

Malherbe Monthly

Number 258
February 2026

GRAFTY GREEN VILLAGE HALL
ANNUAL PANCAKE EVENING



TUESDAY 17th FEBRUARY 4.30PM TO 6.30PM
COME AND MEET YOUR FRIENDS & ENJOY
SWEET & SAVOURY PANCAKES £2.50 EACH

Lots of children's activities

Useful contact names and telephone numbers

County Councillor	Sarah Emberson Sarah.Emberson@kent.gov.uk	
Borough Councillors	Martin Round martinround@maidstone.gov.uk Ziggy Trzebinski ziggytrzebinski@maidstone.gov.uk	890276 07852 492770
Member of Parliament for the Weald of Kent	Katie Lam katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk	01580 388344
Church Wardens	Kenneth Alexander Vanessa Goodwin	859549 858372
Parish Council Clerk	email boughtonmalherbe@pc@gmail.com	
Village Hall General Enquires	Sue Birch Email: burch1997@aol.com	07803 962339
Gardening Club	Doreen Hulm	850287
Church Choir	Doreen Hulm	850287
Dance Fit	Sharon Harris	890170
Craft Group	Jan Carter	850898
Yoga	Sue Burch	07803 962339
Farmers Market	Tara Musson info.graftygreen@gmail.com	
Parish Council Website	www.boughtonmalherbe.co.uk	
Pilates	Cheryl Stubbs email: c.stubbs8@btinternet.com	07852 602369
Art Class	Cathy Hill email: cathyonthehill@hotmail.com	07927 045708
Tai Chi	Rhonda Bailey	07985 001782
Benefice Office	Sarah Hills email: churchoffice@lvb.org.uk Answer phone available out of hours	850604
St. Edmunds Centre	Kate Stansfield Mobile 07500 895831	
Fresh Fish delivery	Tuesday PM fortnightly from January 6 outside the village hall, variable time	07976 435217
Malherbe Monthly Production Team		
Carol Hulm	Advertising: carolhulm@gmail.com	07990 574214
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John Collins	Treasurer	850213

The views expressed in "Malherbe Monthly" are not necessarily those of the Production Team; publication of articles/adverts does not constitute endorsement and we reserve the right to edit! Anything for the **March** edition should be sent to the Editor Carol Hulm via email (carolhulm@gmail.com) by **24th February**

February Message from Katie Lam, MP for the Weald of Kent

February can be a challenging month for many people across the Weald of Kent. Colder weather and short days can make it difficult to stay connected, and it's often tempting to stay indoors. Loneliness isn't always obvious, and for some older people or those who live alone, getting out at this time of year can be difficult, making the winter months feel particularly isolating.



A short phone call, a visit to say hello to a neighbour, or even a letter through the door can make a real difference. It's sad that letter writing is something of a lost art, but I find that taking the time to write a few lines by hand, even a short note, can mean a great deal to many people, showing them they're cared for, while also offering a welcome break from screens!

Charities like Age UK also run telephone friendship services, matching volunteers with older people for a regular weekly chat. Just half an hour a week can provide companionship and friendship to those who might otherwise go days without speaking to anyone. Many of our local churches and charities run face-to-face befriending schemes. And many community groups across the Weald (like The Dementia Experience) are glad to welcome new volunteers.


Rural areas like ours have such a strong sense of community, and it's something I'm immensely proud of. So, this February, I encourage everyone to write a letter to someone who'd appreciate it, volunteer, or if you know anyone that's struggling or you need help yourself, please don't hesitate to write me at Katie.Lam.MP@parliament.uk.

Great News for the Village!

We're really pleased to let everyone know that CPR and Defibrillator training will be taking place right here in the village. It's a great chance to learn some really important, potentially life-saving skills without having to travel far.

Places are limited, so booking in advance is recommended. If you'd like to book a space but can't access the online booking form, just get in touch with Nick Eastwood on 07801 749498 and he'll be happy to sort it out for you.

If you miss out on a place because the session fills up, please let the Parish Council know. If there's enough interest, we'll look at arranging an additional session. We're delighted to be able to bring this training to the village and hope lots of people can take part.



**Kent Fire &
Rescue Service**

CPR & Defibrillator


TRAINING SESSION

24th February at 6.00pm
in Grafty Green Village Hall

**Limited to 20 places –
please book in advance!**





Scan the QR code below or apply via:
<https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/events/cpr-and-defibrillator-sessions-grafty-green>

or scan this QR code:



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01622 692121 • [kent.fire-uk.org](https://www.kent.fire-uk.org)

    [@kentfirerescue](https://www.kent.fire-uk.org)



BOUGHTON MALHERBE PARISH COUNCIL

www.boughtonmalherbe-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Full Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 5th January 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present:

Cllrs N. Eastwood (Chairman), L Hook, C Tomlinson, G Thompson, S Peter

In Attendance:

Mrs M. Norris (Clerk)

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.30 pm.

26/01/01 Apologies & Declarations of Interest

- a) No record of apologies.
- b) No changes were declared to the Register of Interests.
- c) No declarations of pecuniary or other interests were made regarding any agenda items.
- d) No requests for dispensation were received.
- e) No declarations of lobbying were made.

26/01/02 Public Session

One member of the public was in attendance and raised safety concerns regarding Wents Junction. This issue has been raised previously with Ulcombe Parish Council. The Chairman of Boughton Malherbe Parish Council advised that he would write to Ulcombe Parish Council to offer support in highlighting the junction's safety concerns.

26/01/03 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Boughton Malherbe Parish Council meeting held on 3rd November were approved as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chairman.

26/01/04 County & Borough Councillor Reports

No reports were received from the County Councillor or Borough Councillor.

26/01/05 Matters Arising / Updates from Previous Resolutions

- The Christmas Carols Around the Tree event was well attended by local residents and the Parish Council extended its thanks to everyone who assisted with and attended the event, helping to make it a success.
- The Clerk had reissued a copy of the proposed 2026/27 budget to members for review prior to the January meeting.

26/01/06 Planning

a) The PC considered the following applications:

25/505058/LBC – Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single storey rear conservatory including a glass link. Liberton Cottage, Headcorn Road ME17 2AN

KCC/MA/0135/2025 Land at Chapel Farm, Lenham Heath Road – Proposed development of a new sand quarry.

Resolution – No comments were made.

b) No planning appeals had been received By MBC for consideration.

c) No planning decisions had been received by MBC.

26/01/07 Finance

Bank Balances (as at 5 January 2026)

Lloyds Community Account (1062)	E4406.33
Lloyds Instant Online (4862)	E12,448.24
Cambridge & Counties	E51,094.72
Nationwide	E14,973.40

Schedule of Payments for Approval- January

Invoice Date	Amount	Payee	
December 2025	E100.43	Amesis	Litter Picking Services
Nov/Dec	E885.12	M Norris	Salaries
December 2025	E700.00	Nu- Venture Coaches	59 Bus Service

Resolution:

The schedule of payments for January and the bank reconciliation had been circulated to members

prior to the meeting. Payments were authorised accordingly. The PC was advised that the Chair had been in contact with Nationwide to facilitate closing the account.

26/01/08 Parish Council Budget 2026/27

Councillors discussed the draft budget and it was agreed to set the precept for £7,923.00

26/01/09 Correspondence

a) Nationwide Exit Form - The Chairman confirmed that he had been in contact with the Nationwide Building Society regarding the closure of the account and the matter was in hand.

26/01/10 Amesis Contract

The litter-picking services contract had been received from Amesis and circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members noted and agreed the proposed price increase to £16.08 per hour, effective from 1 May 2026. At this stage, the Parish Council decided to defer signing the service contract, and the Clerk will write to Amesis to advise.

26/01/11 Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople Plan – Regulation 18C

Maidstone Borough Council has launched a consultation on its draft Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Plan, seeking views on proposed policies, sites, and potential alternative site suggestions. The consultation is open from 27 November 2025 to 11 January 2026 and can be viewed at <https://maidstone.oc2.uk>. Boughton Malherbe Parish Council will hold a meeting on Friday 9 January at 6.00pm St Nicholas Church to discuss and agree the feedback it wishes to submit before the consultation closes.

26/01/12 A report on external meetings attended by Councillors

KALC- The planned Maidstone KALC meeting for November was cancelled, and no meeting was held in December. KALC has issued a draft submission response to the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Plan for comment, which was circulated to all councillors.

Heathlands Garden Settlement - Two public events for the Heathlands consultation were held in November at the Dog & Bear Hotel, Lenham. The public consultation closed on 15 December. Cllr Eastwood had no further details on the outcomes at this stage and will report back at a future meeting.

26/01/13 Matters for Information

It was brought to the attention of the Parish Council that, although a defibrillator is available at W Courts Funeral Directors, there is currently no defibrillator near the Who'd A Thought It pub to the south-east of the village. The PC Council agreed to explore the possibility of siting a defibrillator in this area.

Defibrillator training sessions, hosted by Kent Fire Service, are still being organised. Cllr Peter will seek to book a Saturday session for residents. Confirmed dates and venue will be advertised via the *Malherbe Monthly* and the village Facebook page.

26/01/14 59 Bus Service

Following news that the Parish Council was not awarded KCC grant funding for the 2026/27 bus service, a joint meeting has been arranged between Boughton Malherbe, Ulcombe and Kingswood Parish Councils and Nu Venture, the service operator, to discuss funding arrangements for the next financial year.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at **8.16 pm**.

Message Board

This section is for people to post their messages or any thoughts they would like to share with the community. Send your messages to the editor within the deadline for each month, details can be found on the contact's page 2.

Please see the return of the Link Word game on the last page of the magazine, with answers from last month included and a game for February

From the Editor

A suggestion from a reader is that we could include stories from people about their life in Grafty Green, so I would love to hear from you with your stories, including pictures.

Front cover Photos: Please send me any photos that you would like to see on the front cover of this magazine.
Thank you.

The Grafty Green Wanderers “The journey continues “



Following the disastrous performance of the England cricket team down under your attention should now be drawn to your local village Cricket Team.

After a fabulous inaugural season, the Grafty Green Wanderers will start their weekly pre-season nets training on 3rd February to blow away the cobwebs, lose a few of those festive pounds and

hone their cricketing skills. With an influx of new but frankly unknown talent the squad has now grown to 22 players, giving us plenty of options for the coming season.

The Committee have reached out to a number of local village teams with a view to playing 9 matches during the summer. We've had a fabulous response and the fixture list for the coming Cricket season is as follows :

Sunday 24th May 2 x 20/20 matches at Egerton, the start time TBC.

Sunday 21st June 1:30pm a 40 overs match at Frittenden.

Wednesday 24th June 6pm a 20/20 match at Smarden

Friday 3rd July 6pm a 20/20 match at Lenham

Sunday 19th July 2 x 20/20 matches at Smarden, the start time TBC - Smarden Beer festival.

Saturday 8th August 2pm a 40 overs match at East Sutton inc an after match BBQ.

Sunday 13th September 12.30 a 40 overs match at Lenham

Saturday 19th September 1pm a 40 overs Match at Egerton

Saturday 26th September 1pm a 40 overs match at East Sutton

Last year the Team thrived on the support from the Village and would like to encourage as many villagers to join the Grafty Green Growlers in supporting the Team again this year.

As with every new village cricket Team there is an obvious financial burden on the players in purchasing all the necessary kit, match balls, practice facilities etc..

So if you'd like to help in making a financial donation, providing some kit or just sponsoring the match balls for £50 a match, then please feel free to contact Dean on 07793086002.

Any donations will be greatly received and faithful applied.

Last year saw the rise of a new Team and the season promises to see those green shoots grow into a thriving village cricket Team!

Deano aka Scratchin' Tendulkar

Village Hall News – February Newsletter

Dear All,

Since last month's newsletter we have held the Christmas Panto at the hall which appeared to have been enjoyed by all, (particularly the younger members of the audience) and a date for your diaries is next year's Panto, (Snow White), which has been booked for 3pm on Saturday 9th January 2027. I would like to claim that we are terribly organised by letting you know so far in advance, but the reality is that we receive a generous discount for booking next year's show early which in turn means we can keep the ticket prices low.

We also hosted the welcome back coffee morning to celebrate the reopening of the hall on the 24th January and both the Mayor Martin Round and our Kent County Councillor Sarah Emberson took time out of their busy schedules to support our small village community.

Following the refurbishment the Farmer's Market is back at the hall and in full swing with it's wide variety of goodies every Friday between 1pm and 3pm.

Events

Coming up as well as the regular activities at the hall we have the following events for you to look forward to:-

Pancake Evening – Tuesday 17th February 4.30pm to 6.30pm – see Front Cover

If your waistline didn't take enough of a battering, (please excuse the pun), over Christmas don't worry we have the just the event where you can pile on those unwanted pounds again by over-indulging in a range of delicious sweet and savoury pancakes at the Grafty Green annual pancake evening. There will also be lots of activities for the children. No need to book please just come along all are welcome to enjoy the fun.

CPR & Defibrillator Training – Tuesday 24th February 6pm to 7 pm

Steven Peter one of our Parish Councillors has very kindly organised through the Kent Fire Service free CPR and Defib training for up to 20 attendees at the hall on Tuesday 24th February between 6pm and 7pm. You need to register for the training, and I understand there will be a link contained within this magazine for you to do this. The training is both timely and fortuitous for two reasons; firstly, we will shortly be installing a defib machine on the outside of the hall and secondly if you have over-indulged at the pancake evening detailed above you may require the assistance of a suitably qualified person to help you recover.

Jon Thompson

Village Hall Committee Chairman

jon@graftygreenalpacas.co.uk Tel 07932 112730

www.graftygreenvillagehall.co.uk - facebook – graftygreenvillage

GRAFTY GREEN **FARMERS MARKET**

EVERY FRIDAY, 1-3 P.M.
GRAFTY GREEN VILLAGE HALL



Come along and enjoy a wonderful selection of local produce, home-baked treats, crafts, and more — all from your friendly local traders!

Are you a trader?

We're currently looking for producers, particularly those offering bread, cheese, or meat products to join our market community.

For more details, please contact:
info.graftygreen@gmail.com

Grafty Green Village Hall

Bookings 07932 112730

Regular Weekly Events

Yoga – mixed ability
Susan Burch 07803 962339

Mondays and Thursdays 9.30 – 11am
Wednesdays 7 – 8.30pm

Pilates
Cheryl Stubbs 07852 602369

Tuesdays 9.30 – 10.30 am

Post Office

Tuesdays 12.45 – 2.15pm
Thursdays 11.15 – 1.15pm

Coffee morning

Tuesdays 12.00 – 2.00pm

Short Mat Bowls
Joan Marriott 07503 568874

Tuesdays 2.30 – 5.30pm

Dance Fit
Sharon Harris 01622 890170

Wednesdays 11 – 12.30pm

Tai Chi
Rhonda Bailey 07985 001782

Thursdays 2.00 – 3.00pm

Craft Group
Janis Carter 01622 850898

Fridays 10 -12.00pm

Art Class
Cathy Hill 07927054708

Alternate Wednesdays 1 – 3.30pm
Alternate Thursdays 7-9pm

Farmer's Market
Tara – grafftygreen.info@gmail.com

Friday 1- 3pm

Regular Monthly Events

Gardening Club
Doreen 01622 850287

First Tuesday 7.30 - 9pm

Digital Kent

Fourth Tuesday 12 – 2pm

The Grafty Gourmet

Although there are a few ingredients in this recipe, but you cannot beat a curry made from scratch. It is so much better than a sauce from a jar.

PRAWN CURRY WITH FETA FLATBREADS

For the Curry

2 teaspoons of mustard seeds
2 teaspoons of cumin seeds
1 teaspoon of coriander seeds
2 tablespoon of olive oil
1 red onion, finely sliced
1 red chilli, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 teaspoons each of garam masala, turmeric, ground coriander, sweet smoked paprika
250g of cherry tomatoes, halved
250g of spinach
250g of raw king prawns
Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
Bunch of coriander, finely chopped
Salt and Pepper

For the Flatbreads

300g of self-raising flour
300g of natural yoghurt
1 teaspoon of baking powder
1 tablespoon of vegetable oil
100g of feta cheese, crumbled

1. Place a frying pan over a medium heat and add the mustard, cumin and coriander seeds. Once you start to smell them and the seeds start to pop, add the oil and the onion and cook slowly for about 10 minutes, until the onion is soft and caramelised. Whilst the Onions are cooking, make the flatbreads as detailed in (3) below.
2. Add the chilli and garlic and cook for a further minute or so. Add the garam masala, turmeric, ground coriander, paprika and 3 tablespoons of water and cook the spices for a minute in the water. Drop in the tomatoes and cook until nice and soft, then add the spinach and cook until wilted. Stir in the prawns and cook until they just turn pink, then season and add a good squeeze of lemon juice, zest and the chopped coriander.
3. For the flatbreads, mix all the ingredients except for the oil and cheese in a large bowl. Knead to a dough – it's quite a sticky dough – then shape into 6 balls weighing about 50g each and roll them out to about 1cm thick. Brush each bread with the oil, then sprinkle over the feta and fold the dough in on itself (like an envelope) to incorporate the cheese. Use a rolling pin to roll each bread out to about 15cm in diameter.
4. Heat a griddle or heavy-based frying pan over a medium-high heat until piping hot, then cook the flatbreads for about 2-3 minutes on each side or until golden.

Grafty Green Gardening Club

Meetings are held in Grafty Green Village Hall on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm unless stated otherwise. Entry for guests £4. Bring your plant and seed swaps! Membership £5 - contact Doreen Hulm (Treasurer) 01622 850287

Programme for 2026

Date	Speaker/Event	Topic
February 3	Dilo de Alvis	Feed the Earth and the earth will feed you!
March 3	Alan Harvey Head of Horticulture at Hadlow College	
April 7	Spring Show and Kevin Tooher	Gardens of East Sussex
Sat May 2	Plant Sale 10 – 12 Village Hall	
May 5	Outing - Marden Meadow, guided by Vicky Golding - please car share as limited parking	
June 2	Outing - Pimphurst Farm, Bethersden TN26 3EE	
July 7	Outing - Barnfield Cottages, Wormshill, ME9 0TU	
July 24 - 26	Weekend away – Walmer Castle, Great Dixter, Butlers Farm House, Herstmonceux Castle and grounds, Driftwood, King John's Nursery, Goddards Green. Dinner bed and Breakfast at Landsdowne Hotel, Eastbourne	
August 4	Outing to Jungle Garden at Wye	
September 1	Autumn Show and Catriona	Romney Wools
October 6	Chris Stewart	The hop bine and hop pickers of Kent
November 3	Stephen Harmer	La Claire the Story of Jersey's lost garden
December 1	Social and creative activity	

Gardening Tips - Jobs for February

Here are some garden jobs for next month:

- Prune roses
- Cut Buddleias back hard
- Cut back late flowering clematis to within a few inches of the ground
- Weed and dig over or mulch vegetable beds
- Weed and mulch borders.....cut down any remaining dead stems perennialslast chance to move and or divide perennials
- Top dress shrubs in pots
- Start seed sowing indoors, with bottom heat, crops that are slow-growing e.g. chilies, tomatoes, and aubergines
- Sow peas and broad beans in pots in the greenhouse to plant out later
- Cut down ornamental grasses
- Chit early potatoes
- Force rhubarb for early pickings

Enjoy the snowdrops and emerging bulbs!

Sue's Blog – reminiscing!

This month I'm taking you back to the summer of 2000! The village green was the perfect spot to celebrate the new millennium, so thought four locals, who were regularly socialising, agreed it would be fun to organise a mid-summer party on the green.

We, Yvonne Fletcher, Mary O'Connell, Chris Hollingsbee and myself, planned and fund raised, (auction in the Kings Head and a jumble sale) to pay for a band and a marquee.

We raised enough money for it to be a free event, enough money left over to repeat the event in 2001. Both nights were amazing, the weather was good, the band was good; people danced and had fun.

Although we didn't do another we did have a French afternoon on the green to judge the biggest onion grown from seed, played pétanque and picnicked. Another free event that brought the village folk together.

Sue

Yoga with Susan

Weekly classes in Grafty Green Village Hall

Monday morning 9.30 – 11

Wednesday evening 7 – 8.30

Thursday morning 9.30 – 11

No yoga week beginning 16th February

New term starts February 23rd

Yoga brings a sense of peacefulness and connection to yourself and others whilst bringing more flexibility and strength into the body.

For more information or to enrol for the new term - please give me a
call 07803 962339

**Ulcombe History Society
2026 programme**

January 20th Guy Bartlett
“British women in aviation”

February 17th Derrick Parkes
“The Emperor Justinian: his reign and legacies”

March 17th Ed Adamson
“Kentish clerical errors”

April 21st Melanie Gibson-Barton
“Suffragettes and Suffragists – votes for women”

May 19th Adam Taylor
“Islands of the Medway Estuary”

October 20th Bertie Pearce
“Wonder workers and the art of illusion”

November 17th Ed Adamson
“Making and faking of ghost stories”

December 8th Imogen Corrigan
“The goose is getting fat”

We meet at Ulcombe Village Hall, 7 for 7.30 pm.
Guests are always welcome, admission £4

The Roses

Friday, February 13th

Performance begins 19.30, doors open 19.00

Running time 1 hr 45 mins, director Jay Roach

We have a bumper month for you with two films to see. The first is on Friday 13th. An unlucky day? Not if you've come to see **The Roses** (15, 2025) for an evening of brilliant dark comedy with two magnificent actors. Benedict Cumberbatch plays Theo who is married to Ivy, played by Olivia Colman. It seems a perfect marriage, with two successful professionals, great children, good social life. What more could they want? Nothing – or so it appears. When Theo's business life ends with a bang however, the situation abruptly changes and the tinderbox of their marriage explodes. And what happens then.... well, come along and find out. Trouble is definitely brewing for the Roses!

Somewhere in England

Friday, February 27th

Performance begins 18.30, doors open 18.00

Running time 1 hr 18 mins, director Sheila Daniels

We have a special screening later in February – we're proud to show **Somewhere in England**, an original British musical promoting the work of Gordon Caleb, a mostly unknown and unrecognised late British composer.

The film is a salute to both the great Hollywood musicals and classic British cinema of the 1940s and 50s. We step back in time to the summer of 1943, with the arrival of a US army unit and its impact on the lives of a small community in rural England. Entirely shot in Bethersden, the film presents 19 stand-alone songs as a visual album, in a black and white format, with contemporary styling. The eclectic cast is made up of professional performers from London and talent from the local area, some of whom will be present at the screening along with the producer/director, Sheila Daniels. Performance is at the earlier time of 18.30, do come along and see this original British film.

For our March film, on Friday 13th, we again make a visit to Downton Abbey for the evening. In **Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale** (PG, 2025) there are changes afoot as the Crawleys face uncertain times in the 1930s.

The Lenham Film Club team recently had the opportunity to present a cheque for £500 to Lenham Nursery School. The funds were raised at a charity performance we held last year in honour of our late Treasurer Ian George. We were very pleased to be able to present the cheque to the school in Ian's name.

Admission: Adults £5, under 16s £2; cash only, card payments not accepted.



lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com



www.lenhamfilmclub.org



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- ✿ Mama-to-be sharing & support circles
- ✿ Pregnancy relaxation
- ✿ Intro to baby massage

With baby

- ✿ Baby massage, reflexology and colic alleviation (birth-crawling)
- ✿ Mama sharing & support circles
- ✿ Baby yoga (3 months to pre-school)

Events

- ✿ Parties
- ✿ Coffee mornings

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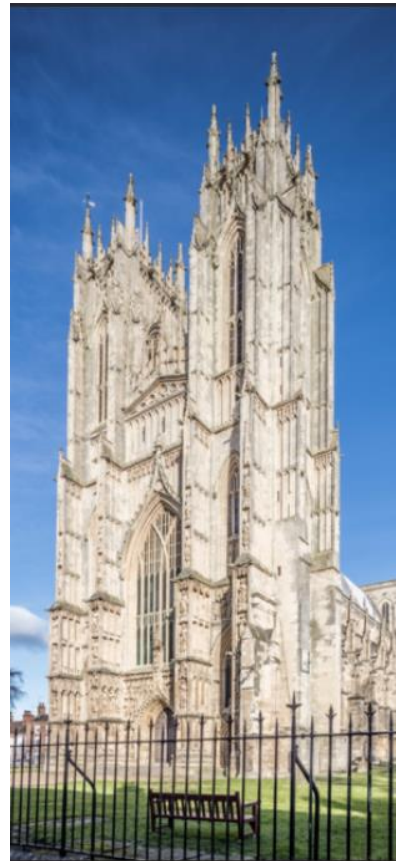


We thoroughly enjoyed our Basking Babies 'Nurture Me' course. It was great to learn massage and reflexology techniques to help with common complaints such as teething and colds. Me and my baby were so relaxed after each session. It was lovely to get to meet other mums and babies, and be able to chat over a cup of tea each week.

News from St.Nicholas Church – February 2026

Have just returned from a few days retracing childhood and family footsteps in the East Riding and North Yorkshire coast with a brain buzzing with memories and visits to friends, family and amazingly beautiful landscapes. From the small village primary school we learnt so much of our local history, our visionary and powerful saints and their impact on our national and Christian development through the centuries.

St.John of Beverley and St.Hilda of Whitby have remained my all-time heroes. It was a joy to just gaze, again, at St.Hilda's gaunt and windswept abbey and walk through St.John of Beverley's elegant and impressive minster, a place of legal sanctuary with roots in the 8th century. Sure, we can learn from their timeless guidance in our time.



Usual reminders

The church porch is open 24hrs a day as always. So good to see the messages from visitors, local and from far afield.

If you need to top up the kettle, water jug or dogs' bowl, there is a tap round the back of the building, just follow the stone path beyond the West Door. Do use the mini food bank box, remembering there is a larger food bank at the back of St.Mary's church in Lenham, open daily from 10.00am -4.00pm.

Please fill in a prayer request card, if you would like. It will be prayed for as soon as possible in church.

The church is open for services, meetings, cleaning etc. If you wish to visit at other times, please contact the churchwardens for a key.

News

Cake and Coffee Time continues in the Village Hall each Tuesday from 12noon-2.00pm. We are really delighted to see the newly decorated Hall, seems even more welcoming. Many thanks to the Committee for all their hard work. If you missed the generous invitation to experience it on January 24th, with refreshments, join us in the coming week or two, as the committee has kindly donated some of their treats.

Please note the dates for the Lent lunches taking place on the Cake and Coffee mornings, in February and March.

Lent Lunches

We will be providing **Bread and Soup Lunches in the Village Hall on Tuesdays** from 12noon - 2.00pm, at the same time as our usual Cake and Coffee time.

There will be Kenneth's homemade bread and homemade soups as usual. All proceeds will be given to **Christian Aid**, for their work in troubled areas worldwide. Such a worthwhile charity.

The dates for the lunches are: **February 24th, March 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th.** We look forward to seeing you there.

Hoping you are enjoying a time of quiet in this New Year.

Len Valley Benefice February 2025

Everybody is welcome



Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.

1 John 4 v7 (part)

Sunday 1st February

9.30am Boughton Malherbe: Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

9.30am Harrietsham: Morning Worship

11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

Wednesday 4th February

9.30am Lenham: Holy Communion

11.00am Harrietsham: Chippendayle

Sunday 8th February

9.30am Harrietsham: Morning Worship

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

11.00am Ulcombe: Holy Communion

3.30pm Boughton Malherbe: Choral Evensong

Sunday 15th February

8.00am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30am Boughton Malherbe: Holy Communion

9.30am Harrietsham: Holy Communion

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Ulcombe: Holy Communion

11.00am Lenham: Morning Worship

Wednesday 18th February

9.30am Lenham: Communion with Imposition of Ashes

7.00pm Lenham: Communion with Imposition of Ashes

Sunday 22nd February

11.00am Benefice Holy Communion at All Saints, Ulcombe.

Please note that during February some services may need to be altered or cancelled at short notice due to circumstances beyond our control.

Christian Message for February 2026

‘Let Your Light Shine’.

As I start to write this on 16th December, my mind is full of expectation about Christmas: presents and tasty food, hopefully, but more importantly, the celebration of the birth of Jesus at services across the Len Valley Benefice and at home.

By February the Christmas decorations will be back in a box, presents will have been tried out, mince pies will have been finished, and Christmas may be but a fading memory. It is appropriate, however, that as I sit, waiting for a festival to honour the arrival of the ‘Light of the World’, I should turn my attention to Candlemas, the Feast of the presentation of Jesus at the temple by Joseph and Mary.

In Bible times the law stated that after the birth of a male child, a mother was regarded as 'unclean' for seven days and required to stay at home for a further 33 days. On the 40th day, a sacrifice was to be offered in Jerusalem, for her purification. Luke, Chapter 2, tells us that Mary and Joseph did this and then presented Jesus to God through the priest at the temple.

Whilst there, they met Simeon and Anna. Simeon had been waiting for the

Messiah, and believed Jesus to be him. Anna, an elderly, widowed woman who spent all her time in the temple praying, came and praised Jesus as well. How must Mary and Joseph have felt about this further endorsement of their son's true identity, after the miraculous birth?

The feast of Candlemas falls on 2nd February, which is the 40th day of Christmas and Epiphany. In some countries Christmas decorations are removed after this day and Christians take their candles to their local church, where they are blessed and then used for the rest of the year, as a symbol of Jesus Christ, ‘the Light of the World’.

What is 'the Light of the World'?

The imagery of light represents purity, truth, and the presence of God throughout the Bible. 'The Light of the World' describes Jesus' divine nature, His role in saving us from sin by his death on the cross, and His guidance for us all. Jesus identifies Himself as 'the Light of the World' in John, chapter 8.

God is the light that shines within and through His whole church and Jesus, speaking to a crowd of ordinary people, told them "You are the light of the world" in Matthew, chapter 5. So the 'Light of the World' is the Messiah, the Church and everyone who believes and let's Christ into their life.

God wants to be able to use us all to help Him do His work here on earth and so Christ says that we are to let our lights shine. When we lead a life that is pleasing to God and are filled with the Holy Spirit, He will shine through us.

I don't think it's too late to start a new year's resolution on 2nd February but if you do, by 18th February it will be the beginning of Lent, and a perfect time to do as Jesus asks. So, I hope you enjoy Candlemas, enjoy your pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, Let Jesus into your life, and let your light shine brightly throughout Lent and beyond.

Pamela Cuerden

Licensed lay reader, North Downs Deanery.

February link word puzzle: One word links all three – can you work it out?

No	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3	Answer
1	Valentine	Heart	Box	
2	Leap	Year	Frog	
3	Snow	Drop	Flake	
4	Candle	Dinner	Light	
5	Red	Rose	Petal	
6	Winter	Coat	Storm	
7	Chocolate	Bar	Chip	
8	Groundhog	Shadow	Day	
9	Love	Letter	Stamp	
10	Cold	Snap	Front	
11	Cup	Arrow	Bow	
12	February	Calendar	Day	
13	Sweet	Card	Shop	
14	Ice	Skate	Rink	
15	Warm	Blanket	Hug	
16	Friendship	Bracelet	Band	
17	Kiss	Hug	Mark	
18	Frost	Bite	Nip	
19	Promise	Ring	Band	
20	Snowman	Hat	Scarf	

January Answers:

1. CHICKEN 2. HOUND 3. CATS 4. NAME 5. LIGHT 6. CIRCLE 7. HOT 8. STREET 9. SCOTCH 10. COURT 11. MINISTER
12. COCOA 13. BLACK 14. ACHE 15. BRAN 16. MARRAGE 17. ATOMIC 18. TONGUE 19. CHIN 20. COPPER

Emergency and Help Contact Details

Police, Fire and Ambulance Emergencies	999
Police, Non-Emergency - (Including PCSO)	101

Ambulance 999 note: an **aed** 'public access **defibrillator**' is sited and available 24/7 at the premises (in porch) of A.W. Court in Headcorn road. Ambulance 999 control centre will give 999 callers the lock code, if appropriate, to access the **defibrillator**.

NHS Medical Helpline	111
Maidstone & Pembury Hospitals	0845 155 1000
William Harvey Hospital	01233 633331
Headcorn Surgery (<i>out of hours listen to</i>)	01622 890294
Lenham Surgery (<i>recorded messages</i>)	01622 858341

Electricity (UK Power Networks)	
<i>Emergencies and Power Cuts</i>	0800 783 8866
Or	01243 508866

Water	<i>Emergencies</i>	0333 000 0002
Southern Water Foul and Waste Water drainage/Flooding		0330 303 0368
Calor Gas	<i>Emergencies</i>	08457 444999
KCC	<i>Emergencies</i>	03000 41 41 41
	<i>Highways</i>	03000 41 81 81

KCC Community Wardens:

<i>Local warden – Stuart Ellesmere</i>	07969 583923	
<i>District Support – Dawn Riach-Brown</i>	07773 397125	
Fire	<i>General Enquiries</i>	01622 692121
	<i>Home Safety Visits</i>	0800 923 7000

R.S.P.C.A	<i>Emergencies</i>	0300 1234 999
Vet	<i>24 Hour Pet Emergency Treatment Service</i>	01622 734555

Maidstone Borough Community Protection - **01622 602202** – Bonfires, crime, dogs, domestic abuse, loan sharks, noise, pests and protection orders

Environmental Services – **01622 602162** – Fly tipping, Street cleaning, Litter, Bins, dead animals

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