Grasshopper Class are continuing their campaign to make roads safer and will be getting out into the community to see what they can do to help.

Jenni Orwin Head of School

Fletching Singers

DO YOU ENJOY SINGING? COME AND SING WITH US!

Under the guidance of our inspirational Music Director, Ansy Boothroyd, The Fletching Singers (www.fletchingsingers.co.uk) meet on Tuesday evenings during term time in Fletching Village Hall from 7.45 to 9.45 p.m. We are a sociable, relaxed and informal non-auditioned choir. Our choir members come from many of the surrounding villages and new members in all voice parts (SATB) are always very welcome. The spring term starts January 9th and we will be rehearsing Faure's Requiem along with other pieces for our concert in Fletching church in April.

We would like more singers! If you are interested please email info@fletchingsingers.co.uk or just come along to a rehearsal and give it a try

Fletching Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan Update

Thank you very much to the 125 people from around the parish who replied to last year's consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan. This was a strong and welcome response with a lot of detailed and well considered information for us to consider. We will be analysing your responses in detail to identify your concerns and aspirations and to see what policies we can support with evidence from the survey. Our next steps are to complete the analysis and then see what support we may need from a consultant in order to develop robust policies that are not in conflict with the draft Wealden Local Plan that will be put out for consultation in February. We will keep you posted as we develop these policies and will consult further with you, hopefully later this year."

Road Improvements – A272 Piltdown at Goldbridge Road and Batts Bridge

ESCC has notified the Parish Council that following the concerns raised about the current vehicle speeds on the A272 it would be undertaking improvements that will encourage appropriate speeds and improve safety for drivers and pedestrians. The works, due to be completed by winter 2024, include:

Improvements to the existing speed limit terminal signs; Installation of new village name plates; Refresh of ‘40mph’ roundels; Refresh of warning signs; Refresh of road markings; Installation of red surfacing at the gateways.

Recreation Ground Pavilion – refurbishment works starting

Hopefully by the time you read this the work will have started on the refurbishment of the Pavilion at Fletching Recreation Ground. It has taken some time to get to this point mainly due to the length of time the building took to dry out following the burst water pipe in the roof and the loss adjuster signing off on the claim. Due to a very generous donation from the Cricket Club, the Parish Council has been able to take this opportunity to improve and enhance the interior of the building. The works are due to be completed in April.

Fletching Parish Council Precept 2024/25

At its meeting on 8 January the Parish Council voted to set the Parish Precept for 2024/25 at £59.60 for a Band D dwelling. This equates to an increase of £1.72 (0.56%) on the 2023/24 parish precept.

Splaynes Green Phone Box

At its December meeting the Parish Council held a discussion with residents about the future of the phone box and it was agreed that there were a couple of options that could be considered: refurbish the phone box and install a defibrillator but not replace the door; or refurbish, replace the door and level the base slab. A number of offers of support were received at the meeting and the Parish Council would like to invite anyone who would like to offer their skills and support to help refurbish the phone box to contact the parish clerk via email at clerk@fletching-pc.org

Wealden District Council

I have resigned from position as Chair of Wealden District Council in order to concentrate on campaigning in the coming General Election, as the Green Party parliamentary candidate for East Grinstead and Uckfield. It really has been an honour to serve the community by engaging as far and wide as possible with different organisations, charities, schools and individuals. I am particularly proud of having spoken with more than a quarter of schools in Wealden, about the importance of nature recovery in a time of climate and biodiversity crisis. It was a tough decision to stand down, but I believe that it is in the best interest of the residents of Wealden, as it raises the platform in which I can advocate for my local community. Liberal Democrat councillor Gavin Blake-Coggins will act as interim Chair, until a successor is appointed at the next Full Council meeting. The Alliance for Wealden will be nominating Jessika Hulbert, Green Party Councillor for Withyham ward, as the new Chair. Although I am resigning as Chair, I will continue as ward councillor for Danehill and Fletching and it is my intention to remain so even if I am successful in the General Election.

Local Plan: It is clear that protecting our countryside is a major priority for this local community. One of the only tools that we as Councillors have to try to do that is to have an up-to-date Local Plan. We anticipate bringing a first draft to the public for consultation at the beginning of February.

What is a Local Plan? It is the responsibility of the District Council to permit or refuse proposals for development within the area. A Local Plan guides how these decisions are made in relation to housing, employment, retail and more. The law says that it is the job of the District Council to prepare such a Plan, in consultation with the local community, and in line with strict government guidelines. Many residents will know that Wealden is without an up to date Local Plan, after a previous submission failed to pass the government's inspection in 2019.

The headline: The government sets out a formula as a starting point for determining future housing needs for Wealden. This is often termed 'housing targets'. Meeting these 'targets' would mean more building and development than many of our residents would want to see in Wealden. However, the Local Plan we submit must be approved by the government's Planning Inspector, so it must carefully follow the government's rigid rules.

Didn't the government just remove housing targets? The short answer? No! Just before Christmas, the government said the targets were not compulsory, but "an advisory starting point". Sometimes it might be

possible for a Council to choose a lower target. However, if we do that, we will need to justify it by showing that Wealden's population and housing market are exceptional when compared to other Districts. Arguments about our exceptional landscape do not impact this advisory starting point.

So how many new homes will be allowed in Wealden? The Government's formula calculates that Wealden should give permission for 1200 new homes each year for 20 years. But we do not think that we have enough appropriate land for that many. We are currently investigating whether the sites which have been submitted to us are suitable, so that we can assess the number of new homes that Wealden can sustainably provide.

Why do we need to have a Local Plan at all? Without an up-to-date Plan, we experience a planning 'free-for-all'. Developers can apply for permission to build wherever they like, and it's much harder for Planning Committees to refuse. A Local Plan makes it easier to ensure that development happens only on sites included in the Plan. It will also allow us to insist on things like lower carbon emissions, improved building standards, water conservation, better design, and more protection of nature and biodiversity. We also hope to be able to increase the proportion of affordable housing, and more 2 and 3 bedroom houses to better reflect local need.

We are already under some pressure from central government to get the Local Plan in place as soon as possible. The worst-case scenario would be that we lose our planning powers altogether and have to hand over the whole process to central government.

When will the draft Local Plan be shared with residents and how can I comment?

On February 8th there will be an Extraordinary Full Council meeting at Wealden District Council offices in Hailsham, also webcast online. The draft Local Plan will be debated and brought to the vote. If it passes, we will enter the vital phase of consultation with the public.

If you would like to receive updates about the Draft Local Plan and take part in the consultation process, please register using our consultation portal at <https://consult.wealden.gov.uk/kse/>.

What happens after the consultation? Once the consultation ends, we'll review all the comments made on the document and use them to feed into the next draft of the Plan. There will be a further consultation on the Plan the Council wishes to bring forward in due course around Winter 2024 before it gets submitted for Examination by an independent Inspector.

Christina Coleman Chair

East Sussex District Council

Southern Water

Southern Water, which covers most of Sussex, Hampshire, Surrey and Kent recently gave a presentation to councillors and other interested parties. They provide water and sewage services to different parts of this large area. The picture as to which company provides what service is a bit complicated. However, there were some interesting points in their presentation of their long-term plan from 2025 to 2050. I appreciate some of this could seem a bit irrelevant to the here and now, but investment does take a long time to plan and bring to fruition.

With an anticipated population increase of 25%, there will be a requirement for an extra 300 million litres of water per day. To provide this they plan to

Invest £7 Billion compared with the current plan of £2.5bn; Improve 38 waste water sites; Introduce smart meters for everyone; Try to reduce rainwater flow using reed beds and new technology rather than storm overflows which when overwhelmed cause sewage discharges; Transfer water by pipeline from other parts of the country which have even more water than we do; Build a new reservoir in the Adur District.

This will, of course, cost money and water bills will rise. There is little alternative unless the taxpayer foots the bill. We all have to pay whether as customers or taxpayers.

Specific questions were asked about investors and dividends. The private sector has put in significant funds and apparently not taken a dividend since 2017.

Local Transport Plan

The other long-term plan being considered at present is the Local Transport Plan which again covers the period from 2025 to 2050. This is very strategic and looks at the whole range of transport options including walking, cycling, public transport and cars taking into account new types of vehicles, lower emissions and cleaner fuels. There are a number of ways in which you can participate in the consultation. You can go online to view the consultation via the council's consultation hub at:

<https://consultation.eastsusse.gov.uk/economy-transport-environmental/local-transport-plan-4-2024-2050>

Roy Galley 01825 713018

Fletching Bonfire Society

We wish you all a Happy New Year and look forward to a successful 2024. Fletching Bonfire Society has been a long-established village group and a massive part of the tradition of Sussex Bonfire. There are some 23 plus Sussex Bonfire Societies who every year spend many hours raising funds to put on the magnificent display of fire and fireworks and raising money to give to local charities.

As a collective in 2023 Sussex Bonfire raised £48,000 in donations to local charities. We have donated £150.00 to the Village Hall and £150.00 to the School this year, and we are hoping to make it more this coming year as we would like to give things back into the village.

We have an array of fund-raising events this year, in the hope that we can bring back our amazing procession and fireworks display of old: In order to do this, we need your help.

We have several events planned so far this year and would love it if you would be able to support us by coming along, or if you would like to help we would love to hear from you, you can email me on fletchingsecretary@gmail.com.

We would love to have more members, young or old who would like to help us. It can be the smallest of things, but everything helps, if you would like to get more involved or would like to know more about the Society and what we do please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Please keep a note of the following events and we hope you will be able to join us:

9th February	Quiz and Pizza: Village Hall 7pm
16th February	AGM: Village Hall 7pm
17th February	BINGO: Village Hall 6.30pm
16th March	Paddy's Night: Village Hall 7pm
13th April	Jumble sale: Village Hall
20th April	BINGO: Village Hall 6.30pm

Thank you for your continued support.

Family Support Network

At the start of a new year we are looking forward with hope to what we might achieve in 2024. With over 400 families currently active on our caseload, and over 700 families supported in total during 2023, there is no sign of the need for our work slowing down. We are doing what we can to maintain this level of support whilst also being conscious that the continuing financial crisis will impact on our ability to raise funds (all of our income is voluntary with no statutory support from local or national government).

With the retirement of our Hastings practitioner at the end of last year we have been reorganising our practitioner teams to make sure that we can continue to provide a service throughout Sussex without placing too much strain or unrealistic expectations on any of our staff. As a result we are currently recruiting new staff to keep this support at the necessary level. Do please pray that the right people are found.

Our events diary for the year is filling up fast, with 3 supporters (including Spencer from our office!) taking part in the Brighton 10k in early April, as well as our skydive on April 26th and the busy Open Garden season. All our events are on the Events page of our website so do look there for further information, in particular regarding the opportunity to join our skydive. If you are planning any fundraising events for us then do let the fundraising team know so that they can help you to promote the event for maximum success. Contact them by email

fundraising@familysupportwork.org.uk or phone 01273 041401.

December's work in numbers

- 333 individual visits and 1183 calls with families supporting 330 adults and 298 children
- 30 supported meetings with other agencies
- 56 group sessions held supporting 798 parents and 497 children, plus Christmas parties and trips to the pantomime
- 194 food deliveries made and 180 Christmas hampers delivered
- community support

Nikki Kerr

FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

Bevern Trust

25 Years of Creating ‘More From Life’

As we move into 2024 we are delighted to be celebrating our 25th anniversary of providing outstanding care and support for the profoundly disabled adults of Bevern View. To commemorate this significant occasion, we would love to welcome you to our first event of the year – The Bevern Trust Annual Dinner & Auction. Hosted by our patron, Natasha Kaplinsky and special guests, the evening will be an opportunity to hear more about our work and exciting future plans!

The journey has been a testament to the unwavering support from our dedicated staff, compassionate families and our incredible residents who have made Bevern View their home. We are immensely proud to have been part of so many lives and we look forward to continuing our mission of enhancing the wellbeing and happiness of our residents.

The Bevern Trust Annual Dinner & Auction.

7pm on Friday 8th March 2024 at Barcombe Village Hall

Tickets are available from beveritrust.org

Donate: www.beveritrust.org

Email: info@beveritrust.org

Follow us on social media: @thebeveritrust

Chailey Repair Café – A busy start to 2024!

No soon was Christmas over then you were all asking us to fix your stuff!! In no time at all we'd been asked to look at a printer, a WW2 flying jacket, an old briefcase, a bicycle, a wind up gramophone and several Christmas gifts which no longer worked and for which there was no receipt...

Chailey Repair Café will come to the rescue – there isn't much that our Café's skilled repair teams can't take on! During 2023, our talented electrics and general repairs teams have tackled toasters, irons, record players, table lamps, broken zips, furniture, and everything from a unicorn to a beautiful 100 year old French doll!

Don't forget that we have an IT team who will not only get your new laptop or iPad working properly but will also spend time showing you how to use

it if you've got stuck. We also have a state of the art sharpening machine to sort out those knives blunted by the turkey! It's all in a day's work for this successful local initiative which has gone from strength to strength as we start our 6th year!

Our 2024 dates are easy to remember – we are normally open every 2nd Saturday of each month between 10am – 1pm. Our new 2024 posters and flyers with all our dates are now 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!

You'll find us at St Peter's Church, Chailey on the A275 at Chailey Green normally on the second Saturday of each month (13th Jan, 10th Feb, 9th March and so on....) between 1000hrs and 1300hrs where we have a full Café service including our legendary cakes!

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 – Sunday 25th February

Dear Cinema goers,

Unfortunately, Cinemobile are unable to bring a film to Newick in February, so there will be no village cinema for this month. Our next film will be shown on Sunday 24th March

As usual details will be in the parish magazines and on posters throughout the village.

As always thank you for your support and watch out for details of the March film – a happy thought, we will be more or less heralding in spring by then!

Uckfield, Lewes & Newick Arts Society

The Civic Hall, Uckfield, February 14th 2.30

Andrew Davies, one of our favourite lecturers returns to tell us all about 'St Pancras and Friends, a Journey through London's Railway Stations.' Perhaps it is appropriate to have this lecture on St Valentines Day - many romances seem to have involved railway stations, most of us must remember the wonderful Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard in Brief Encounter!

Andrew is a frequent contributor to Radio and TV and this talk will take us not only to the old historic stations in London but also the new ones. This of course includes St Pancras, badly destroyed by fire, and then the subsequent battle, led by Sir John Betjeman, to totally rebuilt it, whilst still retaining its former glory.

All our lectures are digitally illustrated and for this one you may be amused by some rather jolly posters used to encourage railway use which are included.

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 do need new members so please think about it, the cost is only £47 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 & Newick Painting Group

Chailey & Newick Painting Group members were thrilled to see so many visitors at their exhibition in November, thank you to all those who ventured out on the Saturday in some terrible weather, and in calmer conditions on the Sunday, it was lovely to welcome you all.

We had many much-appreciated comments on the high standard of the work on display and sales were commensurately brisk; we are fortunate indeed to have some very talented artists amongst our number, although it must be stressed that there are no qualifications of ability or experience required to become a member (or to exhibit), membership is restricted only by there being space available.

The tombola in support of the Hospice, with every ticket winning an original artwork, again proved very popular with only a small handful of tickets out of 172 remaining at the end of the weekend. Our wonderful cakes were also in great demand! Together with generous donations, we are delighted to have raised a substantial sum for the Hospice at the exhibition, which will be added to the kind donations on the Just Giving page of our website <http://www.chaileyandnewickpaintinggroup.org> where you can also have another look at the exhibition paintings.

The Graham Barber Memorial trophy was awarded to Carlina Oliver for her pastel painting 'Green Lane, Sun & Shade'; thank you to all of you who took the trouble to vote for your favourite painting.

We have started thinking about next year's exhibition already, taking place in Chailey village hall on November 16th & 17th and we look forward to seeing you there.

Calling all Badminton Players!

Fancy a game of badminton on a Tuesday night? Newick Badminton Club welcomes players of all abilities. We are a friendly club and play at Newick Village Hall from 7.45pm to 10.15pm. If you are interested in coming along, please call 07801079334 or email secretary@newickbadmintonclub.co.uk. Our new season starts on 5th September.

Your first session is free!

Cumnor House

Cumnor House Sussex, an independent school located in Danehill, is inviting applications for a 110% funded private school education. The school is offering up to two places to children currently in Year 3 at a Sussex state primary school, and who will be joining Year 4 in September 2024. Cumnor's Foundation Scholarship programme is unique, in aiming to cover the cost of a child's education at independent school for ten years, from the age 8 to 18, including activities such as sport, music, art and DT, as well as

school uniform and school trips.

To be eligible to apply, your child should be performing towards the top of their class, and places will be offered to children from families who could never afford to pay for an independent school education – either through their single or joint incomes, or the release of assets. .

Applications are now open until Mon 25th Mar 2024. We encourage parents of children who will be starting Year 4 in September 2024 to contact Sam by emailing: samdavies@cumnor.co.uk or calling 01825 790 347. To read more about the opportunity, visit:

<https://cumnor.co.uk/admissions/foundation-scholarships/>.

For further press information contact Sam Davies, Foundation Manager at Cumnor House Sussex on 01825 790 347.

Chailey Commons Society

As we move into the second month of the year, we can see that the days are slowly getting longer, and we look forward to spring again. The recent record-breaking heavy winter rains have made the commons soggy, and most paths have become muddy trails. Snowfall in early January was better than rain but made everything very messy.

Our annual January project of cutting birch for besom broom making took place once again and the resulting bundles have been put into dry storage until October. Thank you to those who joined us and contributed to this interesting and worthwhile heathland activity.

The indoor meetings started again with an interesting talk by Ryan Greaves from the Sussex Bat Group on Bats and Bat Detectors. We will be listening to bats around the commons using our own bat detector so we can learn more about their sounds and flight.

Our talk this month will be on Thursday 8th February in the Chailey Village Hall at 7.30.p.m. when we have a talk on Nightjars by Greg Conway from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). This is a subject of great local interest generally and to those who have joined in the walks on the Chailey commons, usually during June, when these unusual birds visit each year flying over from Africa to spend the summer. Their call is very distinct,

being heard after dark, when they feed on moths and pair up for breeding. Our website has been professionally updated and should be more user friendly and informative. New features include recording sightings via email 'sightings'@chaileyccommons.org.uk', contact pages, ability to download information and join as members online. A comprehensive activities page should keep everyone informed and this will be updated as required. It also includes a Gallery of local pictures, and these can be sent in via email to 'mail@chaileyccommons.org.uk'

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

William Coleman 01444 831098

Toad-in-the-hole (Sussex Wildlife Trust)

Once upon a time, the British people were divided. Impassioned debates raged throughout the land, truth and common sense became distorted, and the public rose up and demanded an answer. How did that toad get inside that rock?

In 1898, two burly workmen in a chalk quarry near Lewes cracked open a hollow chunk of flint. The solid rock, formed 85 million years ago, split open to reveal an airtight cavity at its core. To the quarrymen's amazement, entombed within the ancient flint was a dead toad.

'Toad-in-the-hole' hysteria soon hit the headlines. It seemed like every month the newspapers reported how someone had split open a rock and found a toad inside. Some of these toads had already croaked but others would inexplicably still be alive and hopping. The Victorian world was thrown into theological and philosophical panic. Clergymen preached that the Creator had placed the eternal amphibians in rocks at the dawn of time. Subscribers to Darwin's new theory of evolution were perplexed. Charles Dickens wrote of his bewilderment, while others believed it was simply sorcery. Scientists began burying living toads in sealed boxes to investigate the unfortunate animal's longevity.

The Lewes toad of 1898 is the world's only surviving artefact of the entombed toad craze. It now resides in Brighton's incredible Booth Museum of Natural History – one of my favourite places in the whole world. Amongst the many awe-inspiring exhibits at The Booth, you'll find a special cabinet dedicated to curiosities. In it, lying reverentially on a bed of maroon felt, there is 'Probably the most famous toad in the world'. Admittedly when it comes to world-famous toads it's not a particularly crowded field, with only Toad of Toad Hall to contest the title. Alongside the original oval of cleft flint sits the shrivelled body of the infamous amphibian. The whole surreal exhibit is like a Kinder Surprise designed by Hieronymus Bosch.

But this cracked up flint isn't all it's cracked up to be. The Lewes toad was originally presented to the Brighton and Hove Natural History and Philosophical Society by Charles Dawson. That's the same Charles Dawson who would soon be sticking some Orangutan teeth on a human skull and declaring he had discovered the 'missing link' at Piltown, near Uckfield. In 1953, Dawson would be unmasked as a fraudster and the whole 'toad-in-the-hole' phenomenon would come crashing down, dismissed as popycock.

Michael Blencowe

A month on the farm

It is good to be back and it couldn't be a better time! January is the start of calving and we have already had a couple of early arrivals as I write this on New Year's Day....

The first cow to calve was one of our – how do I say this without causing her offence? – less attractive girls. Nevertheless, she is always the first in calf, the first to calve and never has a problem so this makes up for any other shortcomings! The second was the first of the heifers – calving for the first time. This is always more tense. Not only are their bodies new to giving birth, so are their hormones and emotions! You never quite know how things will go. It was quite tight getting the calf out and we needed the ropes and a good deal of human brawn! The mum was amazingly good

after a rough time and her milk came down quite quickly. But the calf – a big bull - took about twelve hours to stand up – which is far too long so intensive nursing was necessary.

There are a few things you must do as soon as you can after birth. First, you need to put iodine on the umbilical cord to avoid an infection, which is called “navel ill” and can really drag a calf down. If the infection tracks into the calf’s system you can end up with “joint ill”, which is horrible and can leave them with damaged joints. Incidentally, should you see farmers with brown fingers, it probably isn’t a nicotine addiction, but iodine! The next priority is to get some of the Mum’s milk inside the calf. It contains life-protecting colostrum, protecting against bacteria while hydrating and nourishing. Normally, calves suckle on their own, but our little one was far too dopey so I milked the cow and then put it into a special bottle with a long tube putting it straight into the tummy. That way I knew he was safe until he “came to”, which he duly did the following morning.

By law, we have to put tags in the calves’ ears as soon as possible after birth. Each tag has a number, the first half of which is our herd number and the second half is unique to the animal. Then its birth must go onto our computer records after which we apply for a passport from the Government. It is a bit of a palaver, but relatively straightforward once you are used to it and total traceability really matters for food safety.

There is something magical about the start of calving. The cycle of life begins again. Soon there will be snowdrops as the days lengthen. The birds will be spying out their nests. The sap will begin rising up the branches. Of course, we will have a spell of grim weather, but we know Spring will follow and there is nothing as exciting as that!

Lisa Buchanan

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
(Harry Godwin)	
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	07966 035575
(Richard Hannay)	
Wealden District Councillor	07718 208340
(Christina Coleman)	
Piltdown Residents Association	722101
(Sandy Bone)	
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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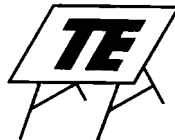
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