

Malherbe Monthly

Number 224
March 2023



Sunset over Grafty Green. Looks better online at www.boughtonmalherbe.co.uk
Picture courtesy John Collins

Useful contact names and telephone N^{os}.

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Church Choir	Doreen Hulm	850287
Dance Fit	Sharon Harris	890170
Dazzle	Gail Kelly	850671
Yoga	Sue Burch	850381
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The views expressed in "Malherbe Monthly" are not necessarily those of the Production Team; publication of articles/adverts does not constitute endorsement and we reserve the right to edit!

Anything for the **April** edition should be left in Grafty Green Telephone Box, or contact Mike on 01622 858937 (mfhitchins@btinternet.com) by **20th March**

News from St. Nicholas Church - March 2023

It is hard to imagine the trauma, heartbreak and devastation of the immense earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. While we are smiling at the appearance of snowdrops, others are scrabbling at mountains of rubble in a frantic effort to release or just find their loved ones. We can be thankful and give our prayers, as well as financial support, for the dedicated rescuers and the charities who are in the thick of it, giving 'hands-on' care.

Reminders (as usual!)

The church porch is open at all times for a break from the weather or the steep climb up the hill. Do make use of the facilities to make a hot drink and enjoy a biscuit there.

Please add to the mini food bank box under the table if you can, or use the gifts for yourself or others if in need. A larger food bank is at the back of St. Mary's church in Lenham, open from 10-4pm daily.

The main church building is only open for services, cleaning etc. but a key can be obtained at any time from the churchwardens. Their details are elsewhere in the magazine or on the church noticeboard in the porch.

Celtic Morning Prayers are said in the side chapel each Monday 9.00-9.30am. Please contact Rev. John Huggins, Rev. Charlotte Coles or the churchwardens at any time if you have any prayer requests. Prayers will be said in Morning Prayer time or in private if you wish.

Information

Village Coffee Morning is held every Tuesday in the village hall in Grafty Green from 11-2pm. The pop-up Post Office is available from 12.45-2.15 pm and most weeks various stalls will be present. But there will always be the church eco-shop with household cleaning products and Sylvia's jams and Sally's marmalade, as well teas from the Pluckley Tea and coffee company, kindly sourced by Sue Burch. Sue's beautiful cards are available too. Last month we were able to give money to local schools and this month we have given £180 to our church treasurer to send to the Disaster Emergency Fund for help to Turkey and Syria.

The Craft Group is enjoying the time on Fridays, 10-12noon. It never seems long enough!! Much discussion at the moment, do we **knit** or **crochet** the crowns to mark the coronation round the village? Come and have your say. A delightful time today as we could show a child an Alpaca fleece from its crumpled 'just shorn' state, then, already having been washed and dried, it was carded and spun into the softest of yarn for knitting! We happened to have the fleece in each of its stages. Amber was able to help with the carding and turning the spinning wheel. Join us if you would like to experience this age-old craft too.

Lent begins next week, after Shrove Tuesday, when we finish the rich food with delicious pancakes, before the fasting begins the next day Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent. A time for reflection on the path towards the death of Christ on the Cross on Good Friday, followed by his joyous rising from death to life on Easter Sunday.

If you would like to join a Lent group meeting for discussions through this season, please contact Rev. John Huggins.

There will be four Lent lunches taking place in St. Nicolas church through March. There are posters on the hall noticeboard and the church noticeboards.

They will be on Thursdays, the 9th, the 16th, the 23rd and 30th March, 12-2pm.

Soup and bread will be served, and coffee/tea if you are lucky.

It will be a good time to see and experience the beautiful new oak refectory table in situ.

Any donations will benefit the amazing work of the charity **Christian Aid** worldwide.

Wedding. Please pray for Nicola and David who will marry on 25th March at St. Nicolas.

Finale

It is now late at night and I shall be away tomorrow for a month.

I am looking forward to meeting old friends and passing on news of friends here.

I might even crochet a few 'crowns'.

The house is quiet and the Norfolk Terrier is telling me to go to bed!

How lucky are we who have a bed, a family, friends and even a Norfolk Terrier.

So many to-night will not have these luxuries.

May our Lord keep them safe.



The knitted squares still keep coming! The first blanket has been completed! - See Picture

Sally Alexander

Boughton Malherbe

Parish Council

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Helen Whately MP - Planning consultation can help us get housing right

Ask any Kent MP what issue - come rain or shine - fills their constituency postbag more than any other and I think they'd tell you the same thing: housing.

It's no wonder. We live in a beautiful part of the world and people want to protect it. I feel exactly the same and understand the emails objecting to new homes. But at the same time, I also get emails from people desperate to find somewhere to live that they can afford - people experiencing the consequences of the need for housing outstripping supply.

Besides from its impact on our countryside, we also know that new housing can put extra strain on our local infrastructure – like putting more traffic on our roads or making it harder to see a doctor or a dentist. This is why planning is decided locally. No one knows better what an area needs than the people living in it, and no one cares more about making sure that development goes in the right place.

As a government it's our job to look at the bigger picture, think about our long-term national housing needs and decide how we're going to meet them. It's undeniable that we have a national housing shortage. That's why in 2019 we pledged to build 300,000 new homes a year, and we weren't alone in coming to that conclusion. In fact, all the main parties made similar commitments in their manifestos.

One problem is that because of the current allocations, the scale and pace of the development expected in areas like ours – beyond the protected green belt - has been really tough to keep up with. I know how worrying that's been for local residents, and that's why along with other Kent MPs I've been fighting to get the current mandatory targets reviewed. In fact, at one stage, I met with the Housing Minister three times in a month to get our point across!

Just before Christmas we found out that we'd been successful, when the Government put forward its plans for updating the National Planning Policy Framework. Not only have ministers proposed a move away from mandatory housing targets towards advisory, but there's also tougher rules to make sure developers meet community commitments, and a renewed focus on finding more brownfield sites.

There's a consultation on these plans which gives everyone a chance to have a say. You can find the consultation on the government's website until 2nd March, or if you want to feed in after that date you can email me with your views you can at helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk

Our children and grandchildren deserve the chance to own their own home someday, and that means we do need some more homes in the South East, as well as in towns and cities across the country. But I think where possible that development should be concentrated in urban areas and, crucially, coupled with the investment in infrastructure we need.

It's so important that we hear from everyone. People who've owned their own home for decades, people who've just managed to buy, and people who desperately want to get on the housing ladder someday. Together we need to get housing right for people now, as well as for our children in the future.'

Maidstone Museum – Boughton Malherbe Bronze Age Hoard

Wed 8th Feb 2023 to Sat 17th Jun 2023 - All Day

Secret Stash? Discovering a Bronze Age Hoard

Have you ever found anything buried or buried something yourself? Take a closer look at the Bronze Age Hoard discovered at **Boughton Malherbe**. We take an in depth look at what makes it 'treasure', where it came from, what the pieces are and possible reasons for its burial. What would make you bury a stash of this size? Free entry

Recently a reader of Malherbe Monthly went to this exhibition and these are the direction when you visit the Museum:

If using the lift, turn left, if using the main staircase, turn right, (or ask at reception), just to save anyone a long search!!

It is beautifully presented with lots of information boards and many of the pieces found.

Village Hall News – March Newsletter

Firstly I would like to thank you for supporting the Pancake Evening at the hall on Shrove Tuesday, we had a mention on BBC Radio Kent, it was well attended, there was a lovely atmosphere and I don't think anyone was able to resist a second pancake! We raised just over £70 on the night which will be used to fund future events at the hall.

As usual we have a busy schedule coming up with the following events being hosted at the hall

Flicks in the Sticks Presents Blazing Saddles Friday 17th March at 7pm

Following a great suggestion made by a member of the village at the welcome back event we will be hosting our first film night at the hall. Having canvassed opinion, we have decided to show the classic comedy Blazing Saddles. There will be complementary popcorn and light refreshments. Tickets are £5 per person and can be obtained from myself on 07932 112730 or by emailing bromley@ashleylaw.co.uk.

Spring Craft Fair Sunday 2nd April 10 am to 2pm

We will also be hosting our spring craft fair at the hall on Sunday 2nd of April where you can browse a selection of stalls offering a wide range of interesting crafted items, have a chat with friends and enjoy a cup of tea and some cake. There will be a wide range of stall holders including beauty products, bags and lots of gift ideas. There will also be an Easter Egg hunt for the children. Any donations of cake will be very welcome and we look forward to seeing you on the day.

60's/70's Music Night and Meal on Saturday 22nd April – doors open at 7pm

Dougal & the Blue Cats will be performing live for us at our 60's/70's Night. There will be a complementary glass of fizz on arrival, a three-course themed meal and a fancy dress competition, so dust off those platforms, flairs and tank tops and get ready to boogie! There will be a pay bar and tickets are £15 per person and can be ordered from myself on 07932 112730 or by emailing bromley@ashleylaw.co.uk.

Date For Your Diary - King's Coronation Event Sunday 7th May

We have not finalised arrangements yet but as a committee we are presently liaising with both the Church and the Parish Council with a view to hosting an event to celebrate the King's Coronation and we will let you know as soon as we have more detail on this, but in the meantime if you have any good ideas as to how we should

celebrate the event that you would like to share with us please do not hesitate to let me know. In the meantime please make a note of the date in your diaries.

New Crafting Club at the Hall Friday Mornings 10am to 12 noon

Calling all crafters! A new Craft Group is taking place on Friday mornings at the hall. They currently have spinners, knitters and crocheters but will offer a warm welcome to anyone with a crafting hobby.

If you would like to meet up with a friendly group of like-minded people for a chat a cuppa and some crafting they meet between 10 am and 12 noon. Each session only costs £2 per person with free tea and coffee. They are all happy to share their skills so beginners are welcome! For more information please call Janis on 01622 850898.

They have already been busy designing and making Coronation Crowns to decorate either the home or to display around the village, (please see attached photograph) and if you would like learn how to make these please come along to learn how to make one on a Friday morning.

Easter Craft Workshop – Make an Easter Wreath or Table Decoration - Sunday 26th March 11 to 1

Nicki Oliver is organising an Easter Craft Workshop at the hall on Sunday 26th March where you can make either an Easter Wreath or Table Decoration, all materials are supplied – cost is £35 per person please contact Nicki on either 07900322512 or Nickioliver2006@yahoo.co.uk for further information.

That's all for this month, but if anyone would like to consider hosting a club or activity at the hall it would be great to hear from you.

Jon Thompson Hall Committee Chairman

bromley@ashleylaw.co.uk

www.graftygreenvillagehall.co.uk

Facebook – [graftygreenvillage](https://www.facebook.com/graftygreenvillage)

FLICKS IN THE STICKS
PRESENTS
BLAZING SADDLES



GRAFTY GREEN VILLAGE HALL
FRIDAY 17TH MARCH 7PM
TICKETS £5 CALL JON
THOMPSON ON 07932112730

60s / 70s Music Night & Meal.

Grafty Green Village Hall Sat 22 April



Live music from Dougal & the Blue Cats

Doors open 7.00 pm meal from 7.30 pm

Music from 8.30 fancy dress optional!

Tickets: £15 from Jon Thompson

07932 112730 or bromley@ashleylaw.co.uk

**Coronation Crown as designed by
the Crafting Club**





Spring Craft Fair



Sunday 2nd April 10.00-2.00

Grafty Green Village Hall

Wax Melts

Resin8 Crafts

Handmade cards

Avon

Ickle Bit of Love Crafts

Alan Colledge local artist

Julie Elizabeth Ceramics

Axe Works Arts

Handmade bags

Shepherd Crafts

Handmade candles

Spring wreaths, bouquets and table decorations

Vintage items

Knitted goods

Burscombe Cliff Farm meat products

Handmade crafts from St Nicholas Church

As usual our wonderful tea, coffee and cake stall will be open so that you can come along and meet up with friends.

Plus, children can win a free chocolate treat for solving our 'find the letters' treasure hunt!

We look forward to seeing you all and would welcome cake donations for the tea and coffee stall on the day

Helen Whately

MP for Faversham and Mid Kent

I work for you. If you have a problem you think I can help you with, please contact me or visit me at
one of my surgeries

House of Commons,
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THE HONYWOOD & DOUGLAS CHARITY LENHAM

(Registered Charity No. 211272)

The Trustees hereby give notice that the following
Almshouse accommodation is available:

**A ONE BEDROOM FIRST FLOOR FLAT
and
A ONE BEDROOM GROUND FLOOR FLAT
SITUATED IN LENHAM**

Applicants must be 60 years of age or more, able to look after themselves
and have lived in the Parishes of Lenham or Boughton Malherbe
for at least two years.

Application forms are available by emailing or telephoning
Katherine Costain (Clerk) on clerk.hdc@gmail.com or 07889 562931.

Completed forms should be returned no later than 31st March 2023.



Boughton Malherbe Parish Council

www.boughtonmalherbe.co.uk

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 23rd January 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs B Adams; N Eastwood; R Turner
Clerk Mrs Vickie Ford

In the absence of the Parish Council Chairman, the Clerk opened the meeting at 7.30 pm

M01/01/23 Chairman

RESOLVED: in the absence of Cllr Galton, Cllr Turner to chair the meeting.

Anybody filming or recording this meeting kindly requested to declare it – none

M02/01/23 Apologies

Apologies from Cllr R Galton; Cllr S Prendergast (Kent County Council); and Cllrs M Round and Z Trzebinski (Maidstone Borough Council) were received and accepted.

Cllr Turner informed all present that Cllr Kennaird had resigned.

M03/01/23 Declarations:

Any lobbying – none declared

Any interest in items on the Agenda – Cllr Eastwood declared a personal interest in the Christmas tree.

Any changes to the register of pecuniary interests - none declared

M04/01/23 Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2022 and the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 28th November 2022 were taken as read, confirmed and signed as being an accurate record of the proceedings.

M05/01/23 Public Session – eleven members of public present:

- A member of the public requested an update on the installation of the kissing gates on various rights of way. They expressed particular concern regarding the unsafe condition of one stile along KH427. The Clerk explained that the Parish Council had been obliged to delay replacement of the stile it lay on the footpath as walked rather than as shown on the definitive map. The member of the public asked if landowners were insured in case of accident. Cllr Turner suggested that the Parish Council could go back to Kent County Council (KCC) and the landowner to find out if anything could be done to repair the existing stile.
- A member of the public asked if the Garden Club could use Cllr Galton's tap to water the planter on the Village Green in order to retain it. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to include a special resolution to retain the planter on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.
- A member of the public asked if a kissing gate could be installed further along KH325 beyond the newly-installed gate. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to check if a stile in the location has been identified for replacement.
- A member of the public asked if any action could be taken to repair the wall around the yew tree in Church Road. Cllr Turner stated that nothing could be done by the Parish Council as the tree and wall were on private land. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to contact KCC with regard to the yew tree as it is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

- The Parish Lengthsman asked if the Parish Council would like a monthly report; Members confirmed that it would. Cllr Turner confirmed that feedback (reports, problems etc) should be through the Clerk. The Lengthsman had collected 2 bags of animal offal while litter picking and asked for a black bin to be sited conveniently for the disposal of rubbish.
- A member of the public asked if the Parish Council could put up posters requesting dog walkers to pick up waste. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to find out who would be responsible/authorised to do this.
- A member of the public raised the issue of water running down Liverton Hill. All present agreed that this was a big problem during icy weather, as had been proved recently. Cllr Kennaird had contacted KCC to find out why the road had not been gritted. The Clerk was asked to chase up with KCC.
- A member of the public raised concern regarding the speed of vehicles through Grafty Green and asked what was happening to introduce Speedwatch. Cllr Eastwood stated that the Parish Council's policy was to set up Speedwatch but not enough volunteers had come forward. The member of the public asked if it would be possible to use volunteers from neighbouring parishes. Cllr Turner asked that any volunteers contact the Clerk. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to contact the Community Speedwatch team to ask if volunteers could be shared.
- A member of the public expressed concern regarding the three serious potholes on the Headcorn Road near Offen Farm. The potholes had been reported to KCC but had not been repaired. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to follow up with KCC.
- A member of the public complained of intermittent water supply problems, making it difficult to have a hot shower due to safety valves. They proposed to carry out a leaflet drop to see who else was affected and then organise a meeting with South East Water. Cllr Turner asked the member of the public to notify the Clerk of any meeting. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to raise the matter with South East Water.

M06/01/23 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Report

Cllr Trzebinski had submitted a written report, which Cllr Turner read aloud. The Cost of Living event had been held in Headcorn and a number of people were able to receive advice which would improve their financial position in real terms. Also, subject to Parliamentary approval, Sutton Valence would be added to the existing four parishes in the Headcorn ward, to be called Headcorn and Sutton Valence from 2024.

M07/01/23 Planning Outcomes since 7th November 2022

Noted that:

22/504385/FULL Erection of a single storey rear extension, with a new pitched roof to front porch (Resubmission 22/501981/FULL) at Sunnybank, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green, ME17 2AN: **APPROVED**

22/504842/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate to regularise the existing use and development of outdoor arena, stable, store and tractor shed;

22/504843/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) to establish use of additional land as residential garden;

22/504844/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate to regularise the development of the existing swimming pool, pool house and plant room; and

22/504857/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) for change of use of agricultural land to amenity land with tennis court and formal garden at The Black House, Southernden Road, Egerton, TN27 9BT: **APPROVED**

22/505189/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) for loft conversion which was completed in approximately 2000 at Woodsden Barn, Lenham Road, Headcorn, TN27 9LJ: **WITHDRAWN**

M08/01/23 Local Policing/Community

Police/Crime Report: It was noted that the latest information was for December and 2 crimes had been reported since 7th November 2022.

M09/01/23 Speedwatch: Due to Cllr Kennaird's resignation, no update on Speedwatch was available. **RESOLVED:** to defer discussion of an article on traffic calming for publication in the Malherbe Monthly.

M10/01/23 59 Bus

The Clerk summarised the current position regarding the service and funding: due to the withdrawal of KCC subsidies from 13th February, the service would be reducing to one return journey to Maidstone every Wednesday following the re-opening of Ulcombe Hill in mid February; enquiries were being made into the availability of funding from KCC from July 2023.

RESOLVED: to delegate authority to Cllr Eastwood, Mr John Collins (East of Maidstone Transport Group) and the Clerk to apply for a community transport grant if feasible.

M11/01/23 Litter

It was noted that Liverton Hill was badly affected by littering.

M12/01/23 Highways Improvement Plan

There were no changes to be made.

M13/01/23 Footpaths and Grafty Green Stile Replacement

The Clerk reported that no progress had been made.

M14/01/23 Councillor Reports on any External Meetings

Cllr Turner reported that he, Cllr Galton and the Clerk had attended a meeting with Mr Norman Kemp of Nu-Venture, Mr John Collins, representatives of parish councils along the 59 bus route and Headcorn Parish Council, held in Grafty Green Village Hall on 2nd December 2022. The meeting had discussed the future of the 59 service after the withdrawal of KCC subsidies.

FINANCE

M15/01/23 Balances at the Bank: Balances as at 17th January 2023 were noted:

NatWest current	Nil
NatWest business saver	Nil
Lloyds current	£6,756.82
Lloyds business instant access	£40,013.81
Nationwide	£14,230.15
Cambridge and Counties	£23,685.05

M16/01/23 Receipts since last meeting: £198.26 Cambridge & Counties, £13 Lloyds interest

M17/01/23 Bank Reconciliation

The statement prepared by the Clerk was accepted and signed.

M18/01/23 Statement of receipts and payments against budget

The statement to 31st December 2022 prepared by the Clerk was accepted.

M19/01/23 Cheques to sign: Clerk's expenses £59.05, ted learning Ltd £29.93, Clerk's salary increase from 1.4.22 £273

M20/01/23 Authorisation of payments since the last meeting: Amesis Ltd £84, Mr R Tew (Christmas tree) £239.99, Simon Jones Assoc £480.12, Amesis Ltd £42, V J Ford £1,026.48

M21/01/23 Lloyds Bank

RESOLVED: to open a 32-day notice account with Lloyds bank to sit alongside the current and instant access accounts; and to transfer an initial deposit of £20,000 from the instant access account.

BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2023/24

M22/01/23 Budget 2023/24

Members had before them a revised draft budget, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance and Staffing Committee. Cllr Turner stated that the Parish Services Scheme (PSS) grant was likely to reduce to £262 in 2023/24.

RESOLVED: subject to the PSS grant being amended to £262, to adopt the 2023/24 budget as presented.

M23/01/23 Precept 2023/24

RESOLVED: in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance and Staffing Committee and the agreed budget, to set the 2023/24 precept at £7,113.

Cllr Turner thanked the Clerk for her work on the budget and explained that a Parish precept of £7,113 would result in no increase per Band D equivalent household next year.

M24/01/23 Lengthsman Contract

RESOLVED: to increase the rate paid for lengthsman's services to £14 per hour.

RESOLVED: to order a black rubbish bin for the Village Green for the lengthsman's use, storage site to be agreed.

M25/01/23 Electricity for Christmas tree lights

RESOLVED: to approve remittance of £50 to the King's Head pub.

M26/01/23 Finance and Staffing Committee Terms of Reference

RESOLVED: to adopt the revised Terms of Reference, as recommended by the Finance and Staffing Committee.

M27/01/23 Clerk's Salary

RESOLVED: to increase in Clerk's salary 2022/23 by £1 per hour, in line with NJC pay scales and in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance and Staffing Committee

Cllr Turner closed the meeting at 8.50 pm

	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23	Actual to 31.12.22	Forecast to 31.3.23	Budget 2023/24
	£	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS					
Precept	5,731	7,005	7,005	7,005	7,113
Parish Services Scheme	409	327	327	327	262
Bank interest			226	276	300
Misc					
VAT Refund	200	150	-	677	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	6,340	7,482	7,558	8,285	7,675
Balance brought forward from previous year			85,966	85,966	22,844
PAYMENTS					
Staff Costs - Clerk's Salary	2,498	4,196	3,079	4,470	4,700
Other Costs					
Village Green Maintenance:	500	500			
Grass etc			203	500	500
Trees			1,175	1,175	900
Fencing			-	200	500
Village Hall Hire	250	250	-	250	250
Christmas Tree	300	300	240	300	350
Christmas functions	300	-	-	-	400
Litter Collection/lengthsman	100	-	424	600	800
PRoW replacement gates	-	-	792	2,000	2,600
Community grants:					
Churchyard Maintenance	500	500	-	500	500
Platinum Jubilee event	-	-	793	793	-
Village Hall Centenary celebration	-	-	500	500	-
Air Ambulance			50	50	50
Community Grants e.g. Coronation event					1,000
Emergency Plan		-	-	-	-
Training Courses	300	300	170	300	300
Internal/external Auditor	70	100	90	90	300
Insurance	370	400	489	489	500
KALC Membership	300	300	229	229	250
SLCC membership fees (Clerk)	-	-	120	120	120
Contingency (incl defib spares)	50	-	238	238	408
Chairman's Expenses	50	-	-	-	-
CPRE Membership	36	36	36	36	36
Stationery, postage, admin	200	200	217	500	500
Total Other Costs	3,326	2,886	5,766	8,870	10,264
Repairs Fund contribution	500	-	-	-	-
Village Green Fund	-	400	-	-	-
TOTAL PAYMENTS	6,324	7,482	8,845	13,340	14,964
Ringfenced reserves (CIL)				4,358	
Earmarked reserve (Village Green)				52,899	
Contingencies					
Emergency reserve					7,500
Clerk additional hours				810	2,010
Community bus					5,000
CLOSING BALANCE				22,844	1,045

Grafty Gourmet

Pork, cider and apples are a great combination in cooking, for a reason. This great recipe blends both the sweet and the salty flavours together for a real winner !

SAUSAGE & CIDER CASSEROLE

1 tablespoon of sunflower oil	2 tablespoons of plain flour
8 good quality pork sausages	300ml of dry cider
200g of smoked bacon lardons	300ml of fresh chicken stock
50g of butter	8-10 fresh sage leaves, chopped
2 medium onions, chopped	1 tablespoon of wholegrain mustard
2 garlic cloves, crushed	2 small eating apples
2 small parsnips, chopped	A squeeze of lemon to serve
3 large celery sticks, chopped	(optional)
1 tablespoon of tomato purée	

1. On the hob, heat the oil in a large flameproof casserole dish (with a lid). Add the sausages and brown them all over, then transfer to a plate.
2. Add the bacon lardons to the casserole dish and fry for 5 minutes until the fat is crisp and brown. Transfer to the plate with the sausages.
3. Drain off all but 1 tablespoon of the oil from the casserole dish and add half of the butter and, when melted, add the onions and garlic. Cover and cook for 10 minutes, stirring now and then, until soft and lightly browned.
4. Take off the lid, stir in the parsnips and celery and cook for 2 minutes more. Stir in the tomato purée and flour, then gradually stir in the cider and stock and bring to the boil.
5. Return the sausages and bacon to the casserole dish, then stir in the sage and mustard. Cover and put in the oven and cook for 40 minutes.
6. When the casserole is ready, melt the remaining butter in a non-stick frying pan. Quarter, core and slice the apples into wedges. Add them to the pan and fry gently for 2-3 minutes until golden all over and just tender. Season with a little salt and pepper.
7. Remove the casserole from the oven, stir in the apples and season to taste (add a squeeze of lemon if you think it needs it). Serve with baked potatoes or mash and greens.

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Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way

Phantom of the Open

Friday 10th March

Performance begins 19.30, doors open 19.00

Running time 1hr 42 mins

Follow your dreams – that’s what this comedy-drama Phantom of the Open (certificate 12, 2021) tells us. Based on a true story, Maurice Flitcroft– played brilliantly by Mark Rylance – heads a cast of eccentric characters in this heart-warming tale. Maurice won the reputation of being ‘Britain’s worst golfer’ when – ever the optimist – he gained entry to the 1976 British Open Golf Championship qualification round. So what? you might ask. Well, he had never played a stroke of golf in his life, and the staid golfing elite were, to say the least, horrified. But Maurice had made his dreams come true and that’s the message that his incredible story gives us. It’s directed by Craig Roberts. Whether you are a golf fan or not, do come along and share Maurice’s journey to his own special stars in this lovely British comedy.

As well as showing a great film on March 10th, we’ll also be revealing the fabulous line up of films that we’ll be showing as part of our Spring and Summer 2023 programme. There’ll be more about future films in the April issue of Focus.

Please get in touch for more information, to join our mailing list or to become a member. **Admission:** members £4, non-members £5 **Annual membership:** £6 (over 16’s only)



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www.lenhamfilmclub.org



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Yoga Classes in Grafty Green Village Hall with Sue Burch

Monday and Thursday mornings at 9.30 and Wednesday evenings at 7
Classes are an hour and a half; approximately 70 minutes of physical practice, 10 minutes breathing techniques, meditation and 10 minutes full relaxation. Yoga is a mindful practice; bringing strength and increased flexibility. The breathing practices reduce stress and calms the busy mind together with meditation which aids processing thoughts, reduces distractions, improves memory and sharpens the intellect.

To join a class – call 01622 850381 or 07803 962339

Saturday morning walks from Grafty Green– 4th March and 8th April from the village green; meet at 9.30.

Sue Burch will lead these walks taking in the wonderful views and enjoying both woodland and pasture environments.

There are regular morning walks, Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays each with a leader, and from varying starting venues usually around 3 to 4 miles in length. To enroll in this scheme email Jan Enever – jenever@btinternet.com.

Fresh Fish Tuesdays!

For many years now Mel has been delivering a weekly fresh fish selection from Hastings to customers in Grafty Green on Tuesday afternoons between 3 and 3.30 – telephone to book her to call at your house on 07976 435217; a quick and efficient service!

Music Notes for March 2023 – B Hardy

Some real quality concerts this month, many with religious overtones as it is Lent and Easter approaches. We still suffer from the problem of clashing dates! Here then is the list:

- **Saturday 11th March**, 7.30pm at All Saints Church, Maidstone, ME15 6YE Maidstone Wind Symphony's concert is entitled "Spring awakening" and consists of 20th century and contemporary wind band music, including works by Peter Graham, Percy Grainger, John Mackey and David Maslanka. Tickets at the door or <https://www.maidstonewindsymphony.org/cal-events43.html>.

- **Saturday 18th March** 7.30pm at St. Nicholas Church, Allington, ME16 0DE, Maidstone Choral Union's concert includes Fauré's *Requiem* and *Messe Basse* plus works by Mendelssohn and Elgar. This will be MCU's last concert directed by Martin Hindmarsh as he is retiring after 17 years in the post. And he has hand-picked the soloists. Tickets at the door or 07752 923084
- **Saturday 25th March** 7.30pm at Mote Hall, Maidstone, ME15 7RN Maidstone Symphony Orchestra's concert includes Richard Strauss's *Horn Concerto No.2* and Bruckner's *Symphony No.4 "Romantic"*. Tickets 07817 429143 and at the door.
- **Also on Saturday 25th March**, 7.30 pm at Holy Cross Church, Bearsted, ME14 4EE Bearsted Choral Society sing Stainer's *Crucifixion* and items by J S Bach. Tickets 01622 734908
- **And sadly again on 25th** but further to the South, so perhaps to a different audience, 7.00pm at St Mildred's Church Tenterden TN30 6AT, Sutton Valence Choral perform J S Bach's *St. John Passion*. Tickets from pamela.hipkins@btinternet.com or at the door.

As regards anniversaries I have to confess to finding no anniversaries of anyone of musical significance in March 2023 so I have cheated by moving to 1st April which is the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sergei Rachmaninoff, Russian composer, pianist, and conductor (1873–1943) .

Rachmaninoff is widely considered one of the finest pianists of his day and, as a composer, one of the last great representatives of Romanticism in Russian classical music. Early influences of Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and other Russian composers gave way to a thoroughly personal idiom notable for its song-like melodicism,



expressiveness and rich orchestral colours. The piano is featured prominently in his compositional output and he made a point of using his skills as a performer to fully explore the expressive and technical possibilities of the instrument. Born into a musical family, he took up the piano at the age of four. Following the Russian Revolution, he and his family left Russia, and in 1918 they settled in New York City. With his primary source of income coming from performances as a pianist and a conductor, Rachmaninoff had little time to compose. Because of this, he completed just six works between 1918 and 1943, including the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, *Symphony No. 3*, and *Symphonic Dances*. By 1942, his declining health led to his relocation to

Beverly Hills, California, and later became a US citizen a few weeks before he died of advanced melanoma in 1943.

Link Word Puzzle - Answers at the back (don't look first!)

	Find the missing word?
1	____ Jean Baker. Marilyn Monroe's real name
2	The _____, who sung 'New Kid in Town'
3	____ Ball, Tommy Cannon's comedy partner
4	Karen _____, Singer & drummer who formed a duo with her brother
5	Norman Stanley _____, Slade prison most famous resident
6	____ Starr, Beatles Drummer
7	David _____, 'Hero's' singer
8	____ Senna, Late Brazilian 3-time champion
9	Sue _____, Former presenter of BBC's 'A Question of Sport'
10	____ Doolittle, Heroine of 'My Fair Lady'

	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3	Answer
1	Finger	Precious	Toe	Little
2	Film	Shooting	Sign	
3	Alarm	Start	Teeth	
4	Buck's	Store	Phone	
5	Middle	Quake	Worm	
6	Cigarette	Share	Title	
7	Coal	Jack	Mac	
8	Bolt	Storm	Struck	
9	Hail	Lime	Wall	
10	Card	Razor	Shooter	
11	Beauty	Board	Jack	
12	Engine	Place	Wild	
13	At	Intestine	Scale	
14	Imaging	Spring's	Unit	
15	Ice	Iron	Old	
16	Account	Business	Travel	



Save Our Heath Lands (SOHL) needs your help!

The fight goes on!

The initial findings from the inspector, in relation to Maidstone Borough Council's review of the local plan, has been made public on the Lenham Parish Council Website.

The inspector has given MBC clearance to proceed to Stage two, however there are some significant issues which need resolving for him to find the plan overall "sound". The most significant issue, for those of us in Lenham, is that although he agreed that the proposal to develop significant housing in what is described as "the broad Lenham location" was an approach, he found the specific policy through which MBC proposed to deliver this "not sound". For it to be deemed sound there are significant pieces of work that have to be completed to the inspector's satisfaction, many of these require agreement from third parties, such as Network Rail. This is not something that will easily be addressed.

We continue to work closely with Lenham Parish Council to pool our expertise and resources available to us to robustly defend the village and its precious green space.

Our attention now turns to prepare our fighting fund for the next phase of the Local Plan Review. We need to be financially prepared to legally challenge the local plan at every opportunity. To do this, we will need financial assistance ready to move fast and at a point it could be our last opportunity to fight Heathlands becoming an allocation site in the Local plan.

We now need to ask for your help. We've resisted as much as possible asking for large sums of money. However, we are going to need in the region of £50,000 in the event that we take the plan to court.

Please help us by donating as much as you can to our fighting fund. You can find out more on how to donate at www.saveourheathlands.co.uk/donate

Thank you for your continued support.

Grafty Green Gardening Club

Program of Events 2023

Date	Speaker/Event	Topic
January 10	Dr Mick Lynn and AGM	Which came first the Bee or the Flower
February 7	Steven Harmer	The story of Plant Hunting
March 7	Kevin Tooher	Getting the best out of Composting
April 4	Caroline Halfpenny and Spring show	A Gardener's response to Climate Change.
Saturday April 29	10 am Plant sale on the Green	
Sunday May 14	Coach outing to Leonardslee	
June 6	Outing to Faversham – Edible Culture	
July 4	Outing to Elmside, Ulcombe - Rhian Banham's Garden	
Sunday August 13	Coach outing to Hyde Hall	
September 4	Victoria Golding and Autumn show	Marden Meadow
September 8,9,10	Weekend away in Dorset, staying in Weymouth, visit Chawton House and Gardens, Abbotsbury, Athelhampton House and Garden and Holme Gardens	
October 3	Lou Nicholls	The Winter Garden
November 7	Christine Bartlett	Healthy House Plants, Happy Home
December 5	Social – wine and cheese with slide-show	

On March 7th our next speaker is Kevin Tooher who will be advising us on the important subject of 'Composting'.

Our evening talks take place in the Village Hall at Grafty and commence at 7.30. If you still have not subscribed for this year you can do so, to the Treasurer on the evening or come as a visitor. Entry is £2.00 for members and £4.00 for visitors, the cost for membership is £5.00 for a whole year and once again there is no price rise for 2023!

In April our speaker will be Caroline Halfpenny on gardening for climate change, and, on the same evening we will be holding our Spring Show, a schedule for the evening will be available nearer to the time.

In our Gardens: - Many plants can be grown in containers for us to enjoy as gardens get smaller. With imagination and a liking for our favourite plants we can grow shrubs and small trees, herbaceous perennials and a whole range of alpines and ground cover plants. Watering is important, however water- retentive crystals can assist with this. Feeding is also necessary.

Bush and Shrub roses can be pruned now remembering to cut off any remaining hips or dead heads. in the kitchen garden prepare seedbeds when the soil allows and start sowing regularly. Herbs too can be sown if they are hardy and dividing too of existing clumps.

Carole Frost Co-Secretary. Enquiries (01622) 757536 (evenings are best)



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Anyone without photo ID should apply for Voter Authority Certificate now

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) is encouraging everyone who votes in a polling station and doesn't have photograph identification to apply now so that they can vote at the local election in May.

The Elections Act 2022 means that from May 2023 voters across Britain will need to show photo ID to be able to cast their ballot in person. Maidstone will be holding its next local election on Thursday 4 May. Anyone who is registered but does not have one of the approved types of photo ID will be able to apply to get a free Voter Authority Certificate up until 25 April.

The Council is asking anyone who doesn't have the necessary ID to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, or arrange for a postal vote, now so that they receive it in good time.

Angela Woodhouse, Returning Officer for Maidstone Borough Council said:

The requirement for photo ID for voters when arriving at the polling station is a big change this year. We realise that there may be some residents who don't have ID that meets the requirements so we are asking them to apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate now so they can still cast their vote at a polling station.

It is really important that everyone who has the right to vote does so - as every single vote counts and we want to make sure that all our residents who are eligible can do so. If anyone doesn't have a valid form of ID, please apply now, or arrange a postal vote, in good time so that you can vote at the election on 4 May.

More information on Voter ID and an application for the Voter Authority Certificate can be made using the UK Gov Website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>

A wide range of photographic identification which will be acceptable at polling stations include:

- Driver's licences
- Passports
- Some concessionary travel passes
- PASS cards
- Ministry of Defence identity cards
- Photocard parking permits issued as part of the Blue Badge scheme

- Free Voter Cards, provided by local authorities

Expired photographic identification will also be accepted if the photograph is of a good enough likeness to allow polling station staff to confirm the identity of the holder.

To find out more about voter photo ID and applying for a Voter Authority Certificate please go to: www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Christian Message March 2023

How would you introduce yourself to a stranger in ten words or less? You might like to think about it now...

How each of us answers that question tells the other person- and ourselves- so much about what we think is important about ourselves and our identity. You might say, "I am the son (or daughter) of somebody important, or "I am Fred and I have always lived in Grafty Green" (apologies Fred if you're out there), or "I'm Rachel and I'm a computer programmer", or "I'm Jo and I go to such and such a school", and so on. So, is inheritance or location or our job or our school what defines our identity?

Identity, and how you find it, is a really big deal these days. Bookshops are still brimming with books about how to find ourselves, and for younger folk especially, appearance and social media profile can mean everything. Sexuality and gender are also key factors for us all.

But for Christians, our identity is located deeply in the love of Jesus. In the Len Valley Benefice our verse for the year is, "In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith". What does this mean? It means that by receiving the love of God we are free to be secure in whom we are. We are people who know that God loves us, warts and all. We are beloved, like the best-loved child. That means that we can be free to love others, whether the 'other' has the same inheritance, is from the same location, does the same job and so on.

None of this means that all those other things about identity are unimportant, but it does mean that deep within our being, our personality, there can be a security from which everything else flows.

It also doesn't mean that this is just 'easy'. Learning that we're loved and learning to love is a life's work. Why don't you join us? What could be a better mission in life?

John P. Huggins (01622 850280)

Len Valley Benefice March 2023



Everybody is welcome

"In Christ Jesus you are all children
of God through faith"

Gal 3:26 (NRSV)

Wednesday 1st March

9.30am Lenham: Holy
Communion (BCP)

Sunday 5th March

9.30am Boughton Malherbe:
Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast
Church

11.00am Harrietsham: Family
friendly Morning Worship

11.00am Lenham: Holy
Communion

Sunday 12th March

9.30am Harrietsham: Holy
Communion

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast
Church followed by joining the
market.

11.00am Lenham: Holy
Communion

11.00am Ulcombe: Holy
Communion

3.30pm Boughton Malherbe:
Choral Evensong

Sunday 19th March –

Mothering Sunday

8.00am Lenham: Holy
Communion (BCP)

9.30am Boughton Malherbe:
Holy Communion

9.30am Harrietsham: Holy
Communion

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast
Church

11.00am Lenham: Morning
Worship

11.00am Ulcombe: Holy
Communion

Sunday 26th March

10.30am Benefice Holy
Communion at Ulcombe

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"I am eternally loved"

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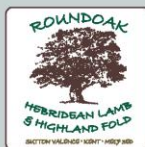
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Answers to the Quiz and Missing Word Puzzle

	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3	Answer
1	Finger	Precious	Toe	Little
2	Film	Shooting	Sign	Star
3	Alarm	Start	Teeth	False
4	Buck's	Store	Phone	Mega
5	Middle	Quake	Worm	Earth
6	Cigarette	Share	Title	Holder
7	Coal	Jack	Mac	Tar
8	Bolt	Storm	Struck	Thunder
9	Hall	Lime	Wall	Stone
10	Card	Razor	Shooter	Sharp
11	Beauty	Board	Jack	Black
12	Engine	Place	Wild	Fire
13	At	Intestine	Scale	Large
14	Imagining	Spring's	Unit	Thermal
15	Ice	Iron	Old	Age
16	Bird	Bubble	Mat	Bath

	Find the missing word?
1	Norma Jean Baker. Marilyn Monroe's real name
2	The Eagles , who sung 'New Kid in Town'
3	Bobby Ball, Tommy Cannon's comedy partner
4	Karen Carpenter , Singer & drummer who formed a duo with her brother
5	Norman Stanley Fletcher , Slade prison most famous resident
6	Ringo Starr, Beatles Drummer
7	David Bowie , 'Hero's' singer
8	Ayrton Senna, Late Brazilian 3-time champion
9	Sue Barker , Former presenter of BBC's 'A Question of Sport'
10	Eliza Doolittle, Heroine of 'My Fair Lady'

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