

# The Lenham Focus

APRIL 2026 issue



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**FOCUS** is also online at  
[www.lenhamparish.org.uk](http://www.lenhamparish.org.uk)  
 (Click on 'Lenham Focus')

# Editorial

**S**pring is in the air and the Easter Bank Holidays are imminent. Villagers are invited to the Parish Council's Easter Trail on 7<sup>th</sup> April from 11am to 2pm – see inside for details.

Later in the month, on 29<sup>th</sup> April, the Parish Council is holding its annual meeting in the Lenham Community Centre (from 7:30pm). This is your opportunity to meet and chat with local councillors and local group representatives to find out what's going on in the village and to discuss any ideas you have to improve life in the village. It's free and there are refreshments too – no need to book, just turn up. More details inside this edition of *FOCUS*.

Also, inside are interesting historic facts about the origin of the Great Stour river and the first part of an explanation of the background relating to Tanyard North, now the site of the homes in Liberty View. This latter article includes a summary of the fascinating finds of the recent

archaeological investigation carried out at this site by Thames Valley Archaeological Services (TVAS).

**Janice Frost** and her grandson **Teo** were delighted to win the 2 tickets to see Sir Michael Morpugo, author of many novels including *War Horse*, at the Faversham Literary Festival in February. She wrote to say: '*thank you so much for the tickets, Teo and I thoroughly enjoyed the talk. Michael Morpugo is such an interesting man, so thank you once again!*' The winner of the Historic Dockyard, Chatham annual tickets will be announced in the next issue.

**David Jackson** | Editor

Email the editor if  
 you have an entry  
 for next month's  
 'What's On' page...

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We welcome your input and comments please email me at [editorialsf@outlook.com](mailto:editorialsf@outlook.com)

# WHAT'S ON

## The Lenham Focus



Here's a quick look at the events around Lenham in the coming month. There may be more information inside.....

Got an event you'd like included next month? Send an email to the Editor.

- **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March:** *Supper club with Japanese cuisine from 'table in the stable'.* **Venue:** Westwell winery. Details at: [www.westwellwines.com](http://www.westwellwines.com)
- **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March at 8:30pm:** *The Midnight Soul Sisters tribute act.* **Venue:** The Wishful Thinker, Lenham. **Cost:** £25pp. Tickets from: [www.elitepubs.com](http://www.elitepubs.com)
- **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April and every Friday during spring and summer.** *Westwell Winery Pizza Fridays 4pm - 9pm.* **Venue:** Westwell Wine Estates, Charing. **Cost:** check website.
- **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> April:** *Enchanted Easter.* More details at: [www.leeds-castle.com](http://www.leeds-castle.com) **Venue:** Leeds Castle. **Cost:** Included in admission ticket.
- **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April from 10am:** *Interested in trying Bowls?* Come to our pre-season coffee morning. **Venue:** The Lenham Bowls Clubhouse or contact Geoff Brown (07506710511) or Lyn Fuller (01622 851538) for more information (see also inside).
- **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 11am – 2pm:** *Lenham Parish Council's Easter Trail.* See inside for details or ring 01622-828034.
- **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm:** Arts Society, Egerton. *Pots and Frocks – the world of Grayson Perry.* **Venue:** Millennium Hall, Egerton. **Cost:** members free; guests £8 (refunded if join).
- **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm:** *The Choral* (Lenham Film Club). **Venue:** Lenham Community Centre. **Cost:** £5 adults; £2 under 16s.
- **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April:** *Craft Fair.* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Cost:** Free entry.
- **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April at 11am:** *Coffee morning + Thorne hedgehog rescue talk.* **Venue:** Charing Heath & Lenham Heath Memorial Hall. **Cost:** Free – donations appreciated.
- **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April from 8pm:** *Karaoke night.* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Cost:** Free entry.
- **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April from 9:30am:** *Lenham Cross cleaning day* (weather permitting). **Venue:** Meet at the Cross – see inside for details.
- **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 8pm:** *Quiz Night.* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Cost:** Free entry.
- **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April from 10am to 3pm:** *Ashford Rotary Antiques, Collectables & Craft Fair.* **Venue:** Holiday Inn, Ashford North. **Cost:** Free entry
- **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 7pm:** *Bingo.* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Cost:** Free entry.
- **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April from 8:30pm:** *Queen Tribute act.* **Venue:** The Wishful Thinker, Lenham. **Cost:** £30pp including show, DJ and 3-course set meal. Book at: [www.elitepubs.com](http://www.elitepubs.com)
- **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April from 7:30pm:** *Lenham Parish Council's annual meeting.* **Venue:** Lenham Community Centre. **Cost:** Free entry and refreshments.
- **Advance notice of the popular Charity Race Night. Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 8pm.** **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Cost:** £2 + £1 tote betting.

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## WISLEY



### Thursday 28th May 2026

Join us on a day trip to RHS Wisley Gardens, the home to one of the largest plant collections in the world. Wander through the Cathedral-like glasshouse, follow the path through the world of plants with many being rare & endangered species. Feel the environment & climate change gradually as you tour through. An impressive waterfall adds to the subtropical feel. Explore the many areas of the beautiful gardens at your own pace. Visit the café or restaurants for lunch and refreshments.

**£40 per person—Entrance & Coach travel**

**RHS Members—£25 coach travel only (RHS Pass needed)**

**Pick up points: 09.00 Carrs Pivington, 09.15 Dog & Bear Lenham, 09.30 The Rose Bearsted**

### **BOOKING FORM— WISLEY— Thurs 28th May 2026**

Name:..... Tel: .....

Address:.....

.....

Email:..... No. seats:.....@ £40 each

Pick up point:..... RHS Member: YES / NO

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HOP ON OVER FOR OUR

# Easter Trail

Join us on  
April 7<sup>th</sup> from 11am - 2pm

FOR SOME EGG-CITING FUN!

HEAD TO THE PARISH OFFICE AND ALL INFORMATION WILL BE EXPLAINED.



Register your interest on the Parish  
Council's Website or scan the QR Code.

[www.lenhamparish.org.uk](http://www.lenhamparish.org.uk)

Alternatively call 01622 829034

This is a FREE Event - Funded by  
Lenham Parish Council

# **The FIRST Lenham Cross Cleaning of 2026**

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April**

**Subject to weather – meet on the cross from 9.30am so we can get it ready for coming summer months.**

**Please bring your own rakes/hoe/trowel and tub – we will supply big rubbish bags, and enthusiasm!**

**No parking on the Pilgrims Way – please arrive on foot from the village.**

**Thank you in advance.**

***With your help, the cross will be bright and crisp following the wet winter months – a fitting tribute to those from the village who gave their lives in the two World Wars.***



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## Did you know we have an excellent bowls club in Lenham?



**Come and give it a try!**

**W**ith any luck, by the time this article is published, that long wet winter will be a distant memory. It will be time to emerge into the warmth and sunshine of spring and summer. What are your plans this year to enjoy the outdoors, meet new friends and socialise? Have you ever tried bowls? At Lenham Bowling Club, we have an excellent clubhouse, one of the best greens in the area and a bunch of friendly playing and social members. During the winter, we keep things ticking over with short mat bowls and various events in the clubhouse plus we have an autumn and a spring Sunday lunch at the London Beach Hotel in Tenterden.

In April, the green is prepared for the season and it is the perfect time for new members to join. Whatever your ability, you can enjoy bowls.

The rules are simple and there will always be a member who can help you get started. After that, it's up to you; start with friendly "roll-ups", try playing in some

friendlies with local clubs or enter club championships and leagues if you like competition. Every game ends with food, drink and a chat. Lenham rightly has a reputation for putting on excellent post-match meals.

If you're interested and would like to know more, come to our pre-season coffee morning in the clubhouse on 5<sup>th</sup> April from 10.00 or contact **Geoff Brown (07506710511)** or **Lyn Fuller (01622 851538)**.

The club is situated on the Maidstone Road a few hundred yards from The Square.



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## **Spring & Summer 2026**

**April: Friday 10<sup>th</sup>**

**The Choral**

**May: Friday 8<sup>th</sup>**

**The Life of Chuck**

**June: Friday 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Save the Cinema**

**July: Friday 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Catch Me If You Can**

**August: Friday 14<sup>th</sup>**

**The Penguin Lessons**

**September: Friday 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Michael**

**Admission: adults £5, under 16s £2**

**Cash only, on the door**

**Doors open 19:00, performance begins 19:30**

**Lenham Community Centre  
Groom Way, Lenham ME17 2QT**



**@LenhamFilmClub**



**www.lenhamfilmclub.org**



**lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com**

# Countryways Quilters and Stitchers

From Pamela Gillard



We've had lots of beginnings and struggled with first-time quilt blocks and Manhole covers. Now for the big stuff! In April we will be starting the construction of a Weekend bag.

I hope you'll come and join us and try your hand at something new or just enjoy the company, have a chat and a cup of tea. It's an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon.



Our meetings are on the first and third Tuesdays of every month except December, we'd love to see you. We meet in the Osborne room in the Lenham Community Centre 1:30 to 4:30pm. Sometimes we move location, please contact me, Pamela Gillard at 07914 809946 or email [moonbeamsplitter@gmail.com](mailto:moonbeamsplitter@gmail.com) if you plan to drop in, for more information on the group or a copy of our 2026 programme.



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# Book Review from the Lenham Library

## The Bellwether Revivals by Benjamin Wood

Eden Bellwether, an organ scholar at King's College, Cambridge, has the idea he can heal through the power of music, but Wood raises the possibility that Eden has a Narcissistic Personality Disorder and is thus suffering from delusions about his powers.

The Bellwether family is characterised by both brilliance and eccentricity.

Eden's sister Iris is a medical student at Cambridge and a fine musician in her own right, a cellist rather than an organist, and she bounces between unflappable adoration of her brother and suspicion that he might be a pathological case study.

One autumn evening, Oscar Lowe, a care assistant at a local nursing home, cuts across the King's College grounds and is attracted by the sound of an organ. On this fateful evening he meets Eden and Iris. Despite their differences Oscar and Iris feel an immediate, quirky attraction for one another.

Oscar has a favourite patient at the nursing home, Paulsen, a former distinguished professor of English, whose friendship with Herbert Crest, a brilliant psychologist, leads to a complicated and volatile mixture of personalities and motives.

When Iris breaks her leg, Eden seems to heal her through a bizarre regimen of physical and musical therapy. Crest becomes intrigued with Eden's powers. He is dying of a malignant brain tumour, so his professional—and sceptical—motives become entangled with his personal ones, the latter characterised by Delusions of Hope, the book he's desperately trying to finish writing before his death.

This was Wood's first novel and was shortlisted for the Costa First Novel award in 2012.

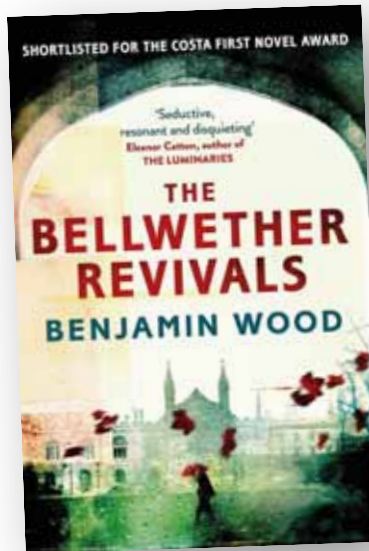
It is very different to the one I mentioned last month and you can see how he has developed and honed his skills. This one is a little melodramatic but very compelling and full of tension.

One event made me gasp. The two worlds of the Cambridge upper crust and Oscar's more ordinary circle are well

woven. I was hooked from beginning to end.

Don't forget all the advantages that a library ticket holds.

The PressReader app gives you free access to newspapers and magazines online.



# The Rotary Club of Ashford Announces Antiques, Collectables & Craft Fair

**Holiday Inn Ashford North TN26 1AR**

**T**he Rotary Club of Ashford is inviting stallholders and visitors to a vibrant **Antiques, Collectables & Craft Fair** taking place on **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April, from 10am to 3pm, at the Holiday Inn Ashford North.**

This indoor fair will bring together an eclectic mix of antiques dealers, craft makers, and collectors from across the region. With stalls priced at just **£25**, the event offers an accessible opportunity for traders to showcase their treasures and handmade creations in a warm, welcoming venue.

**Stallholders will benefit from:**

- Free Parking
  - Indoor trading space
  - Set up from 9am
  - Tables provided
  - Refreshments available throughout the day.
- Bookings can be made easily by scanning the QR code on the right or visiting: **[www.jumblebee.co.uk/antiquesfair](http://www.jumblebee.co.uk/antiquesfair)**

**Collectors: no need to book, Free entry**

The fair is created by the Rotary Club of Ashford and supported by Holiday Inn, with table fee proceeds helping to fund the club's ongoing charitable work in the local community and beyond.

For further information contact the Rotary Club of Ashford.  
**[ashford.rotary.1120@gmail.com](mailto:ashford.rotary.1120@gmail.com)**

## ANTIQUES, COLLECTABLES & CRAFT FAIR

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### SATURDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

HOLIDAY INN ASHFORD NORTH  
10 AM – 3 PM

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#### CALLING ALL STALL HOLDERS

* STALL FEE £25	* FREE PARKING
* INDOOR VENUE	* REFRESHMENTS
* SET UP 9AM	* GREAT ACCESS
* TABLES PROVIDED	FROM A20



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# The Friends of St Mary's need volunteers to join our team

Can you help us organise fundraising events to maintain Lenham's Grade I listed church building?

**Do you have the time to contribute to our team?**

We particularly need ongoing assistance with organising events, writing communications, marketing & social media, although skills in these areas are not essential

**We need enthusiastic new team members to help us take our successful team forward**

**If you think you can help, please either contact us by email or call Andrew on 07543 250686**

 @FriendsofStMarysLenham

 [www.friendsofstmaryslenham.org](http://www.friendsofstmaryslenham.org)

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# Lenham WI

The latest news from Chris Godden

So, we are well into spring now and the days are much longer. This is a time when we should all be getting out and taking the air, going for a walk or a coffee and cake at the café and meeting our friends. Lenham WI is keen on keeping in touch with our members and encouraging them to take part in the many events that we have on offer. Every year, women worldwide celebrate the 29<sup>th</sup> April as ACWW (Associated Country Women of the World) day. Our members and friends gather and walk together to raise funds and share information about the work with their communities. We call this celebration “Women Walk the World” and funds raised are donated to ACWW’s Rural Women in Action Fund which supports empowering projects globally.



This month we have **Lucy Allen – Stunt Woman** – coming to talk to us about her career as a stunt woman for 35 years. She is a professional performer and will be adding a bit of drama and excitement

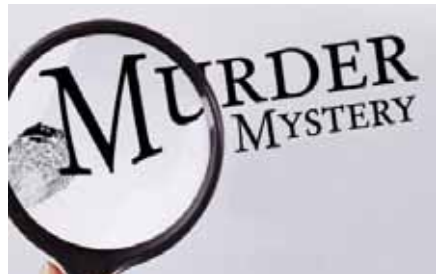
to her talk. She’s certainly a bundle of energy. Lucy says -

“This talk is about my life as a stunt woman: How I got into it, what stunt work actually IS, the highs & lows of the work we do and other stories about my long career, which after 35 years is still ongoing!

This talk aims to educate people about the work stunt performers do, discussing what a ‘stunt’ actually is and why stunt

performers are such a vital part of the film & TV industry.

Also this month, we are going to the **Federation Annual Day at Ditton**. There will be three speakers: **Beth Hilton** is a dog fosterer; **Pete Benson** will be giving his talk on “*Tales of a Film Prop Man*” from sharing a pint with Elizabeth Taylor and Rock Hudson whilst maintaining a balance of a normal life and the demands of a young family and **Lucy Lewis** who is the first female bomb disposal expert. Sounds interesting and varied.



On 1<sup>st</sup> May the WI are putting on a **Murder Mystery** at St Mary’s Platt. “Upper Chattering WI has been serving the women of its local community for decades, but all is not well... the outwardly calm and cordial appearance of the group hides a seething mess of unspoken offence, jealousy and high dudgeon and now MURDER is on the agenda at the AGM”. Some of us are going to see this.

May is also our AGM (no murder here, I hope) and we are hoping to increase the number of committee members as new ideas are always welcome.

If you want to join us, we meet at Lenham Community Centre on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. Please come along and see what we get up to.

To find out more please contact [rgodden@btinternet.com](mailto:rgodden@btinternet.com)



# Hi Kent

Sound Support for People Living with Hearing Loss

Reg. Charity No. 1052036



**NEXT SESSION 17 April (1:30–3pm) Lenham Community Centre**

## Tinnitus

**T**innitus is an unexplained noise in the head with no external source and which affects 1 in 7 of us, either temporarily or long term. Once any medical reason has been discounted, it is usually a case of managing the condition.

At Hi Kent, we run monthly online support groups giving people the chance to share experiences and coping strategies and to feel that they are not alone. We can also provide a one to one chat if you'd prefer. We also have a range of equipment which can help. Contact us at [tinnitus@hikent.org.uk](mailto:tinnitus@hikent.org.uk) or **01622 691151** for further information.

**Contact enquiries@hikent.org.uk or 01622 691151 for dates and times.**

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# Canada's King Charles III Coronation Medal

“ConFLAGulations” – Diane Bonfonte, Waterloo, Ontario

**A** first for Canada, a Coronation Medal was announced by PM Trudeau, May 3, 2023!

Previous one-time Canadian national commemorative honours included Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilee Medals.

Representative of the Sovereign (as Head of State), the Governor General administered the process for 30,000 medals to be awarded by House of Commons MP's and 93 'approved partner representatives' from across Canada. The established criteria are: 'To determine the nominee was alive on May 6, 2023... made a significant contribution to Canada or to a particular province, territory, region of, or community in Canada, or attained an outstanding achievement abroad that brings credit to Canada'.

Without her knowledge, a friend nominated Diane to The Honourable Bardish Chagger - who had 22 medals to bestow within her Waterloo Constituency (approx. 130,000 residents). Diagnosed with MS in 2006, this award honours Diane's 30+ years of unwavering patriotism championing National Flag Day of Canada (February 15<sup>th</sup>) and Canada Day (July 1<sup>st</sup>). Her cornerstone accomplishment was funding, researching, composing and producing in 2015, the 'Let's Celebrate

Canada's Flag' documentary - posted on YouTube. Also submitted for review were 'A View From Across the Pond' articles Diane wrote exclusively for our *Lenham Focus*.

On March 20, 1919, her paternal great-uncle Andrew Bonfonti, died in Lenham's Canadian Special Hospital. He is buried in the local Commonwealth Cemetery. Hoping to visit Lenham next March, Diane shared, "I can hardly wait to honour Andrew in-person along with meeting, and embracing many, like Amy Myers, of whom I am privileged to consider very 'special friends!'"



Well done to Diane, a regular contributor to *Focus* from 'across the pond' in Canada.

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# Maidstone Council adopts 'Heathlands' Supplementary Planning Documents



Following a meeting on Wednesday, 11 February Maidstone Borough Council's Cabinet has approved the adoption of the Lidsing Garden Community and the Heathlands Garden Settlement Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The SPDs provide additional guidance to support the delivery of the Lidsing and Heathlands Garden Communities allocations within the Maidstone Local Plan Review, which was adopted in 2024.

The SPDs do not allocate land for development or grant planning permission but set out detailed guidance and advice to inform the preparation and assessment of future planning applications for the sites.

The documents cover a range of matters intended to support high quality development, including principles for place making and design, movement and access, green and blue infrastructure, environmental considerations, and the delivery of supporting infrastructure. The documents are intended to help ensure that proposals for the sites come forward in a comprehensive and coordinated way, in line with adopted planning policy.

The preparation of the SPDs has been informed by extensive public consultation and close collaboration with borough councillors, parish councils, council officers, local stakeholders, Kent County Council, Medway Council, Ashford Borough Council, and statutory bodies including National Highways, Natural England and Historic England. Councillors and parish representatives played an active role throughout the process, encouraging community participation, supporting public meetings and ensuring that local views were clearly articulated and formally submitted.

Feedback from residents, organisations, public bodies, neighbouring local authorities, government agencies and parish councils has been carefully considered at each stage. Officers and members have worked closely together to ensure that constructive comments and suggestions were reflected wherever possible, within the parameters of adopted planning policy.

As a result, the final documents include a significant number of refinements and improvements informed directly by consultation responses and further technical work, demonstrating a clear commitment to listening and responding to the communities affected.

The council recognises that there are concerns about the potential impacts of development in the area, including on the landscape, biodiversity, critical services and local road network and rural lanes. These matters have been considered as part of the SPDs, which provide guidance intended to inform future proposals and assessments. Detailed consideration of site specific impacts will take place when individual

planning applications are submitted. With the SPDs now adopted, they will be used as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Any applications will be assessed through the statutory planning process, including consultation with relevant stakeholders, and they'll be determined in accordance with the Local Plan and other relevant planning policies.

**Cabinet member for Planning Policy and Management, Councillor Tony Harwood, said:** "These SPDs provide clear guidance to help ensure that any future development is well planned, with inevitable impacts for existing communities and the environment minimised. They will now play an important role in shaping how planning applications for these strategic development sites are progressed."

The documents are in the process of being amended and will soon be available to view on the Maidstone Borough Council website.

## Heathlands Garden Settlement SPD

- Two public speakers raised concerns about infrastructure certainty, viability, deliverability and sustainability and archaeological impacts, particularly at Chapel Hill.
- Cabinet and officers responded that the SPD's scope is limited by national regulations and has to be in line with the adopted Local Plan policy. Detailed matters (viability, archaeology, highways) will be assessed at planning application stage.
- Officers confirmed 58 consultation responses were received and over 50 amendments were made as a result, plus the further changes via an urgent update.
- Cabinet emphasised: The SPD strengthens the council's position when determining future applications.

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## The Choral

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**Running time 1 hr 48 mins,  
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We bring you something different for our showing on May 8<sup>th</sup>. **The Life of Chuck** is a life-affirming fantasy drama based on a Stephen King story about a seemingly ordinary man. Please see our advert in this issue of *Focus*, which lists all of the films we'll be showing in Spring & Summer 2026.

Please get in touch for more information or to join our mailing list.

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The Council meet on the first Wednesday of each month.

Our committees also meet once a month.

These are:-

*Finance & General Purposes  
Planning & Implementation*

Please see the notice boards and website for the dates of these.

All meetings are held at the Lenham Community Centre at 7:30pm.

Parishioners may attend all meetings.

Contact details: Lisa Westcott

(Clerk) 01622 829034

[clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk)

[www.lenhamparish.org.uk](http://www.lenhamparish.org.uk)

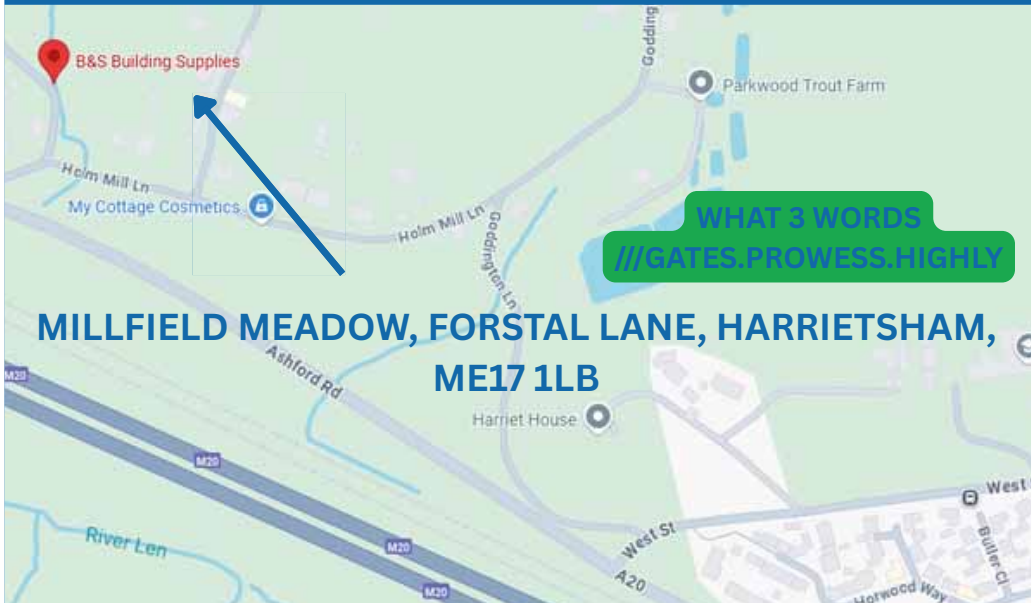


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# Lenham Gardening Society

From Margaret Baines

---

This month's meeting is on **16<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm** in the Community Centre.

**Michael Lynn** is coming to talk on 'Gardening for Wildlife'.

The competition will be for 3 spring flowers and/or 3 shortbread biscuits.

All are welcome to the meetings except in February, July and November which are for members only.

Members pay £1 entrance with non-members paying £1.50. Annual subscription is £7 per person.

Tea/coffee and biscuits are available in the interval and a raffle held before the evening's close.



For further information: Email: [gardenlenham@gmail.com](mailto:gardenlenham@gmail.com) or Tel: 07917401228

## Recipe of the Month

### Mrs Robins Yum Yum Pudding

#### Ingredients:

##### For the base:

170g (6oz) self-raising flour  
2 egg yolks  
86g (3oz) butter  
57 g (2 oz) Demerara sugar

##### For the Topping:

2 egg whites  
57g (2oz) walnuts, chopped  
57g (2oz) cherries, chopped  
86g (3oz) castor sugar

#### Method:

**Base:** Cream the butter and brown sugar, add egg yolks and mix thoroughly. Add the flour and mix well. Put the mixture into a sandwich tin and bake for 20-30 minutes in a 175C (350F) oven. Allow to cool, after turning onto a plate.



**Topping:** Whisk the egg whites until stiff, then fold in the sugar. When well mixed fold in the walnuts and cherries. Pile this mixture on to the top of the cooled base. Brown in a hot oven 225C (200F), serve hot or cold with fresh cream.



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**31st July &  
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# Maidstone Borough Council launches “Swift Streets” campaign to bring declining bird species back from the brink



Photo by High Weald Swifts

**M**aidstone Borough Council has teamed up with the charity High Weald Swifts to launch a new community initiative, Swift Streets, aimed at protecting one of the county town’s last remaining swift colonies.

As part of the project, 50 free swift nest boxes, including professional installation, are being offered to residents living in key streets where swifts have been recorded nesting and breeding.

Surveys confirm that a surviving swift colony in Maidstone successfully raised young last year but urgently needs additional safe nesting spaces this spring. Swifts nest in groups and return to the same sites year after year, so suitable spaces are essential for their continued survival.

Swifts are extraordinary birds that spend almost their entire lives on the wing, eating, drinking, sleeping, and even mating in flight. They migrate thousands of miles each year between the UK and Africa, to seek out populations of their flying insect prey.

Their decline reflects wider environmental challenges and loss of traditional nesting niches as houses are renovated with modern materials, making local conservation action more urgent than ever.

Four key streets have been identified as swift hotspots and are being prioritised for the scheme. Leaflets inviting residents to take part will be delivered to homes in Curzon Road, Grecian Street, Salisbury Road and Waterlow Road. This action is being taken in partnership with the charity High Weald Swifts, Maidstone Borough Council is offering 10 double and 40 single swift nest boxes designed to replace nesting gaps lost during modern roofing and building works. These boxes require no maintenance and leave no mess.

**Cabinet Member for Climate Transition and Nature Recovery, Councillor Rachel Rodwell said:** “Maidstone now has only two established swift colonies left. This project gives us an opportunity to secure the future of one of Britain’s most iconic birds. By working together with residents, we can help ensure swifts continue to grace our skies each summer.”

Residents can help by accepting a free swift box to be professionally installed and recording swift sightings using the Swift Mapper app. They can also support swift food sources by planting native wildflowers, trees and shrubs mowing less, or creating a garden pond.

## Get Involved

To register your interest or request a free nest box, email: [climateandbiodiversity@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:climateandbiodiversity@maidstone.gov.uk)

Boxes will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

# An update from your local MP, Helen Whately

Enough is enough. Faversham & Mid Kent's infrastructure can't cope with the extra 20,000 houses planned to be built on our green fields and farmland over the next few years. I know we need new homes for young people to move into, but taking all these developments together, this is an extraordinary scale of building in the countryside.

To put this into perspective, Faversham and Mid Kent is one of eighteen Parliamentary constituencies in Kent and Medway with less than 5% of the area's population, and yet it is in line to take nearly a fifth of the planned housing. This concentration of development in one rural part of the county is clearly wrong and should not be allowed to happen.

At the heart of the Garden of England, we're historically an agricultural area and we don't have the infrastructure to support this level of growth. Development here means



*Heathlands - Helen raising objections to Heathlands at the consultation at the Dog & Bear last year*

building on green fields and farmland, rather than on brownfield sites in cities and towns where there are jobs, public transport and infrastructure.

Recent water outages in Kent have shown that we don't have enough water for current residents. Many of our roads are already gridlocked and the ubiquitous potholes show they can't support current traffic levels, let alone more.

The Government reduced London's house building targets and increased targets for counties in the South East, including Kent. I'm calling on Ministers to look again at our housing numbers, reject massive developments on green fields, and build more in London.

We need to stand together to make clear to the Government that we cannot continue with this scale and pace of development. If you agree that enough is enough, please sign my 'Stop the Sprawl and Save Kent's Countryside' petition at

**[www.SignHelensPetition.com](http://www.SignHelensPetition.com)**.

As ever, if there is anything I can do to help you, please contact me.

Best wishes,  
Helen

**e:** [helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk)  
**t:** 0207 219 6472

**Helen Whately MP**  
Member of Parliament for Faversham and Mid Kent

*I work for you. If you have a problem you think I can help you with, please contact me.*

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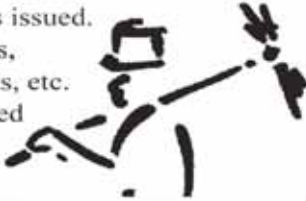
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# Contact Details For Local Groups

Badminton	Alan Williamson	01622-858763
Badminton Club Feathers	Robert Day	07984-948524
Borough Councillor	Chris Houliham	chrishouliham@maidstone.gov.uk
Bowling Club	Lyn Fuller	01622-851538
Bridge Club	Keith Rylands	01622-891964
Brownies (2nd Lenham)	Andrea French	01622-851646
Cat Protection	Mid-Kent Branch	0345-3712758
Church Office	Sarah Hills	01622-850604
Dog Warden (Louise Duke)	Community Protec'n	01622-602117
Drama	Gail Kelly	01622-850671
Fitter/Stronger classes	Paula Hickford	07759-446214
Friends of St Mary's Church	Andrew Barr	enquiries@friendsofstmaryslenham.org
Gardening Society	Margaret Baines	01622-431649
Guides (1st Lenham)	Jo Homes	07887-877814
Ham Lane Allotment Association	Doug Matthews	01622-297692
HAMS Productions	David Penny	07731-455677
Harrietsham & Lenham Beavers	Duncan Keenan	07768-926654
Harrietsham & Lenham Cubs	Mrs A Seales	01622-859829
Hub Club	Nina Kent	01622-851970
KCC for Maidstone Rural East	Sarah Emberson	sarah.emberson@kent.gov.uk
Kent Highway Services	Roads, paths etc.	03000-418181
Kent Wildlife Trust		01622-662012
Lenham Ballet School	Erica McCabe	07866-316056
Lenham Country Market	Sandra Woodfall	07775-736116
Lenham Community Centre	Carol Higgins	01622-853800 (am)
Lenham Cricket Club	Alex Gray	07760-132803
Lenham Film Club	Danny Coorsh	lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com
Lenham Heath Memorial Hall	Rosemarie Pomeroy	07572-911396
Lenham Heritage Society	Henny Shotter	01622-851355
Lenham Lifts scheme	Phil Hollier	01622-859154 / 07542 625277
Lenham Meadows Trust	Danny Matthews	enquiries@lenhammeadowstrust.org
Lenham Nursery	Sarah Siddens	07967 128056
Lenham Parish Council	Lisa Westcott	01622-829034 (Tues-Thurs 10am-1pm) clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk
Lenham Quilters & Stitchers	Pamela Gillard	01233-879507
Lenham Social Club	Sue Neaves	01622-532409
Lenham Toddlers Group	Irene Hine	01622-858919
Lenham Wanderers FC	Anna Russell	07747-844785
Len Valley Health Walks	Jan Enever	01622-851623
Len Valley Practice	GP surgery	01622-858341 / 859204
Member of Parliament	Helen Whately	helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk
Mothers' Union	Mrs J Thomsett	01622-947938
Patient Participation Group	Teresa New	01622-858341
Pilates Classes	Vivien Elcomb	01622-853887
Redback Explorer Scouts	Mark Horlock	redbackesu@hotmail.com
St Edmunds; Platts Heath	Kate Stansfield	07500-895831
Save Our Heathlands (SOHL)	Kate Hammond	07925-606236
Sing & Shake / Make & Shake	Steph Richardson	07894-160906
Sittingbourne Valley FC	Paul Hewish	07795-324062
Vicar	<i>Vacancy</i>	churchoffice@lvb.org.uk
Wellbeing Community Group	Ellie Stevens	07952-594655 / (Vladimir 07877-143088)
Women's Institute	Chris Godden	01622-858658

# Lenham Community Centre - Regular Clubs/Classes/Societies - April 2026

ACTIVITY	WHEN HELD	Time	CONTACT NO
Abundant Energy Tai Chi	Weekly Monday	0930-1030	07985 001782
<b>Abundant Energy Qigong</b>	<b>Weekly Monday</b>	<b>1045-1145</b>	<b>07985 001782</b>
Country Ways Quilting	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	1330-1630	01233 879507
<b>Country Ways Rugmaking and quilting</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; last Wednesday</b>	<b>0900-1300</b>	<b>07784 892160</b>
Feathers Badminton	Weekly Monday	2000-2200	07984 948524
<b>Gardening Society</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday</b>	<b>1845-2200</b>	<b>01622 430649</b>
Hatha Yoga	Weekly Monday	1815-1945	07850 355918
<b>Kent School of Bridge</b>	<b>Weekly Thursday</b>	<b>1330-1730</b>	<b>01622 891964</b>
LenARA Bowling	Weekly Tuesday	1330-1700	01622 858439
<b>LenARA Line Dancing</b>	<b>Weekly Wednesday</b>	<b>1845-2115</b>	<b>01622 859725</b>
LenARA Members	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	1230-1700	01622 851763
<b>LenARA Petanque</b>	<b>Thurs if weather permits</b>	<b>0900-1300</b>	<b>01622 858439</b>
LenARA Zumba Gold	Weekly Wednesday	0900-1030	01622 850468
<b>Lenham Art Group</b>	<b>Weekly Thursday</b>	<b>1000-1300</b>	<b>01622 858238</b>
Lenham Badminton	Weekly Tuesday	2000-2200	01622 858561
<b>Lenham Ballet School</b>	<b>Monday / Tuesday</b>	<b>1700-2030</b>	<b>07866 316056</b>
Lenham Ballet School	Thursday	1630-2100	07866 316056
<b>Lenham Ballet School</b>	<b>Weekly Saturday</b>	<b>0900-1530</b>	<b>07866 316056</b>
Lenham Heritage	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	1900-2130	01622 850228
<b>Lenham Toddlers pre-school</b>	<b>Weekly Tuesday</b>	<b>0930-1130</b>	<b>01622 858919</b>
Lenham Meadows Trust	3rd Thursday	1900-2100	07831 308267
<b>Lenham Toddlers Pre-school</b>	<b>Weekly Tuesday</b>	<b>0930-1130</b>	<b>01622 858919</b>
Lenham WI	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	1845-2200	01622 858658
<b>Parish Council</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday</b>	<b>1930-2200</b>	<b>01622 829034</b>
Parish Council F & G P	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	1930-2200	01622 829034
<b>Parish Council Planning (P&amp;I)</b>	<b>3rd Wednesday</b>	<b>1930-2200</b>	<b>01622 829034</b>
Pathways Church	Weekly Sunday	1030-1200	07708 754672
<b>Telisa Tai Chi</b>	<b>Weekly Wednesday</b>	<b>1730-1830</b>	<b>07734 108683</b>
Zumba with Rosie	Weekly Tuesday	1830-1930	07809 490982

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# ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April at 7:30pm  
Lenham Community Centre

## WELCOME

The chair of Lenham Parish Council will welcome everyone at 7:30pm.

This will be followed by an opportunity to meet and chat with parish councillors and local groups.



## HAVE YOUR SAY?

How can we make your village life better?  
Any burning questions?  
Please let us know by coming along or leaving suggestions in our suggestion box.

## REFRESHMENTS

Light refreshments will be available while enjoying the information stands and displays.

## WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU THERE

No need to book to attend, but if you would like a table or display area for your group, please let the clerk know by 20<sup>th</sup> April.

**Lisa Westcott**

Clerk to Lenham Parish Council

Email: [clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk) Tel: 01622 829034

# The Great Stour origins - Chilston

by Lesley Feakes



**A**s promised, this is about the origin of the Great Stour Chilston source. If one were to take the view that the river source furthest west is the true source, and if one were to take the view of its name, it's the only true source too.

What do I mean about that? Well, look at the name "Great" how is it deserved? I maintain that it is a great mound of sand called the Great Sturreye that originally gave it its name. Just to the west of this mountain was a lake only recognisable on the 1841 tithe map by the names Lake Meadow and Lake Field. From this lake arose the River Len and the River Stour (blue arrow at the bottom).

You will see also that there is a blue arrow from the ice pond also and both these streams still exist. The strongest one crosses the road at the Chilston entrance. Both are "from the area of the Great Sturreye". Alas poor Great Sturreye, has had its heart ripped out by the new railway and is hardly recognisable as a mound!

It was, I am sure, one of the great recognisable mounds we have along the Greensand ridge – Aylesford church, the Eyehorne (Snarkhurst) and Cale Hill. All these three giving rise to the Hundreds, but for some reason ours was missed!

From its now faint trickle beginnings, the water arrives at Chilston Lake. Both streams have great difficulty getting there as they are both truncated by the M20 and I have no idea how well (if at all) they are given culverts.

Most of the water is commandeered by the Chilston estate but an exit stream at the eastern end does make it to the Bowley branch of the Stour. So many people have said to me "Oh, but does the Stour come from Chilston"? Walk along Bowley Lane from Lenham Heath road and look; admittedly it is difficult to see for the bushes.

Proof is found on the Lidar of the area, the deep cut channel joining the Lenham Stour can be seen as it crosses (under) the Bowley Road. By the way, I have since realised why the Stour stream/source in the Mount Castle Hollow lost its recognition. There was a battle with the Romans so horrendous that

the locals pushed the knowledge into the distant past.

All that remains is memory of Mars Wood (on microfiche of Tithe map) and High Crosses - and even those have drifted into oblivion since the 1841 Tithe map was labelled Chilston Stour source opposite Chilston entrance gate.





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# Annual North Downs Walk – 14 June 2026 – Registration now open!

**Sponsored Walk for Cancer Research UK and your own selected charities**

The Rotary Club of the Weald of Kent is running the annual North Downs Walk on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June, starting at Harrietsham Village Hall.

It's a sponsored walk, which has been held annually (except in 2020 due to the pandemic) since 1985 and has raised in excess of £600,000 for Cancer Research UK and the walkers' chosen charities.

There are alternative routes to suit walkers of all levels of fitness. The 1 mile and 3 mile routes are fairly flat; the 6 mile and 9 mile routes take in the beautiful North Downs, with stunning views across the Weald. We have water stations, including dog bowls (this is a dog-friendly event, so give your furry friends an extended walkies) and toilets en-route.

Walkers can start at any time between 8am and 11am and should be back in time for lunch. When you get back to Harrietsham, all walkers are given a free ploughman's lunch, strawberries and cream, and entertainment by local musicians. Come and make a day of it, and raise money for your favourite cause or charity at the same time.

Half of your sponsorship money will be donated by Rotary to Cancer Research UK. The other half is yours to donate to your selected cause or charity, which could also be CRUK but might include Scouts, Guides, school PTA, local church, sports club etc. This makes it a great way of raising money for your cause, with Rotary looking after all of the details.

**Many thanks** to our event sponsors, **Family Funeral Service**, who have underwritten all the costs of the event;



every penny raised in sponsorship will go to the charities. Please visit: [www.wealdofkentrotary.org.uk](http://www.wealdofkentrotary.org.uk) to download registration forms, route maps and event posters, or to learn more about Rotary.

For further details contact **Duncan Payne**, our walk committee chairman at [walkline@wealdofkentrotary.org.uk](mailto:walkline@wealdofkentrotary.org.uk)

An advertisement for Wisetech Security Systems. It features the company logo at the top, which consists of a red signal icon above the text "WISETECH SECURITY SYSTEMS". Below the logo, the text lists services: "CCTV Systems", "Burglar Alarm Systems", and "WIFI Solutions". It also mentions "5 Star Google Ratings" and "Local, Reliable &amp; Professional". Contact information includes the phone number "01634 944161" and the website "www.wisetechsecurity.co.uk". The advertisement includes three circular inset images: a white burglar alarm control panel, a person wearing a green uniform with a "WISETECH" logo on their chest, and a white dome CCTV camera. At the bottom, a white van with the "WISETECH" logo is partially visible.

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# History of a Site: Liberty View

(formerly Tanyard North)

## Part 1. By Henry Shotter

The field that is now Liberty View is shown on a map of 1600 with the name of the owner written on the plan: 'Lord Montague'. He was one of the owners of the Manor of Lenham after the Reformation. He was preceded by Thomas Wilsford as Lord of the Manor. It is nice to see that two houses in Liberty View are named 'Montague' and 'Wilsford', thus remembering an aspect of Lenham's history.

When, in 2014, the field with the popular footpath leading up to the Lenham Cross appeared in Maidstone Borough Council's Draft Local Plan as a site for housing, there was a big outcry in Lenham: 'No, not on Tanyard!'

The site was much loved as it offered the open view onto the Lenham Cross before you entered the built-up area of Lenham. The field was also a favourite for metal detectorists; those who walked the field with permission of the landowner as well as the others; the night hawks, who came out under the cover of darkness and looked for buried treasures illegally. The 'word-by-mouth' popularity of the site made it evident that much was found here, but we don't have a comprehensive record. When the Community Centre was built, a Roman track way had been uncovered which led straight into this field and rumour had it that a Roman bathhouse was situated near the road. Some Roman bricks have

been re-used in the church and because of this it was thought that there had been a building somewhere and Tanyard, close to the springs of the Stour, was the prime candidate.

Thanks to planning policies and the efforts by the archaeology department of Kent County Council, an archaeological brief was required. The archaeological investigation carried out by Thames Valley Archaeological Services (TVAS) concentrated on the area nearest to the Community Centre on 1.7ha and it was assumed that the archaeologists would be finished within 3 weeks.

### 4000 years of Human Activity

In fact: the archaeologists were on this site for 9 months and their finds were a surprise even to those who say, 'they were in the know'. The

TVAS lead of the excavation, Maisie Foster, wrote her report in 2023<sup>1</sup>. It is sensational: The team from TVAS unearthed human occupation of the site spanning 4,000 years from the Mesolithic period onwards. Several thousands of worked Mesolithic flints were recovered from the 1.7ha site. Charred hazelnut shells associated with this Mesolithic period await carbon dating. Finding worked flints in this quantity is extremely unusual. From the later Mesolithic period, there were fewer struck flints on the site. They were aligned east to west across the field.

During the Bronze Age, the site was used for burials of cremated remains in urns and un-urned. Two barrow ditches were unearthed, both 'Beaker Burials', so called

#### Reference:

1. For the complete report see: 'Land at Tanyard Farm, Lenham, Kent; A Post-Excavation Assessment' by Maisie Foster, Thames Valley Archaeological Services LTD March 2023.

because the dead were buried with a beaker. At the centre of the first ring ditch was a beaker and the skeleton of an adult male in a crouched position. Carbon dating of a rib bone showed that the person was alive between 2204-and 2033 BC. Nearby was another beaker burial of a child under the age of 9.

### A Holy place?

There were three cremation burials which the archaeologists identified as high-status burials because they contained eating plates

with bones, the remainder of food offerings. Also included in the burial were an iron cauldron and copper-alloy brooches and part of a dog skeleton.

The Romans had built a track which runs through the site. It is properly constructed like a Roman road with several layers of differing materials. They also built a corn dryer and a well; both foundations still standing. The well, which was near the road, was 4m wide and after excavation 2.5m deep. It contained many animal bones and one set of complete antlers. The well and corn dryer were possibly related to farming activity on the site as in the corner slot of a large enclosure cow skulls and hobnails were found. It is possible that there was a building, but this was later built over and the evidence is lost. Also of Roman origin were tons of iron slag

recovered from the northeast end of the site, which indicate that in this area metal working was going on.

You might wonder why all this was here? The Romans and earlier cultures considered water as a life-giving force and springs are often associated with places of worship. In addition, the springs on and near Tanyard mark a minor watershed which might have enhanced their religious importance.

The summary of the excellent Tanyard report shows the scale of the task ahead:

- Just over 6,600 worked flints were recovered (ca. 30% Mesolithic).
- Approximately 10,977 sherds of pottery were collected but only 77 copper alloy coins (a result of metal detecting in the past?)
- 3,235 pieces of metal (mainly of Roman origin)
- 4,585 pieces of ceramic building material weighing 242.5 kg (Roman/Saxon context)
- 132 kg of iron slag (mainly Roman)
- 88 pieces of glass (mainly Roman).

Not much is certain in archaeology, but it is clear that it will take several more years to have the complete picture. In the next *Focus* we will have a look at the remarkable finds from the Anglo-Saxon period.

---

## Medieval Sheep Farming & the Wool Trade

**23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026**

**Lenham Community Centre**

**12 Groom Way, Lenham ME17 2QT**

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**A talk by Sally Finn-Kelcey for Lenham Heritage Society**

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# Parish Council news

Chair – Cllr John Britt

You will see regular updates on all the parish council's activities in the *Focus*, [www.lenhamparish.org.uk](http://www.lenhamparish.org.uk) and social media.

## Parish Precept

The parish council has agreed an increase of 3% in the Parish Precept for the financial year 2026/27. This is slightly below inflation figures and addresses increases in the costs of providing the services for which the parish council is responsible.

The budget for 2026/27 is higher than the income the precept will deliver, this is because the parish council has offset the income it is projecting to receive against the budget it has set, thus reducing the precept requirement (which covers the difference). The budget for 2026/27 will be available on the parish council's website: [www.lenhamparish.org.uk](http://www.lenhamparish.org.uk).

## Parish Caretaker

The response to the post of Parish Caretaker was excellent. All the potential candidates were strong, and the parish council will announce the successful candidate once all the usual checks have been completed. The new Caretaker will work up to 16 hours each week on tasks set by the Parish Clerk, and Deputy Clerk.

## Annual Parish Meeting – 29 April, Lenham Community Centre

This month, on the 29 April, the parish council will hold the Annual Parish Meeting. This is an opportunity for everyone to come and ask the parish council a question in perhaps a slightly

less formal atmosphere than a full council meeting. The format is deliberately less official than the regular monthly meetings, which is how the parish council does and records its business. As well as summarising our plans for the next year we will also be starting the discussion about the Local Government Reorganisation.

The Annual Parish Meeting is also open to local groups to come along and meet people, explain what they are doing and share their vision of life in their part of the parish.

We very much hope that frequent participants, such as the Lenham Meadows Trust, which do such crucial work maintaining public spaces like the Lenham Pond, along with other local groups like the Friends of St Mary's, who help to look after the church, will be able to join us.

In addition, we hope that Panattoni, which recently acquired the former Marley site, might be available plus an exciting new community initiative for the village: The Lenham Repair Shop.

If you are a local group and want to be involved, please contact the Parish Office, if you want to know more about how the parish council works and what is planned for the next year then please come along. The "chat" will be minimal and there will be refreshments.

### Further April dates for your diary

Don't forget the **Easter Egg Trail** on the **7 April** – more details from the Parish Office.

**The Lenham Cross Spring Clean on Saturday 18 April from 09:30.** However, the work is quite weather dependant, so if you would like to be part of the team keep an eye out for posters and announcements on local social media. The Lenham Cross is one of only two chalk crosses in the south of England, the other being in Shoreham. Maintaining it looking great is an ongoing task and we ask for volunteers to spend a morning helping to keep it looking clean and bright.

### ...and finally

Reporting potholes: we are very conscious that the local roads are in a dire state. It is essential that all potholes get reported to KCC, as the responsible authority, and this is done on-line here: [https://kentcc-self.achieve.service.com/en/service/Report\\_a\\_pothole?consentMessage=yes&noLoginPrompt=2](https://kentcc-self.achieve.service.com/en/service/Report_a_pothole?consentMessage=yes&noLoginPrompt=2)

**Please note that the parish council cannot report potholes on your behalf.**

## Update from Len Valley Practice

From Georgia Lane, Operations Manager

**A**s we move into spring, Len Valley Practice continues to focus on strengthening and developing services for patients across Lenham and Harrietsham. Demand for GP services remains extremely high, and we are working proactively to ensure we can continue to meet the needs of our growing community.

We are currently in the process of recruiting additional GPs and a Clinical Pharmacist, with start dates expected in the coming months. Expanding our clinical team will help increase appointment capacity and provide additional specialist support. We are also advertising for a Phlebotomist to further support our nursing team and improve access to blood test appointments.

We continue to encourage patients to use our online triage system via the practice website for medical and administration queries. This system enables our clinicians to assess requests efficiently and prioritise care appropriately, ensuring urgent cases are dealt with promptly while

routine matters are managed safely and effectively. Patients who are unable to access online services can contact the practice by telephone and our reception team will assist.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind patients that the practice operates a zero-tolerance policy towards abusive or aggressive behaviour. Our staff are here to help and work extremely hard to support the community. Everyone deserves to feel safe and respected in their workplace, and we ask that all interactions with our team remain courteous and considerate.

We are grateful for the continued support of our patients and the wider community as we work to deliver safe, accessible and high-quality primary care services.

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# A View From Across The Pond

By Diane Bonfante, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

## Part I – Red Rose teabags: -“Only in Canada, pity.”

In 1890 a Canadian, Theodore Harding Estabrooks, founded Red Rose in Saint John, New Brunswick. By the 1920's, a rich blend of Sri Lankan/Indian tea leaves was developed to be put into a single serving gauze-like tea bag; thus becoming one of the world's first companies that ensured “something better for consumers” - consistency and quality for every ‘cuppa’. Gaining popularity across Canada, Estabrooks sold Red Rose to England's Brooke, Bond & Company - already synonymous with their brand, PG Tips.

Post WWII, Brooke/Bond established a Red Rose branch in Montreal, continuing “a unique drop of rosie”. By the 1970's, Red Rose dominated Canada's and the USA's tea market. The brand's ‘rights’ were sold by Brooke to Unilever Foods (USA) in 1985, then to Redco Foods, then again in 1995 to Teekanne/Redco Foods of Germany. Today, Red Rose tea is owned by different companies in various countries. Sadly, the original factory in Saint John closed its doors on January 27, 1988.



Folks like me who grew up in Canada no doubt have fond memories, since Red Rose is tantamount in Canada to pop culture. It's the only tea I knew growing up and still brew most days. Their unique marketing involved highly sought and cherished collectible porcelain

figurines called ‘Whimsies’. Also part of their promotional savvy was an impressive advertising slogan launched in the mid-1950's. Over decades, the premise of this

brand's marketing changed minimally until the 1980's when considered, “...no longer viable to identify with modern tea drinkers”.

Circa 1954 in the UK, ‘Wade Whimsies’ launched, selling small porcelain animal figurines manufactured by the George Wade Pottery of Burslem, Stoke-On-Trent. Trade marked ‘Red Rose’ a premium promotion began in the Province of Quebec (1967) that included in every box of tea, a free ‘Wade Whimsy’ miniature! Series of animals, Noah's Ark pets, characters from children's literature and folklore followed. It was so successful, it quickly expanded to the rest of Canada and the USA. This program ceased in 2018 - but not before approximately 300 million Whimsies' were distributed!!



Red Rose ‘Whimsies’ can still be discovered in vintage and antique shops around the world! Today in Canada, the classic Red Rose ad's slogans are usually referenced to make a point for a giggle or two! View for yourself on YOU TUBE, ads utilise British persona in tea-serving scenarios (including a detective) that conclude by expressing rather distressingly, “Only in Canada, pity”. Or “Only in Canada, eh? Pity.”



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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.



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# Nature Watch

By Darren Hammond

## *Ladybird, ladybird makes itself at home*

**T**he classic image of a ladybird, and the one we are most used to seeing in the garden, is the 7-spot ladybird, which has seven black spots dotted across its bright red back. However not many people know that there are around 47 species of ladybird in the UK, with a variety of different colours and patterns. Ladybirds are often called the gardener's friend as they help with pest control by eating aphids that can harm our garden plants.

Ladybirds have a lifecycle much the same as a butterfly, egg to larvae, larvae to pupae and then the adult.



### **The beginning**

The egg is laid on a leaf and then hatches into a larvae. These look fierce and can be fairly brightly coloured. After they hatch there are four stages of growth they go through.

As they eat more and more, they grow and when they get to a certain size, they then shed their skins and move into the next stage. Eventually they get big enough they form a pupae and this is the last stage before becoming an adult.



### **The adult**

When the ladybird first comes out of the egg it might not look like the colourful beetle we know as it is pale and even colourless.

Its colour will take a few days to fully appear. They usually come out in late summer and then spend the winter hidden away until it gets warmer and then they come out to start the cycle all over again. Here we have a harlequin ladybird, one of the varieties we have around the village.



### **The common invader**

The harlequin is an invasive species in the UK but has really made itself at home. They come in a large variety of colours and can appear very different. In fact there has been over 100 different colour patterns recorded. One of the ways to tell if the ladybird you're looking at is the harlequin, is the "M" you can see on the section of its body just behind the head.

### **Not always in plain sight**

Having just told you that to identify a harlequin you should look for the "M" on its back, sometimes this is not always the case.

Here we have a very differently coloured harlequin and it doesn't have an "M" showing at all, nor is it red or orange with black spots. Instead it's a midnight black beetle with large red spots on its back. It's the perfect example to show how different they can be.

### **The cream-spot ladybird**

The cream spot ladybird is found in woodland and hedgerows and can be found on shrubs as well. It's



a reddish brown ladybird that has 14 round evenly spaced creamy white spots on its back.

These lovely little beetles are actually voracious predators and will feed on aphids and other softer insects. In the winter they will hide in the crevices in bark, in the plant and leaf litter in the garden and even in beech nuts.

### **The 16 spot ladybird**

These ladybirds are known for spending the winters in large groups, even mixing in with other types of ladybirds.

They are fairly small and are usually a beige or light brown colour with a very distinctive dark line down the middle of their wing cases.

The spots on their backs are often fused together and can create a pattern of lines or checkers. They do feed on aphids but also eat pollen, nectar and different types of fungi.

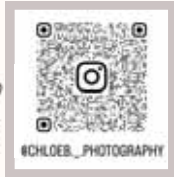
***So when the spring comes and it gets warmer, take a look for the gardener's friend and find a kaleidoscope of colours.***



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---

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## Who are we?

---

Pathways is a vibrant, Jesus-centred church. We are a welcoming, hope-filled community based in and around the village of Lenham, where people from all walks of life come together to worship, grow in faith, and live it out in everyday life.

At Pathways Church, we pray that you will discover a place of **belonging, hope, and meaning.**



Tea and coffee are available before and after each service, so feel free to drop in early or stay later. For more info get in touch via the website.

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No charge although donations to help cover costs would be appreciated.

## Future 2026 dates & planned events:

April 16<sup>th</sup> Thorne Hedgehog Rescue, May 21<sup>st</sup> Plant Swap,  
June 18<sup>th</sup> Fish & Chips, July 16<sup>th</sup>, August 20<sup>th</sup> Cream Teas,  
September 17<sup>th</sup> Macmillan Coffee Morning, October 15<sup>th</sup>,  
November 19<sup>th</sup> Craft Fair



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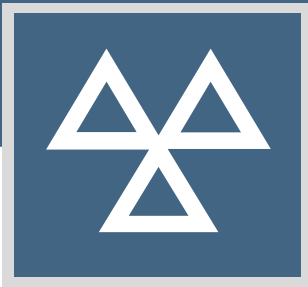
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# Obituary

## Cllr. Derek Haselup 1931-2026

It was with sadness that we learned that Derek passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> January in the Warren Lodge care home in Ashford.

In 1958 he married Jane and together they settled in Chigwell, Essex. In 1960 and 1961 they welcomed two sons, Paul and Mark. Their family was completed in 1968 with the birth of their daughter, Lynn.

In 1975 the family moved to Shepherds Farm at Lenham Heath but later relocated to Frith Farm, Otterden. Derek had a career working for BT until he retired in 1985. Derek had always taken a keen interest in local politics.

In May 1987 he joined Maidstone Borough Council and Lenham Parish Council, becoming Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee. As a Parish Councillor, Derek served as both Chairman and Vice-chairman for both Cllr Andrew Barr and Cllr Nick Osborne.

Derek was a very good borough councillor for Lenham. He always made our village concerns known in Maidstone and his debating skills were a force to be reckoned with. He always believed that local issues were more important than national politics.

Under his guidance, Derek played a major role in the success of several important projects undertaken by the Parish Council. To mention just a couple, he was involved with the upgrade of the street lighting in the village and successfully raised £22k towards the purchase and installation of the CCTV system, Lenham becoming the first village to install CCTV to combat local petty crime.

In 1995, Lenham Hospital closed and part of the site was designated for housing and became Highbourne Park.



The Mid Kent Countryside Partnership managed to transfer around 50% of the site and it became Cherry Downs Picnic site. Derek negotiated a plan so that the Parish Council could take over the responsibility for the ongoing management of the site for the benefit of the residents to enjoy.

In 1997, Derek became part of the team to find a new site and build a new Lenham Community Centre, including a new medical centre.

This was a seven-year project with a budget of £1.5 million. This involved many hours of discussions and meetings; without his advice and support, this project would not have been the success it has become that we all enjoy today.

**A celebration of Derek's life will be held on 11 July from 2pm to 5pm at the Square Fish restaurant in Lenham village square.**

# The Arts Society Egerton



The Arts Society brings people together through a shared curiosity for the arts

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# Christian Message

From Reverend Millie Hart

**A**nyone who was around in the 60s will remember how England won the World cup. As far as we are concerned today, it only happened the once.

It was Kenneth Wolstenholm who supplied the commentary that day; 'they think it's all over' he said and then Geoff Hurst hammered in another goal; 'It is now!' he said...

More than 2,000 years ago a very different scenario was unfolding. Again, things seemed to be coming to an end. A man staggered under the weight of a cross and then groaned in agony as his life ebbed slowly away when he was nailed to that cross. 'They think it's all over' his followers must have been thinking, not just his life but also the hopes and faith they had invested in him were at an end too. Any remaining shreds of hope, it seemed, were laid to rest as they watched him finally being laid in a tomb.

Do you know the inflatable toy that is given to young children? No matter how hard or how often you knock it over, it would always bounce back up again. The whole family might be amused to watch that it just cannot be kept down.

As for this man, Jesus, God's Son, who they put on a cross, he just couldn't be kept down either. This was God's plan, to show how the deep love that God has for each one of us, just cannot be kept down. This was, and is, the resurrection message.

Christ died and is risen!! It is as true today as it always was. Ultimately, there is nothing and no-one that can frustrate the will of God. Ours really is the God who will finally triumph, and who gives us the victory. And as we celebrate the resurrection victory this month, I wish you all a very Happy Easter!

Loving God, as you rose victorious over death, so may hope, faith and love continue to triumph in our lives. *Amen*

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# Len Valley Benefice **Everybody is welcome**

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.  
*1 John 4 v7 (part)*

## Wednesday 1 April

**9.30am Lenham:** Holy Communion

## Thursday 2 April – Maundy Thursday

**7.00pm Lenham:** Maundy Thursday Holy Communion with washing of feet

## Friday 3 April – Good Friday

**2.00pm Services** in all four churches  
 'An hour at The Cross'

## Sunday 5 April – Easter Sunday

**11.00am Lenham:** Easter Holy Communion with baptism

## Sunday 12 April

**9.30am Lenham:** Breakfast Church

**11.00am Lenham:** Holy Communion

## Sunday 19 April

**9.30am Lenham:** Breakfast Church

**11.00am Lenham:** Morning Worship

## Sunday 26 April

**11.00am** Benefice Holy Communion at St Nicholas, Boughton Malherbe

### **Check local notice boards for more details**

*Please note that during 2026 some services may need to be altered or cancelled at short notice due to circumstances beyond our control.*

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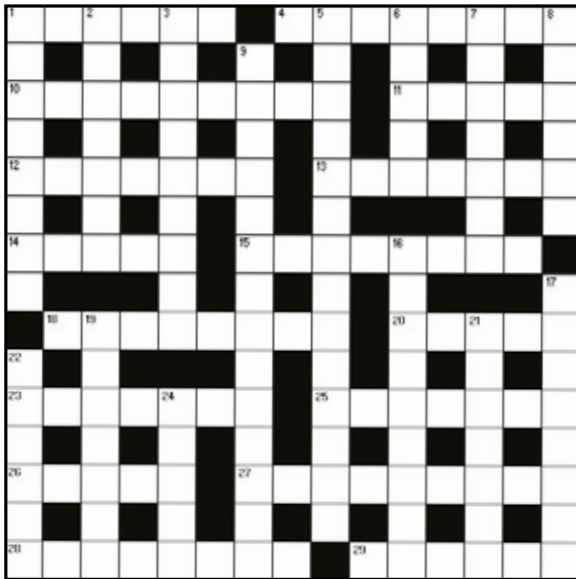
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# Focus PRIZE Crossword April 2026

The winner of the February Crossword is Audrey Joy of Harrietsham. Well done!



## Across clues

1. What a philatelist collects. (6)
4. Computer copying hardware. (8)
10. First layer of paint. (9)
11. A slang expression of disbelief! (2, 3)
12. A word for Vitamin B6. (7)
13. Aldgate and Bethnal Green are here. (4,3)
14. Got less Tense. (5)
15. A crewman is this. (8)
18. A Personal follower of Christ. (8)
20. Recreational areas often including a swimming pool. (5)
23. Gathers for oneself. (7)
25. Poirot's first name. (7)
26. A State in the New England area of America. (5)
27. Container of frozen cubes. (3, 6)
28. Unnecessary. (8)
29. He was loved by Aphrodite. (6)

## Down clues

1. 'Bangers' which are certainly not old cars! (8)
2. Give talk to. (7)
3. Emergency health worker. (9)
5. A spinning firework. (9,5)
6. Computer user's slang 'handles'. (5)
7. Essential part of a light bulb. (7)
8. Take it easy! (6)
9. Very popular item eaten in the far South West. (7, 7)
16. What a particular delivery man does every day. (4, 5)
17. Poisonous substance if inhaled. (8)
19. Think. (7)
21. Intoxicated. (7)
22. Bizet opera. (6)
24. Alloy of iron and carbon. (5)

Answers for March 2026  
*Focus* Crossword



A **£10 voucher**, donated by your crossword compiler, will go to the first correctly completed crossword picked from your entries. Please complete the box below and hand your entries into the Lenham Parish Council offices at 1a High Street Lenham or into the Lenham library by **no later than 22 April** where they'll be placed in an envelope. The winner will be notified direct and announced in a future issue of *Focus*.

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