



Above: Active: Primary school children visit Wakehurst Place to further their rainforest studies, and enjoy a yoga session at school; the new leaders of the Friends of Benenden Primary; magazine distributors and volunteers mark another year in the Bull Front cover: Undeterred: Snowdrops. Photograph: Ruth Clark



Benenden
Magazine
March 2025

Christopher
THE LOCKSMITH

ARE YOUR LOCKS BEHAVING BADLY?

We Value Old Fashioned Customer Service
A Local Trusted Family Business Since 1989

- Specialist in UPVC & Wooden Doors
- No Call Out Charge
- No Fix No Fee
- All Work Fully Guaranteed
- 10% Senior Citizen Discount

For More Advice & Help Call Christopher:
07772 111 222

www.christopherthelocksmith.co.uk

GARAGE DOORS
4 YOU

Environment Agency
The only company to be awarded

FAMILY-OWNED
Over **25** YEARS
BUSINESS

- Repair service
- Roller doors
- Sectional doors - up to 67mm insulated
- Up & over doors - manual & electric
- Side opening doors
- All makes and styles

www.garagedoors4you.co.uk

01634 244452 **01580 230970**



Step away and rest a while!

Transform your skin health with well researched technologies and nutrients to feed your skin from within. Discover advanced massage, well-being packages and beauty treatments to unwind and revitalise with. Experienced and compassionate therapists you can trust.

Gift Vouchers Available

azaratherapies.co.uk
info@azaratherapies.co.uk
T: 07711 483038


AZARA
THERAPIES

Benenden Almshouse Charities

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 232743



A **vacancy** has arisen for a two-bedroom ground floor end flat at 6 Feoffee Cottages, Walkhurst Road, Benenden.

Applications are invited from either couples or single persons, over the age of 55, who have been resident in the parish of Benenden for at least 3 years, or have family connections.

An **application form** is available from the Clerk, Deborah Jenkins 01580 240454 benendenalms@gmail.com

Completed application forms to be submitted by **17 March 2025**



MOVING? NEED AN EXTRA PAIR OF HANDS?

THE HOUSE MOVERS FRIEND are a small team of kind and sympathetic ladies who can help with all aspects of house moving including:

- Sensitive help with de-cluttering
- Staging rooms ready for sale
- Arranging for small remedial repairs prior to marketing
- Packing and creation of inventories
- Sourcing of quotations for removal firms and other related services
- Change of address correspondence
- Curtain alterations

Plus, so much more... *no project is too large or too small.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL THE TEAM ON 07766 00064

Editorial



I discovered a treasure trove recently: bound copies of the parish magazine from 1956-2000, all safely stored in the rectory, alongside a few copies from the 1930s. As I browsed through the pages I witnessed the ebb and flow of the seasons, marked births, deaths and marriages, applauded fund-raising for various village projects and enjoyed news about various clubs - many of which still exist today.

I would love to go back to February 1937 to walk around the village, popping into the various shops and businesses we had before it was easy to drive to neighbouring towns or be served directly on our doorstep via the internet. I would get my clothes, boots and groceries from Rollings (where Benenden's is now), milk, cream and eggs from a selection of three dairies (at least), my meat from one of the two butchers, my rabbit snares from Boorman's, bread from our baker and sweets and corn from Keeley's, before choosing which of our four pubs to pop into for a refresher, prior to taking my washing up to the Weald of Kent Laundry at Mounts Hill ("where you can be certain of courtesy, punctuality and the best of workmanship"). February 1937 was towards the end of one of several flu epidemics that impacted the country and it's sobering to read the names of the eight people whose funerals were held in the preceding two months - including a child.

I thank the tireless editors and contributors who have researched and published wonderful articles about the history of the village and some of its buildings over the years. We plan to plunder these pots of gold from the past and print them in future issues as part of a new occasional series, 'From the Archives'. But we do need old photographs to go with them, please. If you have any tucked away that we could copy and return we would be very grateful.

Ruth Clark, Co-Editor

The Benenden Magazine is published monthly as a joint venture by Benenden Parish Council and St George's Parochial Church Council. It is distributed free to all residents of the parish. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the publishers. Responsibility for accuracy of information rests with contributors and advertisers. Neither the publishers nor the editors shall be held responsible for or endorse any opinions, products or services printed in the magazine or directory.

Editors: Ruth Clark, Peter Thomas

Editorial Board: PCC Rep: Cathy Presgrave, PC Rep: Nicola Thomas, Treasurer: Charles Trollope, Business and Advertising Manager: Paul Leek, Advertising Assistant: vacant

Distribution: Marilyn and Dick Hill, Layout Editor: Camilla Macdonald

Contributions to: benendenparishmagazine@gmail.com by the 10th of the preceding month.

Advertising orders or queries to: advertising.benendenmag@gmail.com.

Distribution queries to: dd.rhill@btinternet.com.

Postal address: c/o Community Office, Benenden Village Hall, Benenden, TN17 4DY 01580 240371

Printed by The Wealden Advertiser Ltd, Cowdens Close, Hawkhurst, Kent

Village Calendar

March

Saturday 1	Churchyard Working Party, St George's, Benenden, 9.30-12noon	
Saturday 1	Fish and Chip Supper, St George's Social Club, 8.15pm	
Saturday 8	Hemsted Park, An Audience with Davina McCall, Benenden School Centenary Hall, 5pm	p.19
Saturday 8	Skittles, St George's Social Club, 8.15pm	
Tuesday 11	Mobile Library, bus stop outside Benenden Village Hall, 10-10.30am	
Tuesday 11	Mobile Library, Benenden Hospital, 10.40-11.10am	
Tuesday 11	Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.13
Thursday 13	Benenden's Community Shop, Volunteers' Social Evening, 6pm	p.22
Saturday 15	Quiz Night, St George's Social Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 16	Hemsted Park, Benjamin Grosvenor - Pianist, Benenden School Centenary Hall, 3pm	p.19
Monday 17	Parish Council Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 7pm	
Tuesday 18	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Melanie Gibson Barton: Suffragettes, Memorial Hall, 2pm	p.15
Saturday 22	Cornhole Tossing, St George's Social Club, 8.15pm	
Tuesday 25	Mobile Library, bus stop outside Benenden Village Hall, 10-10.30am	
Tuesday 25	Mobile Library, Benenden Hospital, 10.40-11.10am	
Tuesday 25	Merry and Bright, John Burbage: Pole Lathe Turning Memorial Hall, 2pm	p.15
Saturday 29	Spring Village Clean, Benenden's Community Shop, 9am	p.15
Saturday 29	Board Games Evening, St George's Social Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 30	The Angry Whelk Fresh Fish Stall, Benenden Village Hall, 12-2pm	

Iden Green Toddler Group

Tuesdays during term time in Iden Green Congregational Church, 9-11.30am

Wednesday Coffee Mornings

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-11.30am

Benenden Bowls Club

Thursdays, April-September, on the recreation field, practice night, 6pm

Cakes & Chaos: Café and Toddler Group

Fridays during term time in St George's Church, 9-11am

Parish Council



Last month several parish councillors attended a planning committee meeting at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and put up a strong case against a recommendation for approval of an application for new homes in our village that flew in the face of our Neighbourhood Development Plan requirement to provide on-site affordable housing. The committee agreed with our objection and refused the application, vindicating the hard work and thought that went into preparing the NDP, and upholding the policies that the community voted for. This sent a clear message to landowners and developers that our NDP policies cannot be ignored.

Yes, we need more homes in rural areas but not without the provision of affordable housing. If we can't support people living where their roots, families and jobs are, then we are failing them and we will rapidly lose the beating heart of our communities, creating a playground only for the well-off. There is an unbridgeable gulf in the South East between the average rural wage and the average house price, and this government needs to redefine what 'affordable' actually is, as it certainly isn't the current level at around 80% of market housing value.

Turning to other parish news, I would like to thank Cathy Presgrave for her time with us on the parish council. Cathy lit up our meetings with her warm personality and she will be missed by us all. We wish her well with the other volunteering work she takes on, especially now, with the organisation of the fete alongside David Commander. So we are looking to fill the current vacancy on the PC, and if you are interested in joining us please do get in touch with our clerk, Caroline (clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org). It's fun, I promise!

Thanks also go to Rohan Barnett who has provided invaluable support for the PC website for many years. We are extremely grateful to him for his skill (and patience!) over the years. Thank you, Rohan.

Date for the diary: the next village clean-up will be on Saturday 29 March. We'd love to see you there, at Benenden's community shop from 9am.

Nicola Thomas, BPC Chair
nicolat@benendenparishcouncil.org

Caroline Levett, Benenden Parish Council Clerk
07593 226462 clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org
For more information see our website www.benendenparishcouncil.org or find us on Facebook

Parish Council Meeting
Monday 17 March,
Iden Green Pavilion, 7pm

Church Calendar

St George's Church

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

Associate Priest: Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie 01233 820100 rev.ylva@gmail.com

Churchwarden: David Collard 241944 d.collard49@btinternet.com

Churchwarden: Sue Fisher 241907 sue@undaunted.co.uk

www.benendenchurch.org 850849 benendenchurch@gmail.com

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

Saturday 1 March

4pm Connect Four
at Mission Church, Sandhurst
5pm Choral Evensong

Sunday 2 March

8am Communion

10am All-age
Communion

Wednesday 5 March

7.30pm Ash Wednesday
Service

Sunday 9 March

8am BCP Communion

10am Morning Worship

Sunday 16 March

8am Communion

10am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 23 March

8am Communion

10am Morning Worship

Sunday 30 March

8am Communion

10am Mothering Sunday Service

Morning Prayer

8am Mondays and Fridays

Mission Church, Sandhurst

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

Morning Prayer

8am Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Mid-week Communion

10am Tuesdays

Iden Green Congregational Church

Pastor: Tobin Bird 240027 www.idengreen.org.uk

Sunday Services

10am Morning Worship

5.30pm Evening Worship

The 10am Morning Worship is broadcast on our YouTube channel: search 'Iden Green Congregational Church'.

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

Fr Barry Grant 713364 www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org

Masses

9am Sundays

7.30pm Holy Days

From the Parish Registers

Funerals

12 February Jane Garratt Memorial Service

17 February Brian Daw Interment

Church Letter



Are you ready for a 40-day journey?

It's strange how 40-day periods crop up again and again in the Bible. They are usually times of preparation or testing:

- In Genesis, it rains for 40 days and 40 nights
- In Exodus, Moses is on Mount Sinai for 40 days, praying and fasting, and returns with the Ten Commandments on stone tablets
- After 40 years travelling through the wilderness back to the promised land, the scouts are sent out for 40 days and return reporting on the good things they have found
- In the story of David and Goliath, the Israelite people are taunted for 40 days before David defeats Goliath
- 40 days after Jesus' birth we mark his presentation in the temple by Mary and Joseph
- Jesus, following his baptism, is in the wilderness being tested and tempted for 40 days
- Following his resurrection, Jesus is with the disciples for 40 days until his ascension to heaven

On 5 March we enter another 40-day period: the time of Lent, starting on Ash Wednesday. It is the beginning of a reflective but busy time within the church, which seems ironic and contradictory. We have a service in the evening on Ash Wednesday to mark the start of Lent and to reflect upon our own times when we have fallen short of how we should be acting and treating others. Our Lent Course this year is entitled, 'A Pilgrimage through Prayer', and begins the following week on 12 March. We'll explore different aspects of prayer, and travel together and learn from one another about prayer and pilgrimage.

We're meeting on a Wednesday evening at 7.30pm, in the Mission Church in Sandhurst. I really encourage you, in these concerning times, to get involved, journey together, and through it draw closer to God - the God who cares about you and the things in your life. We each do that through prayer.

At the end of the Lent Course, we enter the thoughtful time of Holy Week, beginning with the celebratory entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. We continue to journey with a reflective service on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (see the church calendar for times and places). On Thursday - Maundy Thursday - we remember the events of 'the last supper' and the start of Jesus' betrayal and arrest. We gather for a service on Good Friday and remember Jesus' crucifixion and death. On Easter eve, on the Saturday evening, we wait, with a quiet, reflective service. Then on Easter Sunday we awake early and celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

There is a sunrise service at St Nicholas Church (followed by breakfast in the Mission Church). We then gather once again for communion together: our Eucharist, our thanksgiving meal together. It is quite a 40-day journey through Lent, but it ends with a joyous celebration on Easter Sunday. I really encourage you to engage with this period of preparation for Easter.

Revd David Commander, Rector and Area Dean



**Grierson
Life Coaching**

Helping you reach your potential

**Change happens
when we choose to
respond differently.
How will you choose
to respond today?**

Dealing with life can be difficult, including:

- ❖ lack of focus & self-confidence
- ❖ feeling 'stuck'
- ❖ unable to make decisions
- ❖ not seeing the way forward
- ❖ 'allowing' yourself to make changes
- ❖ lack of motivation
- ❖ changing jobs or returning after a break

The first step towards change, however small,
is always the biggest!

Let me support you on your journey. Whatever age,
so many of us have unresolved issues. Please call for
a complementary chat & questionnaire.

LifeWorks Studio, 17 High Street, Cranbrook TN17 3EE
Annie Watsham | www.griersonlifecoaching.com
lifecoaching@anniewatsham.com | 07970 413492

All Guttering Maintenance

Cleaning, Repairs or Replacement

Fully insured

Phone Mark on

01580 292343 07762 461381

Whatever you want to store...

...house sale & purchase not coinciding, travelling,
house building work, paperwork overload or just
"de-cluttering" to sell your house more quickly
— we offer a friendly and flexible
service in Cranbrook. With secure
storage, competitive rates, all on
one level and hassle free
24/7 access, contact us now!



01580 713231

www.barn-store.co.uk



BLUEBELLS
GROUNDWORKS



FREE QUOTE

**01580 438010
07753 804799**

NO OBLIGATION

**GROUNDWORK
SERVICES IN
KENT AND SUSSEX**



TRANSFORM YOUR OUTDOOR SPACES

With over 20 years of industry experience, Bluebells Groundworks is your
ideal partner for any project or consultation needs. Specialising in all aspects
of groundworks and hard landscaping, we deliver reliable and expert
solutions. Trust us to bring your vision to life with precision and dedication.

Enjoy peace of mind knowing your landscaping features are constructed
with high-quality materials and techniques to withstand the test of time.

**info@bluebellsgroundworks.co.uk
bluebellsgroundworks.co.uk**

PROPERTY FEATURE

- CONCRETE SLABS
- FOUNDATIONS
- DRAINAGE
- PATIOS
- PATHS & DRIVEWAYS
- RETAINING WALLS
- HARD LANDSCAPING
- EXCAVATION
- DEMOLITION & MORE

CHEESEMANS GARAGE

B. J. NASH



BENENDEN, KENT

**TELEPHONE
CRANBROOK 240583**



**GOLD & GREEN
GARDENS**

Patios • Tiling • Fencing • Decking
Plus more

07812743117 greenydonald@hotmail.co.uk

High Weald House Clearance

We are your reliable & affordable
solution to all your clearance needs.

All general house, flat, office, garage,
garden part or full clearances.

Mattresses, white goods
& scrap metal taken.

Call us for a free quote

07835 223099 or email

info@highwealdhouseclearance.com

www.highwealdhouseclearance.com

Cranbrook, Kent TN17

COVERING KENT & SUSSEX

Talking Point



Will the bells still be ringing?

For over 300 years the Christmas and New Year festivals in Benenden, and many other occasions, have been celebrated by the ringing of our magnificent bells, but this happy sound is in danger of disappearing from St George's forever, as it has from so many other village churches, now silent. It has already vanished from our sister church in Sandhurst, and almost from Rolvenden and Hawkhurst.

Why? Although people often take them for granted, bells don't ring themselves. They are rung by skilled people who have volunteered for centuries to be trained in our ancient and unique musical art of English change ringing. This is now at significant risk. Without new ringers, like Sandhurst we too will fall silent.

Ringers are everyone aged from eight to over 80, of every conceivable profession, but united by a common love of the music of the bells and a willingness to learn it. And if you think 'I'm not a church person', that goes for many ringers too. The art originated 400 years ago as an entirely non-religious pastime; in fact, until the later 19th century it was actually illegal to ring for a church service. Today we are happy to ring for Sunday services and as requested, but no ringer ever has to attend any church service - unless you want to.

So what's the problem? We live today in a highly mobile society. We have just lost three good ringers of a family moving to work abroad; and another to Scotland this year. Although we have some fine young ringers in the band (until, inevitably, they leave home), we also have three in their 80s, still going strong at present, but for how long? We estimate, if nothing changes, in two to three years from now, these bells will be silent, for lack of anyone to ring them, plus, even more seriously, the loss of anyone capable of teaching anybody who does want to ring.

So if the famous bells of Benenden are to keep up their magnificent sound, we need more ringers - and urgently, since it takes time to train. Keeping these bells alive isn't somebody else's problem. It's yours, if you want them to continue ringing.

We are a friendly and welcoming band, all of whom have gone through the same individual training by a highly skilled and experienced instructor. And it costs nothing. All ringers will tell you of the deep satisfaction in mastering each stage of the learning, which is lifelong, and of its special friendships and fellowship. You can get an idea of our activities by looking at our Benenden Bellringers Facebook page, or contacting me on 24003 or at rodericklebon@hotmail.com; or simply come and join us any Wednesday at 7.30pm. We look forward to welcoming you.

Rod Lebon

POGLE'S
GARDEN MAINTENANCE

Mowing
Strimming
Hedge Cutting
and more



Please call
Sue and Andy
01580 241792
07887 997551

**TERRY
THE MOLE MAN**

EX-GAMEKEEPER
Controlling Moles
using traditional methods

07746 937 373 | 01580 241759
terrybaldwin73@icloud.com

Everything Outside

Complete Garden & Fencing Solutions

Fencing • Mowing • Hedge Trimming • Turfing
Clearance • Landscaping • Gardening • Digger Work
Concreting • Tree Surgery • Pressure Washing
Patos • Decking • Pergolas • Driveways

01580 766 232 07795 465 861



www.everythingoutside.co.uk

Webb's

Hardware, Garden and Cookware Specialists
Webb's Ironmongery Stores (Tenterden) Limited

45 & 51 High Street
Tenterden

HARDWARE and DIY

Specialists in power, hand and garden tools, plumbing, decorating sundries,
lawnmower repairs - brand new showroom

KITCHENWARE

Cookware specialists, garden furniture and barbecues
Gifts with a difference. Free gift wrapping

HOME and LINEN

Beautiful bed linen, towels, table furnishings,
babyware department and quality toys

**We guarantee you will not leave
Webb's empty handed!**

Tel: 01580 762132 email: mail@webbssoftenterden.com Website: www.webbssoftenterden.com



Thinking about a kitchen upgrade?

At the fraction of the cost of a new one?

With over 20 years in the
business, I can help you.

Beautifully hand painted kitchen
cabinets & furniture

07967 808601

emma@paintedbyemma.co.uk
paintedbyemma.co.uk



Gardening • Lawn Care • Landscaping • Tree Surgery

Office: 01580 713495 • Mobile: 07838 229482 • www.kentgardening.com

Benenden almshouse vacancy

A vacancy has arisen for a two-bedroom ground floor end flat at 6 Feoffee Cottages, Walkhurst Road, Benenden. Applications are invited from either couples or single people, of 55, who have been resident in the parish of Benenden for at least three years or have family connections.

An application form, which needs to be submitted by Friday 17 March 2025, is available from the clerk, details below.

Deborah Jenkins 240454

benendenalms@gmail.com

Benenden Almshouse Charities

Parish Council vacancy

A vacancy on Benenden Parish Council has arisen and the council can fill this by co-option. If you are interested in joining, please contact the Parish Clerk, clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org by 31 March.

Applicants must be 18 years or older, a British citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union, neither the subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order, nor have, within the past five years, been convicted in the UK of any offence and had a prison sentence (whether suspended or not) for a period of over three months without the option of a fine.

Applicants must also satisfy at least one of the following: registered as a local government elector for the parish; during the whole of the preceding 12 months occupied as owner or tenant, any land or premises in the parish; principal or only place of work during the preceding 12 months has been in the parish; during the whole of the preceding 12 months resided in the parish or within 4.8km of it.

Caroline Levett, Clerk



The Rhythm of Life
Community Choir

Benenden Church
Thursday morning
10-11.30am
during term time

ALL WELCOME

To book your place call
Carla on 07743 430 797

BVT film night

“Hang on lads, I’ve got a great idea. Why don’t we have another film night to raise funds for Benenden Village Hall?”

Following the successful screening of Casablanca late last year, the BVT has decided to offer another classic film as part of its ongoing fundraising for village hall improvements. Feedback from our first film night showed great support for more films with a themed meal and pay bar to make the evening complete.

Our next film will be the 1969 classic *The Italian Job*, starring Michael Caine, Noel Coward and (would you believe) Benny Hill. It features some classic dialogue, gentle humour and a great car chase. It will take us back to the swinging 60s and was filmed while England still held the football World Cup.

The *Italian Job* will be screened at the hall at 7.30pm on Saturday 5 April. Doors open at 7pm. There will be a raffle. About halfway through the film we will have an intermission, when an Italian-themed meal will be served. Tickets can be purchased from the village hall office Monday to Friday 9.30-12noon, or online by using the QR code on the advert on page 11, or by using this URL: www.ticketsource.co.uk/benendenplayers/t-vvgpxmk

Paul Tolhurst



Short term emergency food and support for local people in crisis.

Please text FOOD35 £3 to 70070 to buy a meal for someone in crisis

Please look at the website for details on how to apply for food. Nourish does cover the Benenden area, meaning deliveries can be made to your home. For information call 01892 548892 www.nourishcommunityfoodbank.org.uk

J. PERIGOE & SON
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

PROUD TO BE SERVING THE
COMMUNITY SINCE 1852

Your fully independent, family owned, Funeral Directors serving the local community with compassion and the highest standards of service and professionalism.

With our 24-hour emergency service, we are only a telephone call away.

At the earliest stage possible, you will speak directly with one of our experienced Funeral Directors, who will be there to help, support and guide you through the whole of the funeral process.

Golden Charter

Bank Street, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 3EF
01580 713636

Dixter Road, Northiam, East Sussex TN31 6LB
01797 260316

enquiries@jperigoeandson.com
www.jperigoeandson.com

J. Perigoe and Son is a Trading Division of
West & Co Limited, 602 Rainham Road South,
Dagenham, Essex RM10 8YP

R.M Sports Therapy

Get your aches & pains eased by a professional, fully insured Graduate Sports Therapist in Benenden.

Injury assessment, massage, stretching, cupping, taping & exercise rehabilitation.

Reduce pain,
improve your flexibility,
strength & posture
with Rebecca Manford

(BSc Hons MSST) **07923 965601**

THE OAK BARN
Frame Farm

WEDDINGS & PARTIES

with elegance & rustic charm

From the magnificent, vaulted roof of The Oak Barn to the tranquillity of The Byre with its stunning views, Frame Farm is perfect for your celebration.

LUXURIOUS & AWARD WINNING ECO-VENUE

01580 441571 www.the-oak-barn.co.uk @theoakbarnff

JSH

**Construction Services
& Surveying**

Justin Hunt
07710 039 190
justin@jshsurveying.co.uk

Kitchen Fitting
Floor & Wall Tiling
Bathroom & Shower
Installation Flooring
Painting & Decorating
Drylining & Partition Walls
Suspended Ceilings
Decking & Patios
Cladding & Roofing
Garden Landscaping

Benenden Village Trust



Sat 5 April doors open 7pm film 7.30pm

Tickets £25, inc supper:

- www.ticketsource.co.uk/benendenplayers/t-vvgpxmk or scan this QR code
- Village Hall Mon-Fri 9.30am-12noon



Village Hall Fundraiser - pay bar and raffle



THE
TRADITIONAL VERANDAH
COMPANY



Bespoke structures designed and made in Great Britain

www.ttvc.co.uk

01580 854891

Village lunch

All Benenden villagers are invited to join us for lunch in the village hall at 12.30pm on Tuesday 11 March. If you would like to come and haven't written your name down already, then please ring me by Thursday 6 March if possible. Lifts can be arranged. We look forward to seeing you.
Sheila Hume 854627

Playground helpers please

Could you spare a little time to help the children of Benenden and Iden Green? Benenden Village Trust, which runs the playgrounds in both centres, is looking for volunteers to help keep the play spaces clean, tidy and safe for children to play in.

We are very lucky to have two well-equipped and very popular playgrounds - Benenden's was rebuilt in 2019 and Iden Green's in 2021 with the generous support of many - but the very nature of the playgrounds, being mostly made of wood and open to the elements, means they need frequent monitoring and occasional maintenance and tidying up.

We cannot simply leave that task to the annual inspection by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. We need a small group of volunteers, perhaps parents or grandparents, willing to organise themselves to occasionally sweep up the leaves and twigs, or clean the equipment where appropriate, report faults and perhaps even carry out minor repairs.

I have undertaken these simple tasks at Iden Green since 2021, often roping my husband Bill into making straightforward repairs. Living so close to Iden Green playground I'm happy to continue to help out as one of a team. By keeping our playgrounds in good order, we will surely prolong their useful life, giving countless hours of fun and pleasure to the children and their families.

If you can help, or would like to know more, please contact Caroline Levett, BVT's manager (bvttrust@gmail.com).

Julie Lewis, Trustee, Benenden Village Trust

Benenden Village Trust

Julie Lewis's appeal for playground volunteers (see left-hand column) is part of a wider campaign by BVT, the charity which runs many of the recreational facilities in the parish, to encourage greater involvement by the community and help eliminate our large and persistent annual financial deficit.

As part of this drive we will also be running a second fund-raising film night in the village hall on 5 April, following the success of our first one, last November (more information on pages 9 and 11).

The trust is delighted to report that its financial difficulties have been eased somewhat, though far from solved, by very generous help from the parish council. First, it has made a £5,000 grant towards the cost of the new heating system in the village hall, which has replaced a very old, inefficient and unreliable one. Second, the parish council has agreed, for the next five years, to pay the cost of maintaining the recreation grounds in both Benenden and Iden Green. This is currently a BVT responsibility, costing more than £5,000 per annum.

The trust is extremely grateful to the parish council for all the help, which underlines the value to the village of its institutions working together for the benefit of the whole community.

The grants will help cut the BVT's annual deficit in 2025-26 but the charity is still expected to be heavily in the red, due to sharply rising costs and vital repairs needed to its properties. The trust is taking further urgent action to eliminate the deficit, including a freeze on non-vital expenditure and enforcing its legal duty to ensure that all private tenants of its properties pay a fair market rent.

Martin Dickson,

Chairman, Benenden Village Trust

Theobald Upholstery

Established 1975



Professional and traditional upholsterers

Most types of furniture re-upholstered and repaired. Cushion interior replacement service, antique restoration, stockists for DIY enthusiasts, extensive range of fabrics.

Workshop 5, Slaney Place Farm
Headcorn Road, Staplehurst, Kent TN12 0DT

www.theobaldsfurniture.co.uk
Tel: 01580 890055

T.W. FUGGLE & SON

FAMILY FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Private Chapels of Rest 24-HOUR SERVICE

All arrangements undertaken with personal attention

Pre-paid funeral plans arranged through Golden Charter

20 Ashford Road, Tenterden - 01580 763340 - www.twfuggle.co.uk



Benenden Village Hall

"Let your imagination run wild – the hall can be anything you want!"



Call John Betts on
07419 989830 for details

www.benendenvillagehall.org

The Bull at Benenden



Sunday Roasts
Private Functions
Local Ales, Ciders & Wine
Roaring Fires
Cozy Corners
Classic Pub Grub
Daily Specials



01580 240 054 . 07729 353 541 . TN17 4DE . @bullbenenden
enquiries@thebullatbenenden.co.uk

hobbs parker

Uncomplicated,
trustworthy and
confidential advice if you
are selling or letting ■

Ashford: 01233 506260 Tenterden: 01580 766766

www.hobbsparker.co.uk

Village spring tidy

The next village litter pick will take place on Saturday 29 March between 9am and 11am. Litter picking is a simple action that anyone can do to make an immediate and visible difference and protect and enhance the appearance of the village. The parish council leads an organised village tidy event every spring and autumn, with equipment provided by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, and is extremely grateful to our volunteers, many of whom have become regulars and take part every year.

Equipment (litter pickers, hi-viz jackets, gloves and bin bags) can be collected outside the village shop from 9am. Volunteers can take part at any time for any length of time between 9am and 11am. Litter collected and bagged should be left at the village hall and equipment returned to the shop by 11am. Volunteers will receive a voucher for a drink and cake to be used at Benenden's café.

For more information email:
clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org

Iden Green and Benenden WI

It was brilliant seeing Delia Taylor again at our February meeting. As usual she was eloquent and very entertaining during her talk on memories of Desert Island Discs. Two members have volunteered to represent us at the West Kent AGM on 19 March. We send them our thanks and look forward to hearing all about it on their return.

At our meeting on 18 March, Melanie Gibson Barton is coming to talk about the suffragettes. We have also arranged a number of social meetings at the Memorial Hall, when we are able to chat over tea and cake and meet interesting local personalities. Our first will be on 4 April when Nancy Warne, Mayor of Tunbridge Wells, will be coming.

Jackie Liffen 752232 WI@daisystar.co.uk

*The Rector and Parochial Church Council
extend a warm invitation to our*

ST GEORGE'S PATRONAL FESTIVAL ON SUNDAY 27 APRIL FROM 5PM

*Allowing us to worship together at Choral Evensong,
and afterwards share refreshments and discuss
exciting plans for the future of St George's*



St George's Patronal Festival

To celebrate St George, St George's and our Benenden community: this will be an opportunity for the community to worship together in our beautiful church on a Sunday close to St George's Day, without clashing with Easter Day.

Following the service, there will be time with refreshments to discuss our exciting plans to restore, refresh and renew St George's, making it sustainable, accessible, and comfortable into the future. Come and join the festival celebration.

Peter Brook, Community Liaison
benenden2020project@gmail.com

Merry and Bright

At our AGM it was decided that our committee will remain: Laraine Penny (chair), Julia Collard (secretary), David Collard (treasurer), Steve and Sandra West, Glenda Marshall, with a warm welcome to Carol Moore joining us.

Our year starts on 25 February, when Lauren Smith will talk about limb loss and the disabilities it involves, and what people can achieve when determined. Our Victorian tea will follow.

Come along to see what we are all about. Our next meeting is on 25 March and the first visit is free. For further information please contact us:

Laraine Penny 241763

Julia Collard 241944



WE ARE PLEASED TO OFFER

**SKILLED GARDEN
MAINTENANCE
PLANTING & PRUNING**

BORDER DESIGN & ADVICE
SUPPLY OF OWN GROWN
TREES - SHRUBS -
CLIMBERS

WISTERIA A SPECIALITY

The Laurels Nursery, Dingledown, Benenden, Granbrook, Kent TN17 4JU
Phone 01580 240463
www.thelaurelsnursery.co.uk

Private Tuition

Remote Sessions
Now Available

Boosting Confidence & Developing Potential
With Clare Leek

clare.intuition@btinternet.com
07711 619536



Primary Subjects
Singapore Maths
French

inTuition

K JONES ELECTRICAL
Electrical and Solar Contractors
Accredited, qualified and trusted local
family business
for over 40 years
Free Estimates
01580 848118
kevin.kjoneselectrical@gmail.com

ANDY AND SUE'S
MOBILE
LOG SPLITTING
SERVICE



Please call
01580 241792
07887 997551

**ANITA MEEKINS
PRIVATE HIRE**

FIRST CLASS SERVICE

Ordinary & Executive Vehicles
& 8 seater minibus with seat belts

All drivers & vehicles
licensed & tested

Long & short journeys
& courier service available

Business accounts welcome

Tel: 01580 240713
Mobile: 07774 672 043
anitameekinsph@btconnect.com



**Town & Country
Homecare Limited**

Q Care Quality
Commission
Rated
Good

**PRIVATE CARE
TAILORED TO
SUIT AN
INDIVIDUAL'S
EXACT NEEDS**

Call today and make your life
just a little bit easier

Natalie or Chloe: 01580 762244
www.townandcountryhomecare.co.uk



**ARE YOU A CARING,
COMPASSIONATE
PERSON?**

Why not join our team of
friendly carers? Full training
provided to all applicants.

**Call today on the
number above to
arrange an interview.**

Hourly Rate, Mileage AND Travel Time paid from first to last
call. Enhanced rates for NVQ Workers.

Primary School

Last term was another very busy and purposeful one. I was delighted to join Year 6 on their residential trip to Bowles outdoor centre in Tunbridge Wells. They demonstrated all our school values of curiosity, courage, compassion and commitment. I spent time with all the groups: high and low ropes, skiing, rock climbing, raft building, orienteering, and the instructors were very impressed with the children and how kind and caring they were towards each other.

Year 4 enjoyed a trip to Wakehurst Place for a workshop at which they learnt all about different plants, products, fruit and spices associated with the rainforest. Later, they went on a walk around the grounds.

At the beginning of February, 49 children from across our federation took part once again in the Young Voices concert at the O2. There were over 9,000 children involved and it was an incredible experience.

As we approached half term, we celebrated Mental Health Week. The children took part in a range of activities around the theme of 'Know yourself, grow yourself', which encouraged them to understand how important it is to talk about their feelings, to support their mental health and wellbeing. All classes took part in a live 'Yogabugs' Yoga session with schools countrywide, as well as wellbeing bingo and art.

During the art sessions, children focused on drawing, decorating and creating a tree focusing on the roots. This led into conversations about how everyone has their unique roots that make them special, focusing on their interests, abilities, personalities and families. At the end of the week, we enjoyed 'Wear your scarf to school day'. Children celebrated the SCARF values that promote children's health and wellbeing: Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience and Friendship.

Lindsay Roberts, Executive Headteacher
240565 office@benenden-cep.kent.sch.uk
www.benenden-cep.kent.sch.uk



Friends of Benenden Primary

With a new year comes a new PTFA team at Benenden Primary School. Jane Mason and myself are taking the reins from the wonderful Rachel Tinker, who has accomplished some incredible things for our school during her time as chair. On behalf of the children and staff and parents at our school we would like to thank Rachel sincerely for all her hard work and dedication and only hope we can do her proud with what is to come.

Jane and I both have children in Year 4 and I also have a son in Year 1. We both have bags of enthusiasm and look forward to bringing fun events to bring everyone together and make money for the school. We see this as a team effort and more of a Friends of Benenden Primary association, where everyone's ideas and support are both welcomed and gratefully received.

So, what events can we look forward to this term? Amongst Valentine's Day bake sales to raise money for school trips, we also have our Easter Hunt, which was lots of fun last year as each child searched high and low for hidden letters to spell out a secret word, receiving a delicious chocolate egg for their hard work.

You will also see some of our stalls at the Benenden Fete on Saturday 14 June.

Evie Banfield, Friends of Benenden CE Primary
friends@benenden-cep.kent.sch.uk
www.benenden-cep.kent.sch.uk/PTFA/

STRENGTH TRAINING FOR WOMEN

One-to-one at my
studio in Benenden

www.thiswomanlifts.com
elizabeth@thiswomanlifts.com
07886833260

You're never too old to reap the
benefits...

- Stronger bones
- Increased metabolic rate
- Improved posture & stability
- Better blood pressure control
- Maintenance of a healthier body composition
- Reduced injury risk

APPLE PIE FARM STORAGE

Short and long term storage
requirements solved!

Storing furniture ? Re-decorating ? Uncluttering ? Renting your house out ? Ideal for storing garden machinery, sports equipment etc.

Talk to us about our storage, delivery and collection of your accounting data.

Speak to us on **01580 388754** or visit our
website: **www.apfcontainerstorage.co.uk**

UNIT 14 APPLE PIE FARM, CRANBROOK ROAD, BENENDEN, TN17 4EU
Telephone: **01580 388754** • Mobile: **07515 649688**



Benenden's
SHOP POST OFFICE CAFÉ

B's

Volunteers Needed
For
Shop Service
&
Café Service

Learn how to make
that perfect coffee
and serve it!

01580 279808

www.benendens.co.uk/volunteers

info@benendens.co.uk

Benenden's

SHOP POST OFFICE CAFÉ

B's

... it's the word on The Street!

An excellent range of groceries, breads, vegetables, beers and wines, and Post Office services. We offer a friendly welcome to all our customers as well as delicious drinks and snacks.

Shop opening hours: 7.30am-5pm Monday to Saturday and 9am-1pm on Sunday.

Post Office opening hours: 7.30am-5pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday,
7.30am-4pm on Wednesday and 7.30am-12pm on Saturday.

Café opening hours: 8.30am-2.30pm Monday to Friday and 8.30am-1.30pm on Saturday
for inhouse and takeaway drinks, hot and cold snacks and mouthwatering cakes.

info@benendens.co.uk

Tel: 01580 279808

HEMSTED
PARK

BENENDEN SCHOOL

SPRING/SUMMER 2025

Book now at hemstedpark.com



An Audience with Davina McCall

8 March



Benjamin Grosvenor: Pianist

16 March



Len Phillips Swing Orchestra;
100 years of Big Band

6 April



Puss in Boots

17 April



Thank You
for the Music

3 May



NT Live:
The Importance of
Being Earnest

11 May



Dad's Army:
The Radio Show

29 May



Romeo & Juliet

31 August

In partnership with


BURFIELDS HOUSE
WEALTH MANAGEMENT


Tongole
foundation

Benenden School

You may have seen some coverage in the media recently in which I have been talking up the benefits of single-sex schools, especially for girls. I am an enormous advocate of single-sex education and when it's done well - as is very much the case here at Benenden - it is a truly transformational experience for students and something I am very happy to advocate loud and clear.

Over the past few weeks, we've celebrated achievements across all aspects of Benenden life. It has been lovely to welcome so many candidates for our various scholarships recently, while other highlights have included students enjoying success in a National Schools Debating Competition, as well as numerous sporting successes in squash, netball, fencing and lacrosse. I am delighted to see the positive impact our sixth formers who are volunteering to help teach coding to children from Cranbrook Primary are having. This is a wonderful example of our students learning the art of leadership at the same time as taking an active role in their community, both of which are vital aspects of our complete education.

With spring in sight, Hemsted Park promises some more fantastic entertainment including an evening with Davina McCall in celebration of International Women's Day on Saturday 8 March and an afternoon performance by the understated and brilliant pianist Benjamin Grosvenor on Sunday 16 March. I hope to see many of you at these events.

Rachel Bailey, Headmistress

VE80 celebration

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and 'Victory in Europe Day' celebrates the formal acceptance of Germany's unconditional surrender on 8 May 1945.

To mark the occasion Benenden Players are presenting an afternoon of song and spoken word on 11 May at 2pm in the village hall. You are invited to dress up and bring your own picnic and singing voice! There will be a bar as well as a raffle in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund.

If you have memories of VE day and would be happy to create a short narration to read, or to have read by one of the players, please contact Peter Ellis. We are especially keen to hear from people living in Benenden and the surrounding areas at the time the war ended.

There are only 100 tickets priced at £10 each available at www.benendenplayers.co.uk or by calling Peter on 07860 941139.

Planning Matters

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

- 24/03253/FULL Land To The West Of Beacon House, Rolvenden Road. (Retrospective) - Relaid vehicular access.
- 25/00107/FULL Kingfishers, Hopehouse Hens, Standen Street. Proposed dwelling with associated parking, amenity space and landscaping. Removal of temporary mobile home.
- 25/00196/FULL School Farm House, Cranbrook Road. Replacement of existing dwelling to create a single storey detached dwelling, with associated garage and car parking.
- 24/02970/TPO - New Development Site, Standen Street. TREES: OAK (T1) - Raise crown to 5m & reduce from building by 2-3m; OAK (T2) - Raise crown to 5m & reduce from building by 3-4m. Granted.

More planning matters at:
benendenparishcouncil.org

Benenden Hospital

March shines a light on female health topics, with Endometriosis Awareness Month and Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, and celebrates women with International Women's Day (8 March) and Mother's Day (30 March).

I feel it's important to reflect upon the frequent media coverage about female health, particularly about endometriosis, a painful disease in which tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus. Many patients struggle for years before they reach a diagnosis.

However, I'm pleased to see that many charities and people are advocating for better healthcare and support for women, and more is being done to urge women to attend important screenings and to keep speaking up if something feels wrong.

At Benenden Hospital, we support health and wellbeing for both men and women, with a wealth of information in our dedicated male and female health hubs on our website. This year, I wanted to launch a service which focussed on bettering the health and wellbeing of female patients and it was wonderful to see our two new female health assessment packages, 'The Essentials and The Advanced', launch in January.

The assessments are led by our private GP, Dr Fiona Warner, who brings extensive expertise in female health. Through her work at Rye Medical Centre, our hospital and her additional training with the British Menopause Society and Newson Health, Dr Warner specialises in a wide range of female health topics, including contraception, sexual health, incontinence, menopause, hormone replacement therapy (including testosterone) and more. I'm excited to see the significant impact this service will have on the lives of many women.

It is important to carve out time for yourself and to ensure you get any persistent symptoms checked, but also to offer support to the women in your life - it could be your friend, neighbour, sister, mother, grandmother, wife or daughter. Every woman and indeed every person has the right to better wellbeing.

Claire Harley, Hospital Director

VINEHALL INTERNATIONAL CLASSICAL CONCERT SERIES 36th Season 2024-25

WIGMORE SOLOISTS

Ben Gilmore (Violin) Annabelle Meare (Violin)

Rachel Roberts (Viola)

Christopher Murray (Cello)

Michael Collins (Clarinet)

Alberto Menéndez Escribano (Horn)

Sunday 10 March 2025 at 3pm

Programme

Mozart Horn Quintet in E flat K.407

Mozart Clarinet Quintet in A major K.581

Sinigaglia Romanze for Horn and Strings, op.3

Coleridge-Taylor Clarinet Quintet in F sharp minor, op.10

For full details, free mailing, tickets call 01580 883092

or write to A.G. Whitehead, Vinehall School,

Robertsbridge, East Sussex TN32 5JL

geoffreywhitehead@vinehallschool.com

Benenden Pre-School

We have been celebrating the Chinese New Year of the Snake. People born in that year are said to have many characteristics, including wisdom and liking to learn new things. They are also known to be caring and determined. The preschoolers of Benenden ably illustrate these traits. Their determination saw them working hard at manipulating their chopsticks when eating noodles at snack time and concentrating heroically on threading pasta onto long pipe cleaners to create slithering snakes.

Their thinking and learning skills have been demonstrated by their curiosity to find out about snakes. We have been reading about anacondas and black mambas and have found out that snakes' teeth are called fangs. We have been exercising our shoulder muscles using rollers dipped in the classic Chinese colours of red and gold to paint snakes gliding across long sheets of paper on the floor.

Children born in the year of the snake focus on achieving their goals and we support the youngest members of our community in meeting their ambitions.

Lucy Oakley, Supervisor

supervisor@benendenpreschool.co.uk

Fun Chicago Bridge afternoon

Enjoy an afternoon of fun playing Chicago Bridge, in aid of St Nicholas Church, Sandhurst, on Wednesday 19 March. Tables of four £24.

Come along to the Mission Church, Back Road, Sandhurst, TN18 5JU at 1.40pm for a 2pm start. Play will finish by 5pm. Please bring your own bridge cloth, cards, pencils and bidding boxes if you have them.

There will be tea, delicious cakes, prizes and a raffle. To book tables or for further information contact:

Anne Tylden-Wright 850281
tyldenwright@gmail.com

Talking shop

It has been all change at Benenden's recently with the installation of a new till system, which is ultimately going to make life more efficient but is taking a while for us all to assimilate. Thank you for your patience as we get to grips with the new technology. There might be a few furrowed brows for a while! It has taken a great deal of hard work and extra time in evenings to adjust the new system to meet our needs and we would like to thank all those staff who have given their time to achieving this.

The good news is that Hannah's flowers are back in time for Mother's Day and hopefully as a portent of better weather to come. In response to requests from customers, we are also offering a breakfast deal: a bacon or sausage bap plus a hot drink for £4.45 between the times of 7.30am and 9am from Monday to Friday.

Finally, and importantly, I repeat the invitation to all our wonderful volunteers for the volunteers' evening from 6-8pm on Thursday 13 March. We hope as many of you as possible can attend so we can share updates with you and try to sort out any queries you might have with the committee. You are vital to the successful running of Benenden's.

Bev Beveridge info@benendens.co.uk
www.benendens.co.uk

Benenden Art Fair

I am delighted that plans for the Benenden Art Fair, 3-5 October 2025, are starting to take shape. For those of you who don't know, this is a local fair which happens every October in the village hall. Our mission is to unveil and celebrate the abundance of artistic talent flourishing in Kent and Sussex, most of whom are right on our doorstep. We provide a professional yet friendly setting, fostering a sense of community support that welcomes artists of all backgrounds and experience levels.

We were overwhelmed by the amount of enthusiasm received for BAF in 2024 and it was a joy to see how well the fair was received. This year, we are expanding the event to include up to 40 artists, making the most of the hall and creating a jam-packed programme for our art enthusiasts. Our main aim is to widen our audience and to get BAF's name out there, so please help us spread the word and invite friends and family to come along.

If you're an artist who is interested in taking part, applications will be open on our website www.benendenartfair.com from 3 March to 25 April. If you'd like to be notified when applications open, please get in touch by emailing benendenartfair@gmail.com or sign up to our newsletter via our website.

I hope you are as excited as I am for this year's fair. You will hear more from me in a few months, but for now, please do pop the dates in your diaries. Thank you for reading and for the support we have received so far. See you in October.

Hannah Buchanan, Benenden Art Fair Director
[@benendenartfair](https://www.benendenartfair.com)

Clubs, Sports and Recreation



Dig for Victory: start now to grow your flower power

To mark the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, we are encouraging all Benenden residents to 'Dig for Victory' and show their results at the Benenden Gardening Club's first Summer Flower & Produce Show on Saturday 12 July at the Iden Green Pavilion. There are 15 classes to enter and we hope this will encourage you to start planning your growing season now. Everyone is welcome to take part, whether you are members of the Gardening Club or not.

We are very pleased that Ron Froud will be our eminent judge on the day. Ron is highly experienced, officiating at horticultural shows across London and the South-East. He spent his working life in charge of the many City of London Gardens, now lives here in Benenden and is the chairman of the Benenden Gardening Club, whose members were privileged to visit his beautiful garden last year.

More details on how to enter will follow in a future issue of this magazine but you are welcome to email me to register your interest or for more information.

Happy Gardening.

Sally-Ann Marks sallymarks100@hotmail.com

The CLASSES to enter are: FLOWERS

- Single rose
- Display of roses
- Display of sweet peas
- Any other single bloom
- Display of garden flowers
- Arrangement of flowers in a standard teacup
- Any succulent or cacti display in a pot

VEGETABLES

- Four onions (as near same size)
- Four potatoes (as near same size)
- Display of vegetables (at least four types for artistic effect)

FRUIT

- Six strawberries (as near same size)
- Six raspberries (as near same size)
- Display of any other soft fruit for artistic effect (could be mixed)

CHILDREN'S CLASS (12 years and under)

An exotic animal or bird (imaginary or not) made from fruit and/or vegetables

MISCELLANEOUS

The ugliest/funniest vegetable

BEST IN SHOW AWARD

Awarded by the judge for the best overall entry






**Hannah's
Garden**
www.hannahsgarden.net

SCENTED AND SEASONAL
ABUNDANT VARIETY
ENGLISH GARDEN FLOWERS


WEDDINGS + BOUQUETS + DIY + ONLINE
CALL: 07958 081915

ELECTRICIAN

Do you want a safe, reliable, reasonable priced Electrician?
LED Lighting - Fault finding - Extra Sockets
Outside Lights - Smoke Detectors - No Job Too Big or Small
NEW FUSE BOARDS
Fully insured qualified electrician. 6 year Guarantee



I assure you of a quick response
Call Nick now 07776 254458
email: nick@njhelectrical.co.uk
www.njhelectricalservices.co.uk





**PEASMARSH
PLACE**

Peasmarsh Place Country Care has been an independent provider of elderly care since 1984, started by the current Viscount Devonport



Peasmarsh Place Care Home is a stunning residential home set in 5 acres on a country estate in Peasmarsh, East Sussex. The residents of the home are supported and cared for by the trained team who provide care 24 hours a day. All our rooms are en suite and offer luxurious accommodation. As the home caters for up to twenty elderly residents, staff can assess and fully understand each resident's needs.

We offer residential, convalescence and respite stays.

Why not contact the home, arrange a visit, and see what we have to offer?

Peasmarsh Place, Peasmarsh, Rye, TN31 6XE | Tel: 01797 230555
www.peasmarshplace.co.uk | Email: manager@peasmarshplace.co.uk



Would you like to join us?

A growing magazine won't write (or run) itself, so we'd love your help

You may have read in these pages recently the story of how the Benenden Magazine came to be, from its early days as an old-school church production to its present colourful A4 incarnation.

Of course, with such progress comes added demands: it takes a lot of work to produce a 40-page glossy and also a lot of money, and it all has to come from somewhere. It helps that we're a 'not-for-profit' organisation, but the real key to it, as with most things in the village, is volunteers - those selfless individuals who will do the job for nothing but the warm glow of satisfaction.

At the sharp end of magazine production are the editorial team, consisting of two co-editors - myself and Ruth Clark - and our layout expert Camilla Macdonald. We write, sub-edit, edit and design the thing every month, which is an honour and a privilege, but it is graft - not like being down the pit, but it takes a lot of time and effort.

So, if you happen to go into the community shop and Ruth is on another one of her volunteering missions, behind the counter serving coffee, you may find yourself co-opted to write your story, or somebody else's, because we need your help to keep going.

All the writing in the world is no good, however, if your magazine collapses due to lack of funds, which is where Paul Leek, our business and advertising manager, comes in.

Paul is a long-standing 'employee' who keeps a tight(ish) grip on the purse strings and a beady eye on the bottom line, but much of his job is about persuading others to supply us with the necessary funds to stay healthy.

"It's free to all Benenden households and that's underpinned by advertising income," he says. "We average more than 80 advertisers through the year - many sign up for the full 12 months - and we have a good mix of local businesses and advertisers from the wider area."

Getting money in, though, is only half the battle. It has to be marshalled carefully with an eye to the long term, with the recognition that it's all part of the big picture in the village.

"My job is to maintain the financial health of the magazine," Paul explains, "and I make sure that we more than cover our costs each year. We do make a small surplus, and we channel our charitable giving through St George's parochial church council (PCC), with our contribution becoming part of their Mission Fund.

"The timely issue of invoices is crucial, strong business management ensures that all income and costs are forecast and recorded, and we also retain a reserve fund - a contingency to protect us against unexpected costs [such as the hefty sum the editors extract to pay for the annual volunteers' and deliverers' social].

"I work closely with Charles Trollope, the PCC treasurer, to track and forecast our finances; and with Camilla, to manage and accommodate the demand for advertising space."

Paul embraces the community the job and the rewards of working with an enthusiastic group, but where there are volunteers, there is also the need for more volunteers, which is where we came in.

"It's a job that brings many rewards," he concludes, "but with the growing success of the magazine I find that my work has increased so I'm now looking for someone to join me and become part of our small team."

So, if you're an accountant with a little time to spare, or somebody who can count and wants to do their bit, please consider joining us. It's not the world's most onerous task - the most important things are enthusiasm and a desire to see the village thrive.

Contact:

benendenparishmagazine@gmail.com



fixing leaking taps to complete kitchens & bathrooms ~ radiator cleaning & maintenance ~ tiling ~ curtain poles ~ swimming pools ~ doors & locks ~ general carpentry ~ paintwork repairs ~ fencing ~ patios ~ mowing ~

Pipes & Nails

- Home • Garden •

Property Maintenance
Plumbing & Handyman Service

Local & Trusted
~ We'll take *care* of your home ~
Fast, local emergency help.
No job too small.
No call-out charge.

Chris Leach 07919 143755
leachfamily@gmail.com
www.pipesandnails.com





MR NOAH'S NURSERY SCHOOL CIC

<https://mrnoahs.org>


We know your area, because it's our area too.

Connect with us





Savills Cranbrook
+44 (0) 1580 720 161
cranbrook@savills.com



CRANBROOK

Promoting health and wellbeing to build a stronger community

Wellbeing in the Weald

Feel like making new friends and trying new activities?
Wellbeing in the Weald is here for you!



We organise and support groups that bring people in our rural communities together socially.
To learn more about the activities we run, see our website at www.wellbeingintheweald.co.uk where you can also sign up to our newsletter.

TAKE NOTICE CONNECT GIVE BE ACTIVE KEEP LEARNING
Get in touch with us by email: hello@wellbeingintheweald.co.uk or phone 07961669575

Supported by 

Registered charity number: 1190083

www.wellbeingintheweald.co.uk



The Care Company

Inspected and rated
Good

 Care Quality Commission

The Complete Care Service for You at Home
Tenterden, Cranbrook and surrounding areas

All our services are available on a short-term or ad-hoc basis, with no contract, including:

- Night Cover
- Accessing the Community
- Sit-in Services
- Medication Management

Contact our Manager, Vicky, for more information
01580 762202 www.carecompany.biz
care@carecompany.care

Spotlight



parked at Allington Library, then my forward journey to Benenden (while brushing my teeth), the weather (heated socks on?), and I run through the route in my head (while waiting for the kettle to boil).

I think of all the wonderful people I will meet today, (while making my lunch). The mobile library's route today contains mainly 'dens'. The meaning: Denn (Kentish), woodland pasture, especially for swine. "It's piggy wood Tuesday," I call

out to the cat as I lock my front door and start my day.

Maidstone mobile library is one of Kent County Council's five high-tech vehicles commissioned in 2021. With over 900 visitors a month, it stops at 59 locations in a fortnight.



'Best job in the world': Confessions of a mobile library driver

Every other Tuesday, Jo Woolgar arrives in Benenden, bringing the mobile library to the village. "One of the best jobs in the world," she declares.

I really should get up earlier. "Go for a morning run" a friend once said. "Have a cold shower, it will change your life," said another. The morning run was abhorrent but, oh, my word, the clarity of a cold shower. It was clear that this idea was insane!

I need to be prompt. I need to clock watch, as no matter the weather, the library patrons will be waiting. They have planned their day around my arrival, I'm in their diaries, marked in their calendars, I am pinned on their fridges. They are eager for reading material, they come with friends, to catch up with neighbours, they discuss local issues, community matters, road closure, sometimes they even talk about books.

As Nancy Cooke, Kent's first county librarian, said: "Have you ever felt that terrible boredom of not knowing where to go or what to do? You have longed for some excitement, some romance, for something to happen in your life. When you feel like that, remember the pleasure, the thrill and the happiness that books can give you."

As a professional driver of 20 years, I take advantage of modern technology. I check my drive time to pick up the mobile library van that is

The history of the mobile library in Kent takes us back 100 years. Miss Cooke commissioned a new innovation: the first purpose-built Kent County Library van, made by Lewis Godden, a coachbuilder from West Malling, and based on a Vulcan lorry chassis. It was lined with bookshelves from which the local volunteer librarians could make their own choice for book exchanges. The van went into service on 16 December 1924 and a year later it had visited 286 Kent villages, travelled 6,000 miles and issued 55,000 books.

The route to Benenden is a glorious drive: across the river at Maidstone, down Linton Hill, through Staplehurst and onwards to Sissinghurst. →





Hand-Finished Curtains
& Blinds
Fabrics & Poles
Upholstery & Loose Covers
Wallpaper & Paint
Lighting & Carpets

www.lucyandrew.co.uk

@lucyandrewinteriors ~ lucy@lucyandrew.co.uk ~ 07930 507047

Cat Sitting Service BOOK NOW!



- Accredited in pet First Aid and CPR
- Accredited Feline behaviourist
- Over 10 years experience
- Your local Cat Specialist
- WhatsApp, text, call 07485 660 781

www.furrycatface.com

AMORA CARE

We are expanding our award-winning care to your area!

Personal care
Companionship & home help
Dementia care
Live-in and night care
Complex care
Post-hospital & respite
From 30-minute visits to live-in care

"Excellent service."



Gill, Tunbridge Wells

Fancy a change?
Join our team!
£13-25ph, paid travel
time, 50p mileage,
free MOT and more!



We are excited to announce that Amora Care's new office servicing
Cranbrook and surrounding areas is **NOW OPEN!**

Book a **free assessment** today:

01580 231701
amoracare.co.uk



An odd oncoming car looks shocked to see such a large vehicle approaching but the driver smiles at the sight of a travelling library, children wave, walkers grin, cyclist try to move over and are grateful for my patience. I take up the road when possible to avoid branches scratching the vehicle's body. In the dip on New Pond Road, I avoid the drain. Mary Berry has a habit of throwing herself off the top shelf in protest at this upheaval.

Arriving at the village hall in Benenden, the bus shelter is offering protection from the elements to any prompt

customers. Anne is waiting to collect her reservations and I take advantage of her wealth of knowledge, quizzing her extensively on a subject I've been pondering.

I ask if she would like to use the wheelchair lift for easy access, but she declines, determined to climb the steps. Su will pop her head in to collect her reads during a morning walk; Chris arrives, my greatest advocate of the service, followed by Colin who collects the next book in a series pre-ordered for him. Tony is not here today, I hope he's okay; Ruth is also on board, we chat about the printing industry and I hand over the books she has ordered via the KCC library app.

The mobile library has a large range of non-fiction on all subjects. I never need to consult them, I have brains to pick at all day on any subject (I recently planned French road trip on a customer's advice). How lucky to have access to this wealth of experience.

The 30 minutes at Benenden pass in haste and I'm soon off to Benenden Hospital. One customer when buying her house checked for the nearest library. When she saw the van parked close by, the deal was sealed.

I then make my way to Frittenden. The gang is all here, my usual suspects picking up their genres of choice, passing me lists of favourite authors,

torn-out pages from the Sunday paper's recommendations, asking how far down the list they are for the new Richard Osman novel. I ask about their travels, adventures, their families. I share in their joys and sorrows, their adventures and exploits. A passer-by steps on board, impromptu. Can we sign up to the service, when do you come, can I order books to collect, do you offer audio book, e-books, large print, children's books? "Yes," I gush, "of course." I can offer all these things.

The church bells chime and alert me that it is time to leave for Egerton. The open road allows me to cruise, I am grateful for the resurfacing of Bell Lane in recent years. Mary Berry concurs, staying in place with the other cookbooks.

The familiar faces of visitors bring me cheer. Egerton customers are my globe trotters, preordered travel books are issued, roving stories are swapped, they inspire my next

voyage, to see the world, to broaden my horizons. My final drive before a lunch stop will take me along Bedlam Lane. This wide, straight lane is a driver's reverie but I still have to ensure a careful pace or Mary will be hurling herself to the deck once more!

As I eat my sandwich I consider my role as a mobile library driver. It is unequivocally up there with the best jobs in the world. Its success and longevity are due to the dedication of its patrons, the community support and a thirst for literature, and I thank every visitor for enabling me to bring a van full of books to your village and for welcoming me into your lives.

Jo Woolgar

Mobile Library Timetable:

www.kent.gov.uk/mobilelibraries



TOMPSETT LANDSCAPING

GARDEN LANDSCAPE AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTORS

Tompsett Landscaping is a family run business which takes pride in offering a quality, professional, friendly and reliable service at competitive rates for all aspects of garden maintenance and landscaping.



Nick Tompsett
07746 672946

Rob Tompsett
07961 637275

E: info@tompsettlandscaping.co.uk
W: www.tompsettlandscaping.co.uk

PLEASE CONTACT US TODAY FOR YOUR FREE NO OBLIGATIONS QUOTATION



Local,
flexible,
rewarding job
opportunities

... for local,
flexible,
caring
people

SUPPORT WORKERS REQUIRED

to enrich lives of adults with learning disabilities (Benenden & Cranbrook)

For an informal chat and/or to request an application pack, contact:

Nicky Pooley (Registered Manager)
01580 240118

adminteam@thegrange2016.co.uk

www.thegrangekent.co.uk



BEACON HALL HOUSE LUXURY BED & BREAKFAST

Visit England 5* Gold with breakfast award

Julie Jex: 01580 240434 | jjjex@icloud.com
www.beaconhallhouse.co.uk

A delightful country home offering 5* bed and breakfast with a touch of luxury to visitors wishing to enjoy the beautiful Kent countryside.

Set within 7 acres of mature elevated gardens and paddock with splendid views over beautiful Wealden countryside.

Enjoy a swim in our heated outdoor pool (seasonal) or a game of tennis on our court within the grounds.

Relaxed evening suppers available by prior booking.

www.lambertandfoster.co.uk



Lambert & Foster



Looking to sell or let your property?

Book your appraisal online, by email or by phone

Call 01580 712 888 Email cranbrook@lambertandfoster.co.uk

Office 39 High Street, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 3DN

PROPERTY PROFESSIONALS FOR OVER 120 YEARS

List your
property



arla | propertymark



Bargain Carpets & Floors

Carpet and Vinyl supplied and fitted at reduced rates

- Same choice as any shop but up to half the price
- We can move your furniture for you and take away your old flooring



For free home sample viewing
and estimates please call Stuart or Lisa

01424 855882 / 07734 659834

bargainfloors@hotmail.co.uk

www.bargainfloors.co.uk

Checkatrade.com
Where reputation matters.

GREENACRE LANDSCAPES



Specialists in private garden
design & construction

Creating beautiful gardens since 1963

Patios • Brickwork
Decking • Stonework
Ponds • Water features
Planting schemes • Groundworks
Detailed plans • Portfolio available
Free Consultation

07595 024330
01892 722412

www.greenacrelandscapes.co.uk
Furnace Lane Nursery, Furnace Lane,
Brenchley, Kent TN12 7BX



If you're the driver, this means using your left hand to reach across your body to open the door. This seemingly minor adjustment, forces your body to turn, significantly increasing your field of vision, making it much easier to spot an approaching cyclist or pedestrian.

When you reach across your body to open the door, your shoulders automatically

rotate, encouraging you to look into the side mirror and glance back. This instinctive action helps you to naturally check your blind spot, drastically reducing the likelihood of inadvertently swinging the door into the path of an oncoming cyclist.

The beauty of the Dutch Reach lies in its simplicity. It requires no special equipment, no technological aid - just a small habit change. It's an intuitive safeguard that can be easily adopted by drivers of all ages. Implementing the Dutch Reach can be a community effort, starting with educating friends and family about its importance and practising it ourselves.

Giles Clark www.thebikeworkshop.com

Embrace the Dutch Reach and help save lives

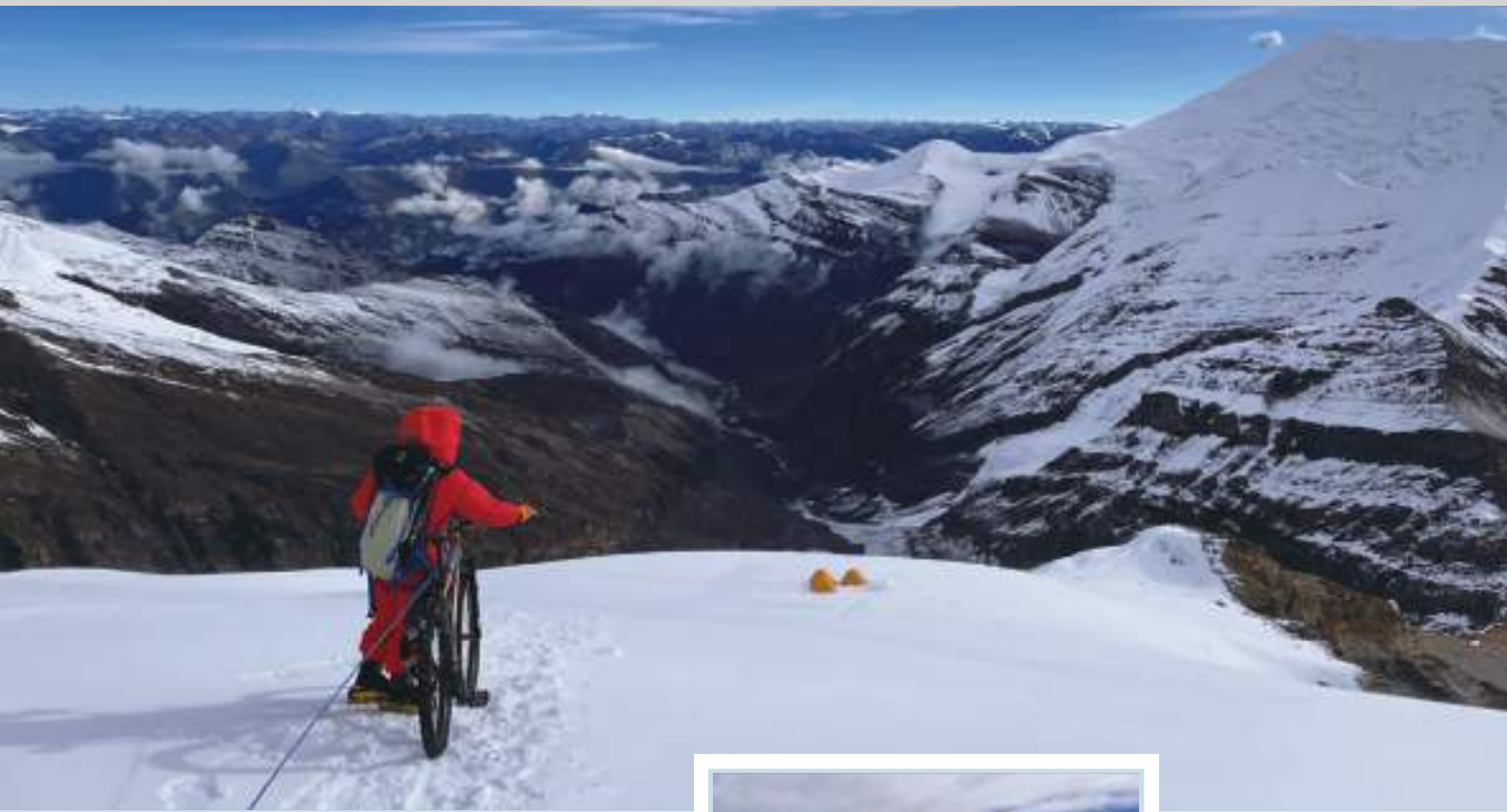
Last year two cyclists in Kent were killed running into car doors that were opened unexpectedly in front of them. If you think this only happens in built-up areas think again, one of the incidents happened in Rolvenden. Though precise figures are impossible to find, reports suggest that many others will have been injured in similar circumstances. 'Dooring' as it is known is a major cause of cycling casualties.

It's easy to see how it happens. A moment's inattention as a driver gets out of a car, the door flips open and the cyclist has nowhere to go. No-one is suggesting for a minute that this is done deliberately or maliciously, but nevertheless dooring is a criminal offence under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 and the Road Traffic Act 1988.

So what can be done to minimize the chance of a dooring happening? For cyclists, one option is to try and ride outside the door zone, which means staying four feet away from parked vehicles - not always practical. For the motorist, there is the 'Dutch Reach'.

Originating in The Netherlands the Dutch Reach is a technique that involves using the hand furthest from the car door to open it.





Highest bike ride: breaking records and raising life-changing funds

In the November issue Tim Maw described the arduous five-day trek made by the 'Highest Bike Ride Expedition' team from the airstrip at Juphal in Eastern Nepal, to the school in Kakgot and onwards to Putha Hiunchuli base camp. In this final instalment he takes us from base camp to the summit.

Despite many expeditions throughout the world, what lay ahead was a new experience; I had never ventured into what is known as 'extreme high altitude' above 6,000m. Our dream was to climb Putha Hiunchuli with mountain bikes to break the world record for the 'Highest Bike Ride' without supplementary oxygen.

Our base camp at 4,907m was higher than the world's highest ski resort and 100m higher than the summit of Mont Blanc. With only half the 21% oxygen enjoyed at sea level, our blood oxygen saturation level was down by 28%. Despite this we continued to acclimatise well whilst carrying our bikes on rough and steep terrain. Guinness World Records stipulated we had to carry our own bikes without Sherpa assistance and that meant climbing gear plus an extra 13.8kg.



Nima, our Nepali guide, had put together an amazing team of seven Sherpas. Between them they had an astonishing 46

Everest summits but only two had climbed Putha Hiunchuli. This remote mountain has no established routes but over the coming week we would set two camps before a summit bid.

Beyond base camp lay a tough, boulder-strewn glacial valley, where slushy moraine hid slippery grey ice underfoot. Five hours later a new white wall of ice gleamed in the sunlight. Only Neil and I had the energy to continue the extra hour beyond the snout to camp one at 5,400m. Seeing those orange tents come into view was a wonderful sight. We paused to catch breath and contemplate our desolate surroundings, left our bikes and descended to base camp to sleep for the night. To acclimatise, it is essential to climb high and sleep low, 'rotating' up and down the mountain.

The next day we all made it to camp one in glorious sunshine. Overnight the weather closed in and we awoke to fresh snow and very poor visibility. It was a brutal start to the day with several hours of steep ascent up to a giant slab

of rock. This led to the snowline at 6,000m, where we put on harnesses and crampons for the roped section to camp two. It was late by the time I reached the first snow ridge so I secured my bike to the line and descended to base camp to join the rest of the team. It had been an extremely tough day. Neil commented it had been "harder than my SAS selection".

After two rest days at base camp we set off for the final ascent, sleeping at camp one before another tough climb up to the crampon point the next morning. The weather was very bleak on the roped section but eventually the small group of orange tents appeared through the whiteout. We had the whole team safely at camp two. A great achievement.

At 6,216m, atmospheric oxygen was now down to 9.5% and doing anything required focus and effort. I

challenged Neil to a game of chess and eventually won. Together, we had broken the world record for the 'Highest Altitude Board Game' (Guinness approval pending). That night the noise of the tents flapping in the wind was terrifying. Our midnight departure for the summit was delayed until 2am, when conditions were marginally better but far from ideal. Deep snow, freezing temperatures and gusting winds took their toll and by daybreak only three of us remained with our Sherpas. Sunrise across the eastern Himalayas was a sight to behold; a dramatic reward after five hours climbing in the dark. The only peak above us was Dhaulagiri, the seventh highest mountain in the world at 8,167m.

Neil and Nima had powered on ahead. We spoke on the radio and realised they would not summit until 3pm. That meant Paul and I would not summit until 7pm. We were moving too slowly and that was too late for a safe return. Making that call to turn back was horrific but



on reflection it was the right decision. We were at about 6,500m and totally broken, with a nine-hour descent ahead of us.

Neil and Nima successfully summited that afternoon and rode their bikes in the deep snow. They made it back to base camp the following day in quite bad shape. Both said that summiting 'Putha' without supplementary oxygen was much harder than summiting Everest with oxygen. It was an extraordinary achievement and has been confirmed as the official Guinness World Record for the Highest Bike Ride at 7,246m.

Aside from world records and wonderful new friendships (both Nepali and English), the important legacy of our expedition is the support we can now give the Tenzing Norgay School in Kakgot; we smashed our £10,000 fundraising target, which really will be life changing for the children in that remote community. Our thanks go to all those who have supported us through this adventure.



CHALKDOWN RDA

Charity No1174554



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Chalkdown Riding for the Disabled, Staplehurst, are currently looking for volunteers to help with their therapeutic riding sessions on Wednesday and Thursday mornings in term time. If you have equine experience, enjoy being part of a team and would like to help our riders discover the healing powers of horses then please get in touch.

All volunteers will need to provide two references and will be DBS checked.

Email staplehurstda@gmail.com for more information

Or download an application form from chalkdownstaplehurst-rda.co.uk



YOUR LOCAL SUPPLIER OF

Topsoils | Composts | Barks
Decorative Stone | Aggregates
Small Bags, Bulk Bags
or Loose Loads

Delivered throughout the South East

Gardenscape

Freephone 0800 854663

www.gardenscapedirect.co.uk

sales@gardenscapedirect.co.uk

The Wharf, Rye Road, Newenden, TN18 5QG



Fast access to treatment for everyone

Our calm and welcoming hospital has high patient satisfaction rates, with access to over 250 self-pay treatments and services. As the only CQC rated Outstanding hospital in Kent, you can be confident in choosing Benenden Hospital for your diagnosis and treatment. Set in tranquil countryside, with specialist award-winning facilities, Benenden Hospital will ensure you receive first-class care from our dedicated clinical teams.

Over 100 years of excellent patient care.

To book an appointment, call now



01580 362 880



benendenhospital.org.uk



4.86 ★★★★★
Based on 3500+ reviews



Payment
plans
available

Choose Benenden Hospital for

- ✓ Fast access to diagnosis and treatment
- ✓ Leading and highly respected Consultants
- ✓ Compassionate and experienced teams
- ✓ Clear and easy to understand pricing

Self-pay treatments

Why wine duty hikes won't stop me drinking well

If you're a wine drinker on a budget, it won't have escaped your notice that our lovely government has just introduced a new set of tariffs that will make the task of drinking well for not too much money harder than ever.

As you may know, I 'look after' the wine room in the village shop, and we had a visit recently from one of our suppliers to discuss what was happening, which turned out to be a rather longer conversation than I was anticipating.

What the government has done is introduce the most convoluted system possible to bleed more money from the beleaguered British wine drinker. It's not just rises in duty (to add to massive post-Brexit rises in import costs and paperwork), it's rises applied on a sliding scale, depending not on volume, as was the case, but on the strength of each individual wine, measured by 'ABV' (or alcohol by volume), which, of course, to make matters worse, can change from vintage to vintage.

In brief, the single amount of duty formerly paid on wines between 11.5 and 14.5% (which was £2.67 for a standard 75cl bottle) has now been replaced with an array of up to 30 payable amounts, moving up the scale of ABV in increments of 0.5%.

As an example, the duty on a bottle of wine that's 14.5% ABV will go up from £2.67 a bottle to £3.21 - that's a rise of 54p. At the very lowest (and rarest) end of ABV, up to 12%, there may be minor decreases (you'll save 13p at 11.5%), but for the vast majority of wines there will be substantial

increases, and that's even before we take inflation into account. Curiously enough, buy yourself a 15% blockbuster and you'll find the duty has gone down to the tune of 12p.

All of which is to say that, at Benenden's, as at every other retailer in the land, wine prices will be going up, although we'll do our best to keep the rises as low as possible.

Will I be giving up wine because it's going to cost me a bit more? No, I don't suppose so. Will I be drinking less? Probably not. Will I keep looking for good-value wines that give every drinker in the parish the maximum enjoyment for as little as possible? That's the Benenden's way.

The rather better news

I've recently unearthed a little gem of a wine that has quickly become a household favourite in the Thomas household. It's called Albarino de Sillages and it's a reworking of the archetypal north-western Spanish coastal grape variety by a producer in the good-value region of the Pays d'Oc in southern France: the excellent co-operative Vignobles de Foncalieu, which also makes our lovely Le Versant Viognier.

Sillages has all the white stone fruit you'd expect on the nose, a lively, peachy palate and a touch of characteristic salinity on the finish, which makes it a perfect accompaniment to seafood and white meat, although my bottles rarely get past the aperitif stage. Now available in your village shop for a bargain £11.50, with no price rise, while stocks last.

Peter Thomas



In Your Garden

Forget holidays, it's time to wake up to spring

I have been gardening now for over 15 years, which as gardeners go is not a very long time. It is, by nature, a lifetime of work. However, as each year has taught me, by the time we reach March I am aware that if I do not have a busy month outside, my garden (or worse, a client's) will be in a mess for six months. Blink and it will be gone! As Alan Titchmarsh wrote over 20 years ago: "This is not the month to be taking a holiday."

Quite a lot is starting to flower now. We have had snowdrops and aconites, and the hellebores, daphnes, primroses and cyclamen coum are on their final stretch as we welcome in magnolias, narcissi and crocus, lily-of-the-valley and forsythias with aubretia and amelanchier towards the end of the month. We should have finished chopping back all the border perennials and deciduous grasses by the end of February - and wherever I can I do chop spent stems into bits and leave them on the surface as a mulch. It looks awful and messy, but give it a week or two and the rains will have dampened them into the top level of soil.

The benefits of doing this are huge: it is an instant mulch which seems to last and last until the spring canopy of leaves has grown over bare ground, by which time mulching is tricky anyway. The slow breakdown of nutrients (exactly the same process as composting) delivers a slow release in a way no handful of artificial fertiliser would ever do, and it also saves time - I know this sounds unfathomable, given that all we usually do is pile clippings into a wheelbarrow and cart it off to the compost bays, but it somehow plays into the hectic time-frame we have left until spring gathers apace. I am on my second year now of trying out this method in a client's borders (I don't think they have even noticed yet!) and am on a point of no return with it. The trick is to make



sure that the border edges look raked and tidy, as are all the perennial crowns, and then it does not look too scruffy.

I have had questions regarding the harbouring of slugs with such a method, but I am now beyond trying to rid any garden of slugs. Either ignore planting slug-inducing foliage or work at it - keep inspecting, dig in some grit, keep raking over the top layer, get



some ducks ... or simply try a different planting scheme. Shrubs and grasses are great border fillers so save the delphiniums and crabe for an area you can easily control, and keep your hostas in nice pots on the terrace.

This is probably the first chance you will have had since early December to get anywhere near the lawn or the border edges. After a dry week or two it will be possible to give the lawn a quick mow, which will crisp things up nicely and pick up a lot of the winter storm debris. Edges can be clipped with long-handled shears and you may even be able to redefine them. I also do a quick round with a hori hori and a bucket to scoop up any early weeds on paths and in borders and give all the roses another mulch. I find the autumn mulch has largely dissipated by now so it helps to cover the surface once more and give all the roses extra TLC. Finally, I clear away any winter containers and replant with a selection of spring bedding, flowering bulbs, rock plants and compact perennials/evergreens.

Annabel Lear GARDENS

Planting . Design . Consultancy

07759 440922 annabellelear@btinternet.com

Your local Independent Estate Agency.

As a licensed Propertymark Agent, at Vale & Marsh we possess extensive knowledge and experience in every aspect of residential property. Based in Rolvenden on the Hole Park Estate, our friendly and committed team are incredibly passionate and conscientious, serving our clients impeccably, offering sound and expert advice on buying, selling, letting and property management. We are highly motivated, dedicated and driven, working with energy, conviction and passion. We ensure all transactions are handled with the utmost professionalism and skill, believing outstanding customer care matters!

Serving the local community.



Get In Touch.

To benefit from our unparalleled advice, call Alex Norwood Hill on

01580 242700

www.valeandmarsh.com

2 Windmill Oast, Windmill Farm
Rolvenden, Kent TN17 4PF



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?
A new border layout...
Refreshing your pot displays...
Or planting something new...

Annabel Lear GARDENS are offering a FREE 45-minute consultation in your own garden. This is a limited offer for February and March only.

Take a positive step with your outside space.

Annabel Lear

GARDENS

annabellear@btinternet.com

07759 440922

@annabel_leargardens



M&A BROWN
A SONS LTD

Your local Groundcare and Garden Machinery Specialist



SALES • SERVICE • SPARES



Iden Green Farm, Cranbrook Road, Goudhurst TN17 2PA

Tel: 01580 211599

email: info@mabg.co.uk



**Help is on hand
from your local Mind**

www.westkentmind.org.uk

01732 744950

Information given, volunteers welcome and donations needed.

We're here to make sure anyone with a mental health problem has somewhere to turn for advice and support.



**PILATES CLASSES
for all abilities**

"Kat is such a great teacher/mentor, I would highly recommend her classes."
Nicci, Benenden

Call
077747 464828
Email
pilateswise@mail.com
Scan



GROUP MAT CLASSES

Monday 8.30pm
Benenden Village Hall

Wednesday 10.15am
Benenden Village Hall

Thursday 9am
Bloomsburys, Biddenden

Thursday 7.45pm
St Andrew's Church Hall, Tenterden

GROUP REFORMER CLASSES PRIVATE ONE TO ONE & DUETS

Monday-Thursday 9am-4pm
in new Pilates Studio, Benenden