

# Benenden Magazine

August 2021







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# Editorial



I'm not sure how you're all feeling about your new-found freedom from the Government's now defunct Covid restrictions. In fact, I'm not even sure how I'm feeling about it. Boris says that a lot of the things we couldn't do, we can do now, although it would be good if we didn't do them too much. Equally vaguely, some of the things we had to do, we sort of don't have to do now, although it would be good if we still did them when people asked us to. All of which relying on the good sense of the great British public sounds positively misguided to me.

No doubt the good people of Benenden will confound my broader expectations by behaving sensibly and considerately, as they usually do, even when they're a bit sceptical. But how will I react to being allowed to go into the community shop maskless? Will it feel like going to pick up a pint of milk with no trousers on? Or will the old normal reassert itself pretty quickly?

I can see myself carrying a mask and putting it on when asked to by shopkeepers and pub landlords, to avoid a) worrying the vulnerable and b) being turfed out without a pint. After all, people still have valid health concerns and businesses to run, so why would I want to ride roughshod over those?

Even the annual Jazz 'n' Blues shindig in Iden Green had to make a few concessions. It fell a couple of awkward days before the lifting of restrictions, so there were plenty of signs and sanitisers and a bit of social distancing by way of compliance, but there was also sunshine and blue skies and beer. It may not have been rock 'n' roll, but everybody seemed to like it, as you'll see from the pictures on page 21 and the back cover.

So let's hope this is the way forward: enjoying our first glimpse of what things used to be like, but being sure not to use it as an excuse to frighten the understandably nervous and reticent. It could be the start of a proper summer for everybody, as long as we don't go daft.

Peter Thomas, Co-Editor

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# Church Calendar

## St George's Church

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 [revdavidcommander@gmail.com](mailto:revdavidcommander@gmail.com) (day off: Thursday)

Churchwarden: David Collard 241944 [julia.collard@btinternet.com](mailto:julia.collard@btinternet.com)

[www.benendenchurch.org](http://www.benendenchurch.org) 850849 [benendenchurch@gmail.com](mailto:benendenchurch@gmail.com)

Please inform the Rector or Churchwardens if you, or anyone else, is ill.

Each 10am service from St George's hopefully will be live-streamed. If this is not possible, then it will be recorded, and the video available the next day on [www.benendenchurch.org](http://www.benendenchurch.org)

Sunday 1 August	8am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst	10am Communion
Sunday 8 August	8am Communion	10am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst
Sunday 15 August	8am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst	10am Communion
Sunday 22 August	8am Communion	10am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst
Sunday 29 August	8am Communion	10am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst

## Mission Church, Sandhurst

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 [revdavidcommander@gmail.com](mailto:revdavidcommander@gmail.com) (day off: Thursday)

Every Tuesday 10am Communion

## Iden Green Congregational Church

Pastor: Tobin Bird 240027 [www.idengreen.org.uk](http://www.idengreen.org.uk)

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

For those shielding the 10am Morning Worship service is also broadcast on our YouTube channel: search for 'Iden Green Congregational Church'.

## The Roman Catholic Chapel of Our Lady and St Joseph TN17 4EL

Fr Barry Grant 713364 [www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org](http://www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org)

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

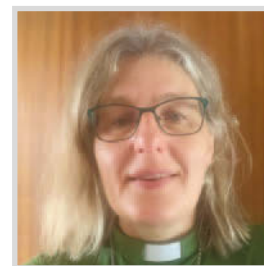
## From the Parish Registers

Weddings  
17 July Rebecca Myles and Rupert Munro-Faure  
30 July Georgina Wade and Phillip Rawlings  
31 July Vicky Rukin and Richard Hayes

Funerals  
28 July Maureen Clayson Funeral Kent and Sussex Crematorium  
28 July Jill O'Flaherty Interment  
2 30 July Shirley Gooseman Funeral Vinters Park Crematorium



# Rector's Letter



## A new beginning at St George's

Hello. How are you? Please let me introduce myself: I'm your new minister - and yet, I have been with you since September last year. How can this be?

You see, as a Curate in the Church of England, my first year here with you was spent as a Deacon. The Deacon is the first Order, the foundation for all priestly ministry in the Church. Deacons 'are called to serve the community in which they are set' - so that's why you will often see me behind the counter in the café on Mondays or Tuesdays - literally serving you coffee, or sausage rolls, whichever is your greater need! I have tried to serve you in all the ways that have been possible, although it has often felt like a bit of an uphill struggle, but there have been ways and means to keep popping up in the life of the village.

On the first Saturday in July, I was made a priest by our bishop, Bishop Rose, by anointing and prayer and the laying on of hands at Holy Trinity in Folkestone. It was a very joyful occasion, although restrictions meant that sadly not many from our parishes could take part in person. One who was there was, of course, Revd David Commander, who is training me during these three years of curacy. His support has been wonderful and I am learning so much from him.

So, now I am not only your deacon, I am also one of your priests. This doesn't mean that my service stops. I will still be there with the 'cuppa' and the roll, but I will also serve you another bread and cup: Holy Communion on Sundays, or on Tuesdays in Sandhurst Mission Church. This is at the heart of every priest's life, the one thing that makes all the other parts we play make sense. The coming together as a congregation to remember all that Jesus did for us in his death and resurrection, is what makes church church. That, and the people.

I am at last able to take weddings and baptisms, as well as funerals, which I have taken for a long time, even as a lay person, and it will be an absolute privilege to work with you, as we plan and celebrate these milestones in your family's life together.

When life gets tough, then I am only a phone call (01233 820100) or an email away (details on the church website). If you, or anyone you know, could benefit from a visit, don't hesitate to get in touch. Or maybe you want Communion, but can't get to church? Then I and my lovely new-but-old Home Communion set, a wonderful gift from the family of Revd Sheila and Barry Smallman, can come to your home.

As things open up a little, it will be wonderful to meet more and more of you at different village events, or just as I walk around the village. Please come over and say hello! Don't be put off by the awkward spelling of my name - if you can say Yvonne, then you can say Ylva. It is Swedish, and an old Viking name, and so am I - both Swedish and a bit of an old Viking, in the best possible way!

Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie, Curate

# Village Calendar

## July

Saturday 31 Bingo, St George's Club, 8pm

## August

Saturday 14 Cornhole Tossing, St George's Club, 8pm

Tuesday 17 Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm p.9

Tuesday 17 Iden Green and Benenden WI, History of an ancient Kent farmhouse,  
Iden Green Pavilion, 2pm p.15

Sat 21-Sun 22 Art in a Topiary Garden, Balmoral Cottage, Benenden, 11-5pm p.9

Saturday 28 Quiz Night, St George's Club, 8pm

Sat 28-Mon 30 Art in a Topiary Garden, Balmoral Cottage, Benenden, 11-5pm p.9

## Benenden Bowls Club

Thursdays, April-September, on the recreation field, practice night, 6.30pm

## Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

Fridays during term time in St George's Church, 9-11.15am

The Village Calendar is starting to fill up. Until we emerge fully from the trials of the pandemic, we'll carry on sharing David Commander's list of guiding principles to steer us all through the confusion. We hope they may be a help until normal service is completely resumed.

## Guiding principles

Our approach to making decisions about specific events, services or issues can be guided by these principles:

**Be calm and trust** the advice given by relevant authorities.

**Protect the vulnerable.** It's not just your health, but the health of others who may be more vulnerable.

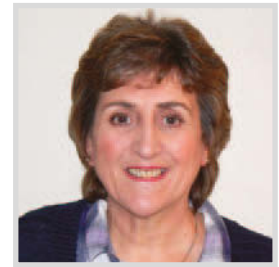
**Continue to love our neighbour.** Respect their needs and concerns as much as your own - but safely. If you have a neighbour living alone and isolated they would appreciate a call.

**Be transparent and open** with one another, sharing accurate and up to date information.

**Be creative** when making decisions - "how can we do this differently in these circumstances".



# Parish Council



The parish council is the third tier of local government for the Benenden area. We are required to act as representatives of the community and as informed and responsible decision-makers within the limitations of our authority on highways, planning, environment and maintenance, to name but a few.

Councillors come from a wide variety of backgrounds, the common denominator being an interest in our community and a desire to help maintain what we have that we all cherish, whilst moving with the times and improving and enhancing where we can.

We have a number of village assets that are the responsibility of the parish council and require maintenance and preservation. These include the war memorial, the iconic red telephone boxes, the public toilets, the bus stops and the two Grade II Listed wells in Benenden and Iden Green. The Maintenance & Environment sub-committee of the BPC takes the lead on these issues and is currently engaged with the repairs needed to both of the wells and to the village sign on the Green in Benenden. This sub-committee covers a wide range of issues including litter, hedgerows and verges, trees, footpaths, protecting wildlife and encouraging biodiversity.

One particular bugbear of many of us is litter. There are numerous litter bins and in the most part people are very good at using them as intended, though it may be that the bins are not located as conveniently as they might be. I am reviewing their number and locations to see if they meet our present need.

One of our local farmers told me recently that he finds that bagged dog-waste is a perpetual problem for him when he is out working in his fields. Walkers, some exercising their own dogs, have also complained about this when using public footpaths and bridleways. It is accepted by TWBC that bagged dog-waste can be binned, so, if you are not near a litter bin whilst out with your dog, take it with you until you are, or (preferably) take the bag home and pop it in your own household waste bin; but please do not leave it dangling from a hedge, tree branch or gate post.

Julie Lewis, BPC Vice Chair  
[julielewis@benendenparishcouncil.org](mailto:julielewis@benendenparishcouncil.org)

Caroline Levett, Benenden Parish Council Clerk  
01580 240371 [clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org)  
For more information see our website [www.benendenparishcouncil.org](http://www.benendenparishcouncil.org) or find us on Facebook

**Parish Council Meeting**  
No meeting in August



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# Talking Point

## What makes a village?

According to Google, it is “bigger than a hamlet but smaller than a town”. Clarity on this point seems lacking - a hamlet also being described as a village. A rural location is not essential, as some metropolitan areas are described as villages. Population numbers of 500-2,500 are suggested.

But surely a village is more than just geography and population? As a heavily pregnant young woman moving here in the 1980s, I remember our first day, when a complete stranger knocked on the door, offered a shepherd's pie, and said: “I'm sure you are exhausted, please take this, and welcome to Benenden.” Her kindness perhaps encapsulates something of what makes a village, and she remains a neighbour and friend.

So, then, kindness is part of what makes a village. Feeling welcomed makes one want to reach out, say “hello” to strangers and start to be a part of things. Acknowledging others as they pass by, a brief “good morning” on a regular basis can turn into a conversation, and perhaps a friendship. Involvement in local clubs and organisations, volunteering, litter-picking, parish council, schools, playgroups, churches, using village shops and pubs, leads to an invisible network of links and connections. This is social capital, and societies with higher levels of it are more likely to thrive and prosper. This was exemplified by the lightning fast formation of the Benenden Action Group at the start of the pandemic, the outstanding service of the village shop, and the willingness of hundreds of volunteers to give of time, skills and, indeed, money to support our community.

Sitting on The Green on a sunny afternoon, watching the cricket, seems archetypal. The thwack of leather on willow, perhaps accompanied by a local beer from the Bull, is the epitome of village life. But the rules of cricket are complex and take time to learn, so acknowledgement of this by old hands is important if new players or spectators are to feel included. So perhaps inclusivity and acceptance of difference are also part of what makes a village. Our Neighbourhood Development Plan group has had to incorporate many differing perspectives and has done so with courtesy, diligence and good humour. The strength of a community comes from its ability to balance different perspectives and hold in mind the common good.

There's something, too, about history and building on the past. Learning from those who've lived here (much longer than I) and remembering past residents, buildings, amenities - we used to have four pubs - gives a sense of continuity and being part of the whole.

Kindness, relationships, service, inclusivity, history, community. The interconnectedness that makes us human, that makes us valuable - a village.

What do you think?

Mary Cruse

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## Fete storage plea

We are running out of storage space for donated items for the village fete. It is going to be a huge event and we urgently need somewhere to safely store items until 18 September. We would be very grateful to know if you have a spare garage, garden shed or even a dry unused lock-up that we could borrow for a few weeks, please email: Tracy Claridge [maisonsicheluk@tlclaridge.co.uk](mailto:maisonsicheluk@tlclaridge.co.uk)

## Raj fronts fete auction

This year there will be a new attraction at the village fete: an auction to be conducted by our star auctioneer, Raj Bisram of BBC's Antiques Road Trip fame, who will select 20 special lots donated by generous villagers and sell them during the afternoon.

If you have anything special that might be of interest, please email [cathy.presgrave@gmail.com](mailto:cathy.presgrave@gmail.com) with a brief description and a photograph of the item. Raj will then choose the most appropriate ones, with those not listed being added to the bric-a-brac stall, for sale later.

These items might include a small piece of furniture; a painting; a piece of silver; something you or your family have inherited that you don't want anymore.

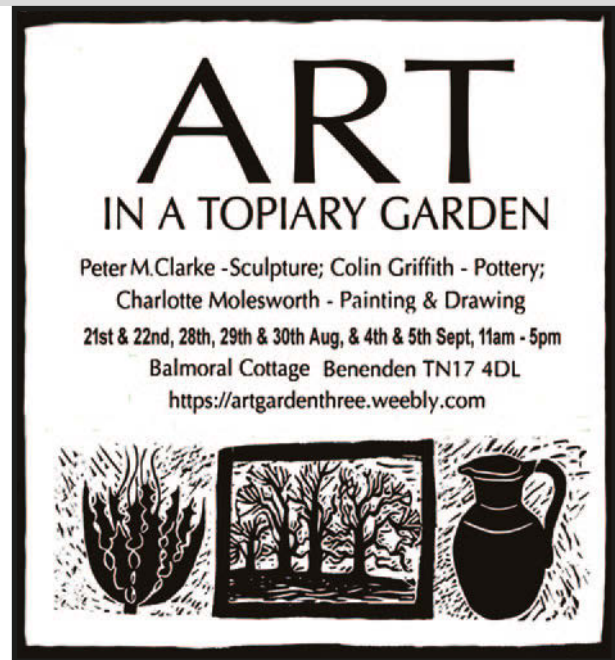
A list of the items selected for auction will be displayed in the community shop window the week before the fete and details will be available on the day. So, if you have something that you think might help us raise money for St George's Church, please get in touch. Thank you so much.

Sally Ann Marks

## Fete bric-a-brac

After two years of collecting, the bric-a-brac stall at the village fete will be mammoth, but we are under-staffed and over-aged and would welcome more help to set up and run the stall on 17 and 18 September. Do please call:

Maggy Hoyt 240700 or 07485 061265



## Grants for students

The Gibbon & Buckland Charity, which started in 1602 with the gift of the school house at the foot of The Green, still gives some support to the primary school, but uses most of its income to give student grants. These are available for any young person under the age of 25 who is resident in, and has been resident in, the parish of Benenden for not less than three years and is either in further education or in other ways getting prepared for working life. Trustees will also give consideration to applications for grants for gap year projects of educational worth. If you could benefit, or know someone who could, please ask for an application form at the community shop, or from the clerk to the charity at [gibbonandbuckland@gmail.com](mailto:gibbonandbuckland@gmail.com). The latest date for applications is 30 September.

## Village Lunch

The village lunch will take place on Tuesday 17 August in the village hall at 12.30pm. £5 each and all welcome. Please could you let us know if you would like to come by Thursday 12 August.

Kay Martin 240566

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## Benenden Players

We need a sound engineer to operate the mixing desk for the annual Benenden Players panto, which will be held in the village hall at the end of January 2022. It would suit a retired person with experience in the operation of 24-channel mixers, radio mics and wired mics, but training for someone with aptitude but no experience would be given to the successful applicant, if required. The Players team provide their services on a voluntary basis and not only have great fun in putting on performances but give great pleasure to the community!

Please apply by email to:

Graham Beveridge 07850 718416  
gbeveridge2@gmail.com

## Village Hall

It's summertime and things finally feel like they are starting to get back to normal again. We're hoping for some wonderful weather throughout August and a month filled with barbecues, reuniting with much-missed loved ones and fun in the sun.

August is often a quiet time for the village hall as many of our regulars take a well-earned break, but that means there is ample opportunity to throw a party with all those people you've been missing so dearly over the past months. Do drop us an email or give us a call if you want to have a chat about pricing and availability, we're always happy to help.

If you're looking for something a bit more constructive to fill the holidays with, Ami Piper, our wonderful dance teacher is holding a series of summer workshops in the hall. For information on those sessions and regular term-time classes, please contact [ami@amipiperschoolofdance.co.uk](mailto:ami@amipiperschoolofdance.co.uk).  
Holly Clayson, Manager 07419 989830  
[enquiries@benendenvillagehall.org](mailto:enquiries@benendenvillagehall.org)  
[www.benendenvillagehall.org](http://www.benendenvillagehall.org)

## Parent, Teacher and Friends Association

It is summertime and our thoughts turn to the school year at an end, with a truly heartfelt thanks to the parents, staff and the committee for their unwavering support over a frequently challenging few months, but perhaps most importantly, enormous gratitude and admiration for the whole school staff. The resolute cheerfulness, positivity and professionalism demonstrated every day to our children has been humbling to behold, and we as a community are extraordinarily fortunate to have such dedicated and delightful people at the heart of all that is good, in times of such uncertainty and difficulty.

But we made it, and we look forward to the new school year after a welcome break, during which we invite you to further expand your culinary repertoire by way of our cookery book, lovingly curated by you all and just £10 from the village shop, butcher, school office and PTFA.

The village fete makes its very welcome return to The Green on 18 September from 12-4pm, so do, please, save the date for yourselves, friends and family to join us all for what will be a happy and highly anticipated afternoon.

For more information on all PTFA activities and how to participate, please scan this QR code or visit the PTFA event section on the school's website.



Wishing you all a very peaceful and pleasant summer.

Chris Sevenoaks, parent,  
Benenden Primary School





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# Helen Grant

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If interested in playing, please contact our Club Captain,  
**Richard Brunt** on:  
**07834 572838** or email [bruntyhk@hotmail.com](mailto:bruntyhk@hotmail.com)



## Iden Green and Benenden WI

We had our annual garden party on 29 June and, as promised, our AGM also transpired alongside.

WI Wanderers presented a fascinating talk about Herbs for Health on 7 July on Zoom. On 20 July we had an informative talk by Jacqueline Aviolet on her nursery and were pleased to welcome three new members.

In August, our meetings are historically held at the Iden Green Pavilion in deference to our founding members, who lived in Iden Green. An interesting talk is planned on 17 August about the history of an ancient Kent farmhouse. We have had excellent reviews on the speaker, Frederick Ashton, and look forward to welcoming everyone at the Pavilion.

Our postponed outing to the Cherry Tree, Ticehurst will be on Thursday 23 September.

Jackie Liffen 752232  
[benendenwi@gmail.com](mailto:benendenwi@gmail.com)

## Benenden Pre-School

Just before the end of term, we had a visit from a travelling theatre-in-education company, who performed an interactive drama in the garden. The show was called A Trip to the Beach and the two actors invited the children to participate in the action and shape the story. We kicked off with a touch of panto, trying to wake one

of the actors who was fast asleep on her deck chair and who awoke only when we shouted loudly enough!

The children had great fun deciding what to pack for the trip, sharing their understanding of how to stay safe in the sun by suggesting sun cream and hats, and working out how to get to the beach. They became the train, snaking their way around the garden before spilling onto the beach to make sandcastles. They acted out paddling, some dropping to their tummies to swim on the grass, and became a human rollercoaster before stopping for an ice cream. The actors encouraged the children to invent flavours, although I think everyone was relieved the ice creams were only make-believe when one imaginative child said his was seaweed and curry pie flavour!

Everyone had great fun, using their imaginations and taking part in what was, for most of the children, a new and exciting activity. Drama helps children's development in a wide range of areas, including self-confidence, self-esteem and self-expression as well as communication, collaboration and aesthetic awareness.

I hope the Pre-school children have the opportunity for a real trip to the beach this summer - and a real ice cream. I would stick to vanilla with a flake.

Lucy Oakley, Supervisor  
[supervisor@benendenpreschool.co.uk](mailto:supervisor@benendenpreschool.co.uk)

## Benenden School

Sports day and speech day, for our leavers, in the final week of term were lovely occasions that brought a difficult year to a very uplifting close. Even though we did not have the entire school together at the same time due to pandemic restrictions, these outdoor events gave us a real reminder of what we have all missed over the past 18 months - and a flavour of what we can look forward to (fingers crossed) in September.

We were also delighted that Year 13 from our partner school, The John Wallis Academy, were able to use the marquee we put up for the end of term, for their leavers' prom, the week after we broke up. They had a wonderful time and would be welcome any time for a similar event at Benenden.

There is, of course, always a celebratory feel at the end of the school year but this sense has been even greater this year. In addition to the events mentioned above, we held the much-delayed diploma ceremony for last year's Upper Fourth, enjoyed a wonderful drama scholars' play and held an Upper Fifth celebration event. The fabulous BenFest - complete with fairground rides, music and festival stalls - represented a wonderful upbeat finale to the year's weekend programme, quite different to earlier weekends in the year when we had girls in isolation amid an outbreak on site! Let's hope that is behind us.

Needless to say, it has been an incredibly tough year but I told the pupils before we broke up how proud I am of them all for demonstrating so much resilience, determination and adaptability.

We will take such positivity forward into the coming academic year, when we have many strategic initiatives to look forward to. These include the opening of the new school hall and music school, the completion of the newly refurbished Marshall and Medway - the latter as the new Fourths' house - and the arrival of Benenden's first day boarders. These are all incredibly exciting landmarks for Benenden that signal, even at this early stage, what a memorable year 2021-22 is shaping up to be.

Samantha Price, Headmistress

## Talking Shop

The withdrawal of some of the Government's Covid restrictions means Benenden's has been able to respond with some welcome changes of its own to the constraints we have been imposing. We are seeking to return to as much normality as possible while paying attention to health and safety measures which will enable our customers and staff to remain safe.

Mask wearing will now be optional for all in the shop and café, but the Perspex screens will remain in place for the time being, as an additional means of social distancing. There will be no limit on the numbers of people in the shop and café but there will be hand sanitiser at both entrances and on each of the café tables. Also (huge relief!) the toilet will again be available for use by café customers. We look forward to welcoming you all back.

Once again we offer our sincere thanks to all the volunteers who have helped to keep Benenden's going during these difficult times. You really are appreciated and to say thank you we are holding a volunteers' social evening on Tuesday 27 July from 7pm in the Memorial Hall. This will be a great time to reconnect with everyone, especially if you are a volunteer who has not returned yet, and if any of you know somebody who has moved into the village recently and would be up for volunteering, encourage them to come along. When next in the shop, please let us know if you plan to come - it would help us with the catering.

The shop committee recently hosted its shareholders' AGM in the village hall. Numbers were restricted by Covid regulations but the atmosphere was convivial as we enjoyed a glass of wine and listened while Sally Ann Marks (acting chair) and Martin Pexton gave us the lowdown on the shop's progress over the last year.

Managers and volunteers have done a brilliant job keeping it all going. Sally Ann extended a warm welcome to our three new committee members, Mo Manning,



Peter Nuttall and Peter Traill, who joined us in October, and to Cathy Presgrave, who has very recently come on board. We are delighted to welcome Peter Traill as our new chairman and to extend our very grateful thanks to Sally Ann, who has done a sterling job of standing in.

Finally, we apologise for any inconvenience as the Post Office closes on each Wednesday between 1pm and 2pm for administration purposes. It will remain open at all other times.

Bev Beveridge [info@benendens.co.uk](mailto:info@benendens.co.uk)  
[www.benendens.co.uk](http://www.benendens.co.uk)

## Planning Matters

For full details of the Parish Council's comment please see minutes of meetings.

- 21/01966/FULL Yew Tree Barn, Mill Street, Iden Green. Proposed first floor rear extension.
- 21/01982/ FULL The Bothy, The Street. Alterations and extensions to convert existing bungalow to a two-storey dwelling house, creation of outdoor pool, conversion of existing barn to games room and artist's studio.
- 21/01436/TPO Owlgate House Mill Street Iden Green. Trees: T1 (OAK) - Remove 3 lower limbs and reduce crown by 7ft.
- 21/02009/FULL Forest Farm, Nineveh Lane. Remodel existing house include; loft conversion with new pitched roof with dormers and roof lights; replacement windows and doors; new exterior weatherboard cladding; new porch; remove 4 no. outbuildings and replace with new home office, workshop & garden store building.
- 21/01973/FULL Under Mount , Cranbrook Road. Proposed extension and conversion of existing garage; Proposed two storey front extension; Proposed single storey rear extension; Proposed loft conversion with

addition of rear dormers; Erection of proposed garage; Associated internal and external works.

- 21/02098/LBC Laurel House, The Street. Replacement garage; Internal and external refurbishment works; Reinstatement and repointing of brickwork plinth; Replacement of 7 no. external joinery items into existing structural openings, repair of 1 no. window, insertion of 1 no. new window to rear elevation, replacement and relocation of 2 no. roof lights; Alteration and repair of existing rear chimney; Replacement of rainwater goods; Replacement of existing redundant external WC; Internal alterations to existing bathroom; Replacement of existing dormers; Replacement of existing roof finishes and weathering; Renovation of existing loft space; Associated internal and external renovation works; Replacement of 3 no. existing trees.
- KCC/TW/0135/2021 Benenden Wastewater Treatment Works, Walkhurst Road. Change of use of land to enable an upgrade and extension of the wastewater treatment works, to include construction and operation of above ground wastewater treatment plant; a ferric dosing kiosk, caustic dosing kiosk and Motor Control Centre kiosk; installation of site fencing and associated landscaping.
- 21/01577/FULL Benton Farm, Dinglelden. Provision of equestrian menage measuring 55m x 25m with silica sand and rubber chip topping with 3x rail wooden fencing.
- 21/02094/FULL and 21/02095/LBC Cattsford Dinglelden. Single storey side extension and double storey rear extension.

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## Topical health

### How to get a Covid pass

While it remains far from clear how these will be used, for how long and what their acceptability will be internationally, we are as a nation being encouraged to get our vaccine passes. At the time of writing, we do know that people who have been 'double jabbed' will not have to self-isolate if exposed to someone who is Covid-19 positive from the middle of August.

The most convenient way to get the pass now is to download it to your phone or tablet, although you can get a paper passport by requesting one from 119 or by visiting the NHS website. Confusingly, perhaps, the pass is not linked to the NHS Covid-19 app, but rather to the NHS app. First you need to download the NHS app from the app store on your device.

After installing the app, start by selecting 'continue with GP login', which allows your details to be matched to your NHS record. At this stage you need to give your NHS number, date of birth postcode, an email address and phone number. If you don't have your NHS number to hand, you may be able to use your passport or driving licence to prove your identification.

You may need to prove your identity by taking a picture of yourself and one of your existing personal identifications, like your passport, although the process is very straightforward.

Once you have followed the instructions for adding the above details, there is an option to 'get your NHS Covid Pass' which, once you give the app permission, will access your vaccination information.

The pass can be downloaded as a PDF (Acrobat) file, or you can opt to email it to yourself.

The NHS app has other advantages in that it can be used to order repeat prescriptions from many GP surgeries and allows you to access limited personal medical information. It will in the future be able to store things like appointments and allow the NHS to send messages.

Peter Ellis

## Benenden Hospital

When it opened its doors in 1907, Benenden Sanatorium, as it was then called, was filled with tuberculosis patients who spent months and often years there. A group of them formed a social circle to organise entertainment and events and set up a magazine full of news about the hospital, written and produced by the patients. It was called the Rising Mercury.

In 1950, two former hospital patients, Bill Hollingshead and George Eastham, resurrected the name when they founded the Rising Mercury (RM) Society as a way for Benenden ex-patients to keep in touch and show their support and appreciation of the hospital.

Why Rising Mercury? It was apparently a sign of recovery when the mercury in the doctor's thermometer began to rise, but eventually both the social circle and the magazine died out as the changing nature of treatment meant that patients spent less and less time in hospital.

The RM Society has evolved over the years and celebrated its diamond anniversary in 2011. Originally using the strapline 'Benenden Ex-Patients', it rebranded itself to 'Supporters of Benenden Hospital' in 2005 and was successful in being granted charitable status in 2006, thus enabling anyone who wishes to support the work of Benenden Hospital to join the RM Society.

RM Society funds have been boosted by fundraising initiatives throughout the year, pre Covid-19, which enabled them to make regular annual donations of up to £20,000. While monies donated in the past were used to purchase specific objects of equipment, for many years now the donations have been used primarily for projects that enhance the patient experience when visiting the hospital, rather than essential medical or surgical equipment.

If you're visiting the hospital for treatment, either through your membership, via self-pay, PMI or the NHS, you will see the Heritage Wall - digital screens in the award-winning atrium which provide beautiful moving images from the surrounding estate and museum, all donated by the RM Society.

Jane Abbott, Hospital Director and Chief Nurse



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## Jazz 'n' Blues back with a blast

Two years on from the last Jazz 'n' Blues at Iden Green, it seemed that everyone was looking forward to a party. The Government's decision to prolong Covid restrictions threw a small spanner into the works, but it didn't stop the show going on, though the numerous signs and precautions put in place kept everyone aware that this was not quite the same event that we are all used to.

The weather was near perfect, if a bit on the hot side, but the forecast meant that people were well prepared for an afternoon in the sun. The guest bands were Entertaining Mr Stone and Dave McKean, both making a return visit to the Pavilion after their excellent performances in 2019. The resident band, Benenden Jazz featuring Debbie Katis, alternated with two sets of some easy jazz.

Cold Pimm's, Larkins Traditional ale, burgers and picnics were the order of the day for the many who came to enjoy what might be best summed up by one of Steve Stone's songs: Lazin' on a Sunny Afternoon.

All proceeds will be going to Alzheimer's UK, a cancer charity yet to be nominated, the Tenterden Day Centre and Iden Green Pavilion. To friends and neighbours who worked so hard to make the event a success

and to everyone from near and far who came to support it, thank you. See you next year.  
Bill Lewis







## From the Big Bang to life's little pleasures

Nancy Tolhurst talks to Benenden CC captain Richard Brunt about global finance and village cricket

On a warm and hazy summer's afternoon, there is nothing, absolutely nothing, quite as nice as lazing around watching village cricket. The smack of bat against the ball, occasional ripples of applause, the odd shout of encouragement from the teams ... and yet, whenever I read Richard Brunt's email match reports, the enthusiasm and energy just fizz off the page.

Richard, a.k.a. Brunty, moved back to the UK from Singapore, and then to our part of Kent around ten years ago. Having first played for Benenden Cricket Club once in the late 90s while on holiday, he clearly got the bug for the club and is now firmly in situ as our effervescent team captain.

Another sunny afternoon, and we're on the boundary rope, charting his course from a full-on lifetime in global finance to the gentler pleasures of village cricket; and yet that's not the starkest contrast his life has known.

He studied theology at Durham University and had plans to become a vicar before, as you do, he

made the gradual move into the City, starting out in publishing, working for News International at Wapping, then with Thomson (later Thomson Reuters), first in London then based in Asia, at a point in the late 90s when business publishing companies started to understand the power of the data from individual financial transactions.

For those of us who remember the City in the first few years after the Big Bang of 1986 - all mobile phones the size of bricks and loud stripey shirts worn by even louder city traders - the buzz in central London was almost tangible. You may not have approved, but you could certainly feel it, and Richard was at the heart of it.

In the early 90s, he moved to Hong Kong with International Financial Review to run their capital markets division across Asia, in the period before the transfer of Hong Kong to China. At that point, life as an expat in Hong Kong, Singapore, Tokyo still had a real sense of being very different to life in London. From south-east Asia, he moved to New York in the late 90s, before returning to Asia in the early noughties. During our chat we tallied up: at least eight different countries in 14 years. During this time, he had joined the fintech firm FENICS (now part of BGC Group), running their data and analytics group.





In 2008, Richard returned to the UK with his wife and three children, and it was somehow not surprising that he seized the chance to build some firm foundations for the whole family. So to a house near the village, and an absolute commitment to the village cricket team. A chance to be grounded somewhere with a real sense of place, a sense of home.

Richard wanted village life with a strong sense of community. For the cricket team that meant harnessing his organisational talents and energy as captain. He has thrown himself and his family into everything from batting to maintaining the square, writing match reports and tidying up after the game. During summer weekends you'll catch him mowing the square, driving the heavy roller, marking out the wickets, or galvanising other volunteers.

His focus has been to ensure that the cricket is about fun and teamwork, with a focus on friendly matches with other village teams with the same ethos, rather than the more competitive league. He's been keen to bring in youngsters and make sure that they get a chance to shine alongside the more experienced players.

Benenden CC play regular village cricket (40 overs at weekends), and mid-week T20 games

(the short form of the shorter form of the game). You can track them down in the Bull after a home game, or via their website ([benendenc.play-cricket.com](http://benendenc.play-cricket.com)) if you are keen to play.

After 18 months when we have missed so much of what passes for normality here in Benenden, I find myself rather pleased to be dozing in the sun beside The Green, half-watching, half-listening to the cricket, mostly anticipating the excitement of another roller-coaster match report.

left to right: Copter Brunt, Richard's son, fast bowler; Barry Basset spin bowler; Richard Brunt, captain and bat and Peter Newman, opening bat





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## Lasting powers of attorney

Lasting powers of attorney make a great deal of sense explains lawyer Kelly Duke

My spouse automatically has access to my bank account; I have a joint account with my father; the doctor always take my instructions about what mum wants. These are statements that I regularly hear from my clients as to reasons why they do not need lasting powers of attorney. Unfortunately, none of them are correct.

Lasting powers of attorney are documents that can be completed to allow nominated individuals to make decisions in relation to your financial and health affairs, at a time when you are unable to make decisions for yourself. For me, as a lawyer, these are vitally important documents. Their value cannot be underestimated. They save a considerable amount of time and heartache in emergency situations and remove stress and worry.

Under the law in England and Wales no-one has authority to make decisions on your behalf in relation to anything. Whilst you retain capacity you are your own decision maker and choose what you wish to do. When you begin to lose capacity and struggle to make decisions it is sensible to have someone who can step into your shoes and make decisions on your behalf that you would have made otherwise. In relation to your financial affairs this could be anything from paying your milkman to selling your home or managing your investments. With your health, decisions could range from discussing new glasses with your optician, making decisions about where you live or making decisions about receiving treatment that could prolong your life.

These documents do not take your power away or take away your right to make decisions, in fact they do the opposite. They ensure that decision making power stays with you for as long as possible, whether decisions are made by you or someone you choose to represent you, rather than a complete stranger.

People you choose to help you are called your attorneys and you need to think carefully about who you trust enough to make decisions for you in the future. You can appoint second

**Kelly**, her husband Kevin and his two boys moved to Benenden from Tenterden a year ago and, in Kelly's words, lockdown has been "wonderful. We are in the middle of the countryside, with chickens

and dogs and surrounded by orchards and within easy reach of the village shop, butcher and farm shops - what could be better."

Kelly started as a legal secretary in 1995 and worked her way up, qualifying as a lawyer in 2005. Today she runs Argo Life and Legacy alongside her husband Kevin, largely working from home and supported by her team based in Maidstone. The company offers legal, financial and social care advice and support and Kelly will be writing about a variety of these topics for us in the future.



choice attorneys if your first choice are unwilling or unable to act. You can leave instructions about what you want your attorneys to do for you and rules they need to follow. With the financial power of attorney you can also choose whether you want support and assistance before you lose capacity.

Everyone over the age of 18 should sign a lasting power of attorney. These documents do not just help with old age, dementia and strokes. They can help look after and protect vulnerable adults, people living with brain injuries and those involved in accidents. You take the time to insure your care and purchase breakdown cover, so why not make the investment to insure you and put in place breakdown cover for you?

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# Benenden History

## Arrival of Measles puts an end to mudlarking

Peter Stennett with the final chapter of his garden pond excavation

As well as the glass and ceramics discarded over the years, a considerable amount of metal came out during our digging and I had been wondering what to do with it, as it would not look as nice as some of the pieces of pottery and glass we have on the windowsills of our cottage. TV provided the answer.



Fig.1



Fig.2

During lockdown, Sara and I enjoyed watching a programme called Grayson Perry's Art Club. Each week viewers submitted work they had done at home and Grayson chose a few to be featured in an exhibition sometime in the future. One of the programmes featured the teddy bear he had as a child (Fig.2). He called it Alan Measles and

Grayson has used it in some of his artwork (Fig.4).

Grayson is best known as a ceramicist and during the programme he made a clay model of Alan affected during the time of the virus outbreak, adding a large number of metal objects piercing the bear's body (Fig.3).

This gave me an idea of what I could do with all the rusty oddments I have found, so I am proud to unveil Benenden's homage to Grayson Perry: Alan Measles' rural cousin! (Fig.1)

If you have enjoyed reading this series of articles as much as I have enjoyed writing them, you might like to come and see the pond and some of the artifacts on our garden open day, which we hope to hold in the first week in August.

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Fig.3



Fig.4

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## We're back and we're taking you on a road trip to France

Peter Thomas with exciting news of the return of the famous village wine tastings

The thing I've missed most is wine travel. Other people may curse Covid for cutting them off from their families or limiting them to five friends from two bubbles with masks but without hugs, but I'm far more concerned about the state of my (notional) cellar.

There was a time when depleted racks meant one thing: it was almost time for a summer road trip to France, to return weighed down with cases of old favourites and new discoveries from our familiar stamping grounds, mostly Languedoc and Alsace but also anywhere else that might be deemed, however loosely, to be en route between the two.

That has all been derailed, though, by quarantine and self-isolation, so I'm low on stocks, short on opportunities and thus highly grateful for the return of that great Benenden institution, the village wine tasting.

For the last few years I've been lucky enough to be involved, with our wine guru Tracy Claridge and the unstoppably knowledgeable and enthusiastic Alfred Nicol, in the planning and execution of many of these events, painstakingly sampling endless bottles for the benefit of our legion of followers. It's a tough life, but it was worth all the selfless toil to see your happy, smiling, slightly rosy-cheeked faces. And then along came Covid.

It seems a long time ago that guest speaker Richard Household talked us through the untapped delights of the Loire on a boozy night at the girls' school. In fact, it was a long time ago - in March 2020. Even longer since we welcomed the silver fox Patricio Gouguenheim, who was kidnapped on his way from Mendoza to Selfridges to show off his immaculate Argentine Malbecs.

Then there was Luis Marculeta from Rioja Vega in Navarre; not to mention the Mitchells from Clare Valley in Australia, the Pasks from Gimblett Gravels in New Zealand; in fact,

Tracy Claridge, Alfred Nicol and Peter Thomas at Benenden School Café



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winemakers from all around the world.

Sadly, travelling winemakers are no longer travelling. The world of wine has been brought to a grinding halt by the pandemic, so we've decided to take you on a virtual road trip.

Tracy, Alfred and I will be whizzing you across southern France in our imaginary Citroen 2CV, starting in Gascony and ending in Provence - maybe the other way round, the details are a little hazy at this stage - to bring you a taste of some of the country's finest. It may be fizzy, it may be pink, it may be bright and white or brooding and red, but it will all be top class and accompanied by some excellent cuisine from the regions.

If, like us, you feel starved of contact with excellent wine and good drinking company, please join us at the café at Benenden School on Friday 24 September. Tickets, priced at £15, will be available from the community shop, to include a glass on arrival, eight fine wines to taste, plus a lovely supper. Book early to avoid disappointment.

As ever, there will be a raffle to raise money for a charity of the school's choosing, so please come armed with £5 notes - and if you have any bottles/wine-related items you could spare as prizes, please let us know.

For further details, please contact:

Tracy [maisonsicheluk@tlclaridge.co.uk](mailto:maisonsicheluk@tlclaridge.co.uk)

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## EATING OUT

Up until now, opportunities for al fresco eating have been limited in Kent this summer, unless you happen to like rain in your gravy, but that has changed for the time being and I've made the most of it by visiting a lovely spot for a civilised early evening.

We at the magazine have long been fans of the Old Dairy Brewery, from the days when it really was at an old dairy (at Hole Park) - with cow smells to match - to its present incarnation down by the old station in Tenterden, but these days you can do more than just pick up a takeaway of fine ale there.

Now you can turn up from 5pm to 8.30pm on a Friday night (or noon to 8.30pm on a



Saturday), perch down at a trestle table outside the brewhouse and order yourself a fine plateful from Moretto's Italian BBQ truck to go with your

choice from the expanded Old Dairy range.

I'd had very good ice cream from outside Moretto's (on the way down to Waitrose in Sayers Lane, Tenterden) before, but the main menu was something of an unknown, so it was a treat when the tagliata (a sirloin steak sandwich in sourdough with rocket and parmesan, served with Tuscan potatoes and salad) really hit the spot alongside a pint of malty Rye IPA.

I can also pass on a good word for the salsiccia Napoli (a sausage wrap with caramelised red onions and all the trimmings), and the Helles Munich-style lager, which quickly assumed its status as star beer of the night, although just to be sure, we also tried a tasting flight of four one-third pints of Uber Brew, Blue Top, Chocolate Brown Ale and the fearsome 8% abv Doppelbock. To think there was a time in living memory when the British beer industry was on its knees!

All this in the evening sunshine with views across open countryside. It's good to be out and about again.

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## SPLASHING OUT

The wife's latest landmark birthday seemed as good a reason as any to push the boat out, so we headed for a long-delayed first encounter with the Curlew in Bodiam. We'd been planning to go years ago, when it still had a Michelin star and hadn't closed down. Then it closed down. Now it's back, under the friendly and expert stewardship of the team from the wonderful Small Holding in Kilndown, and it's a destination once again.

Don't go expecting a cheap and cheerful pub lunch, but do visit for a sharing menu that's both local in its sourcing and far-reaching in its ambition. In fact, the sharing bit is the only real problem, given that the dishes aren't always divided neatly between the number of people at the table, which may give rise to conflict.

Personally, I'd kill just for another taste of the 'cultured' butter, so by the time we get to the pork croquettes with piccalilli and the duck heart kebab, the possibilities for violence are endless.

The carrots with smoked

cod roe and walnuts is so much more than the sum of its parts; the British cheeses are as good as we've come to expect in these exciting foodie times; and the wine list is compact but wide-ranging and fascinating.

Maybe an occasional treat, but definitely a treat.

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# In Your Garden



## What's best for your borders?

There is no better subject to write about in July and August than some of my favourite flowering plants. Naturally I have favourites in other seasons and in other categories, so I am limiting myself to a chosen few that start flowering now and pretty much keep going into autumn, but they are plants that consistently perform in clients' gardens because they reliably come up every year, do not need a huge amount of care, and flower non-stop.

I will start with day lilies (hemerocallis). Most eye-catching when planted in a swathe (Dan Pearson uses them a lot in domestic schemes), their sword-like, fresh foliage is a welcome sight in the spring. A few of my favourites are 'Corky', actually a more diminutive variety in lemon yellow; 'Starling', a deep wine/rusty red with a yellow throat; and 'Crimson Pirate' which is a spider form in an orangey-red. I have found that hemerocallis do best in their own section of the borders. By this I mean it is not a good idea to try and 'weave' them throughout other plants, as they just get swamped. The downside to allowing a large clump to build up, though, is the need for regular division - I'd say every three years.

Although they are hardy and generally cope well in most soils, they perform so much better (and flower longer) in anything moisture-retentive. Our Wealden clay often bakes on the surface in a hot summer, so I would apply a thick mulch to the base at the beginning of spring and keep topping it up.



Penstemons appear to have a rather negative reputation, which I find hard to understand, but it could be due to the fact they are classed as a 'tender perennial' and to avoid losses it is best not to cut them back in the autumn. This means you are left with a scruffy plant over winter - it's only downpoint in my view. I cut mine back hard in late March - the whole thing to within two inches.

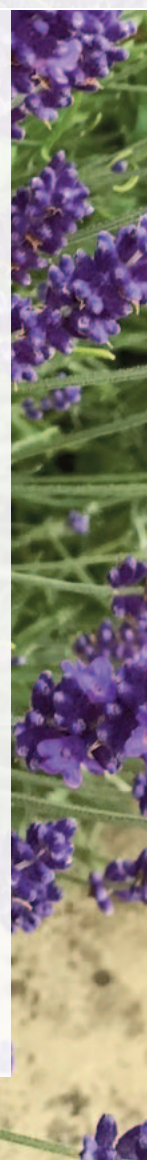
I planted a variety called 'Hidcote Pink' in a client's garden a few years ago and by July it is back up at 50cm-plus in full flower - it's a lovely salmon pink and goes really well with roses. My other favourite is 'White Bedder' - great if you want a glamorous, large-flowering variety, or 'Blackbird', equally flamboyant but a dark winey-red. I regularly dead-head penstemons, taking old flowering stems right down to the base, which really keeps the plant going until November. It's another plant that prefers moisture, so apply the same principle with mulching as for the day lily.

My final choice for July and August would be a loosestrife. Don't panic, I am not suggesting we start to plant the invasive purple form, lovely though it is. If you have a very large garden and some water then it is perfect for that, but I would stick to some of the cultivated forms for smaller spaces. They need moisture and sun, but that is largely it - soil care as above. Loosestrife partners very well with other tall perennials and looks stunning with grasses. I recently planted *Lythrum salicaria* 'Robert', which is a lighter pink variety, with some tall *Calamagrostis brachytricha*, and it is establishing well already on the heavy, chalky clay. The bees love it, of course, and I know it will keep on flowering. Loosestrife is a useful vertical plant to have in a border, too. Other good varieties to try are 'Blush', 'Feuerkeze', 'Dropmore Purple' and 'Rosy Gem'.

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Above: Summer and sunshine: Jazz 'n' Blues at Iden Green Pavilion;  
 Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie's ordination as priest, with Bishop Rose and Revd David, at Holy Trinity Folkestone  
 Front cover: Loud and proud. Photograph: Amelia Thomas