

The Lenham Focus

OCTOBER 2026 issue

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Editorial

FOCUS is also online at
www.lenhamparish.org.uk
 (Click on 'Lenham Focus')

It's another busy month in October! Two big events for you, courtesy of Lenham Meadows Trust.

First, there is the very popular **Apple Pressing Fun Day**. Bring the family (and apples, if you have any) to the Tithe Barn off Lenham Square on Sunday 11th October (11am to 3pm). As well as the apple juice from the presses, there are many stalls for adults and children alike and presentations throughout the day, plus live music, teas, coffees and cakes. And it's FREE entry.

Then on Saturday 24th October, from 6:30pm, it's **Quiz Night at the Tithe Barn**. The £10 a head entry includes a ploughman's meal and there's a raffle too. Tickets available from 'Kent Loves...'. This was hugely supported last year, so get your tickets right away!

And there will be an opportunity to buy the **Meadows Trust 2027 calendar** at both these events, featuring 16 paintings of village scenes - all produced by the pupils

from The Lenham School. All proceeds go to support the Trust. Details of all these events are inside this issue.

AND NOW A PLEA FOR HELP!

We need a volunteer to take bundles of *FOCUS* magazines to approx 13 distributors in and around the Ham Lane area. It'll take about 20 mins to do the task, once a month, on arrival of the magazines. Jon, the lead distribution volunteer, will explain and be happy to accompany you & show you the ropes if needed. If you can help, email me on editorialslf@outlook.com or ring Jon on **07971-249137**.

ALSO we're looking for help for your editor! A couple of hours a month would be an enormous help to keeping the *FOCUS* going.

Interested? Use the same email above and we can discuss.

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 editorialslf@outlook.com

WHAT'S ON OCTOBER

- **Thursday 1st - Sunday 11th.** *Maidstone Lit Fest.* **Venue:** Various locations in Maidstone. **Cost:** See www.maidstonelitfest.org for ticket details/locations.
- **Friday 2 at 8pm:** *Karaoke night.* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Free entry.**
- **Saturday 3 at 10am – 12 noon:** *Village litter Pick.* Meet outside The Red Lion Equipment provided.
- **Sunday 11 at 11am to 3pm:** *Lenham Meadows Trust annual Apple Pressing Fun Day.* **Venue:** Tithe Barn, Lenham. **Free entry.**
- **Wednesday 14 at 2:30:** *From battlefield to the big screen – talk by Melody Foreman Arts Society.* **Venue:** Egerton Millennium Hall. **Cost:** Members free; guests £8.
- **Thursday 15 from 1:30 – 3pm:** *Hi Kent hearing clinic.* **Venue:** Lenham Community Centre. **Free.**
- **Friday 16 at 8pm:** *Dolly/Cher/Mix tributes* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Cost:** Members free.
- **Saturday 17 from 2:30 – 5pm:** *A celebration of Noel Coward – Charing Arts.* **Venue:** The

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.

- church barn, Charing. **Cost:** £8 members; £12 non-members including tea and cake.
- **Thursday 22 at 3pm:** *The black death and its aftermath – talk by Imogen Corrigan for Lenham Heritage.* **Venue:** Lenham Community Centre. **Cost:** Members/children free. £5 non-members.
- **Saturday 24 at 6:30pm:** *Lenham Meadows Trust Quiz night.* **Venue:** Tithe Barn, Lenham. Tickets from 'Kent Loves...' **Cost:** £10 a head includes ploughman's supper, Tables of 8.
- **Saturday 24 at 7pm:** *Bike ride presentation night.* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Free.**
- **Thursday 29 at 8pm:** *Quiz night* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. Purchase quiz tickets.
- **Friday 30:** *Halloween disco.* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. Prizes for best costumes (adults and children).
- **Friday 30:** *Bingo night.* **Venue:** The Dog & Bear. **Free entry.**
- **Saturday 31:** *Halloween night with live music.* **Venue:** The Red Lion. **Free entry.**
- **Saturday 31 at 8pm:** *Bingo* **Venue:** Lenham Social Club. **Members only.**

By 1 November Legend of Lenham Nominations needed.



LENHAM FILM CLUB

at Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way

We had feared that our September performance **Michael** would be our last.

However, plans are now in progress and we hope very much to spring to life again in the New Year.

Good News – we hope!

Thank you to all our loyal supporters and we are looking forward to seeing you all again. Watch this space!

The Lenham Film Club team



lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com



www.lenhamfilmclub.org



@lenhamfilmclub

QUIZ NIGHT



SATURDAY 24TH OCTOBER

Doors open 6:30pm for 7pm start

in the
Tithe Barn Lenham



Get your tickets NOW for the
COMMUNITY QUIZ night

Tables of up to eight
& individuals welcome
at £10 per head

Tickets available from 'Kent Loves'
Ploughman's included
in the ticket price
Please bring your own drink

Please email us if you'd like to know more about the Trust or to join our mailing list.
Follow us on social media for the latest news, details of events and photos of our projects.

enquiries@lenhammeadowstrust.org

www.lenhammeadowstrust.org   @LenhamMeadows



It's back!

THE LEGEND OF LENHAM

WHO WILL HOLD THE TITLE THIS YEAR?

WINNER TURNS ON LENHAM
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS!!!

MAYBE YOUR MUM, BROTHER, GRANDAD,
DAUGHTER, NEIGHBOUR OR FRIEND RAISED MONEY
FOR CHARITY? VOLUNTEERED IN THE COMMUNITY?
OR DID SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR YOU THIS YEAR?

NOMINATE NOW!

Email (1) your name & phone number (2) nominee's name, phone
number & address (3) a paragraph or short write up on why they
deserve to be this year's Legend of Lenham to:

LenhamChristmasLights@gmail.com

Or drop off in a sealed envelope to local parish council office

*Nominations close 1st November. Winner will be chosen by a judging panel
within Lenham Lights Committee & contacted directly*



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availability, please contact Rhonda

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Lenham Meadows Trust 2027 Calendar

Now Available!

A 'must' for you, your family, your friends and neighbours! The 2027 calendar features 16 illustrations, all painted or drawn by the pupils at **The Lenham School** under the guidance of their art teachers.

At only **£8.99 a copy**, it has to be seen as a bargain. And the great thing is that **EVERY PENNY RAISED** will go to the Lenham Meadows Trust to help their on-going work to maintain and protect the green spaces around our village.

The printing costs have all been pre-paid by your *FOCUS* magazine.

How to get a copy. SIMPLE!

- Kent Loves... or the Lenham Parish Council office, both located in Lenham High Street, have stock ready for you to buy.
- OR just email or text the *FOCUS* editor on editorialsf@outlook.com / **07714 311008** with your name and telephone number or email address and someone will contact you to arrange delivery and payment.

- The calendar will also be available at the next Meadows Trust events – notably the **Quiz Night** and **Apple Pressing Fun Day**, both held later in October (see details in this magazine's issue).

It's a great opportunity to buy as a Christmas present, showing homes, businesses and places of interest in Lenham village. A great keep-sake.





Homes
England

Heathlands Garden Community

You're invited to come and review our plans for Heathlands Garden Community...

Homes England, the government's housing and regeneration agency, working in partnership with Maidstone Borough Council, invites you to review the updated proposals for Heathlands Garden Community as we prepare to submit an Outline Planning Application.

Heathlands Garden Community is allocated for development in Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan Review 2021–2038, adopted in March 2024. The proposals include:

- **Around 5,000 new homes**
- **New employment opportunities**
- **Schools and community facilities**
- **Green spaces**
- **A new railway station on the Maidstone–Ashford line**

Join the conversation

Before the planning application is submitted in winter 2026–27, we are inviting you to review the updated plans at one of our community engagement events.

At these events, you will have the opportunity to speak with the project team and ask any questions you may have.

If you are unable to attend in person, you can still view the plans and meet the team by signing up for our webinar.

We hope to see you there!

Come to our local events



Friday 9 October 2026
9:00am – 1:00pm

Church Barn, Market Place,
Charing, TN27 0LP

.....
Friday 9 October 2026
3:00pm – 7:00pm

Harrietsham Village Hall,
Church Road, ME17 1AP

.....
Saturday 10 October 2026
2:00pm – 8:00pm

Lenham Community Centre,
12 Groom Way, ME17 2QT

Join our Zoom webinar

Monday 12 October 2026
7:00pm – 8:00pm

Sign up to attend

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Lenham Social Club



A BIG 'Thank You' from everyone at Lenham Social Club.

What a fantastic few weeks it has been here! We would like to say a huge thank you to all our customers and members who have supported our events and helped make them such a great success.

We've enjoyed an Elton John Tribute, our Annual Bike Ride, live music from Ancient Orange, and of course all the excitement of the WORLD CUP! But the fun continues as there's plenty more to look forward to, with another great line-up of events coming up.

Coming Up in October:

Friday 2nd October – *Karaoke* 8pm

Friday 16th October – *Dolly/Cher/Mix Tribute* 8pm

Saturday 24th October – *Bike Ride Presentation* 7pm

Thursday 29th October – *Quiz Night* • 8pm

Friday 30th October – *Halloween Disco*
Prize for Best Costume (Adults & Kids)

Saturday 31st October – *Bingo* 8pm
(Members Only)



And we're excited to announce our NEW opening times:-

Sunday: 12pm til 8pm

Monday: 5pm til 10pm

Tuesday: 5pm til 10pm – FREE POOL

Wednesday: 3pm til 11pm – DARTS NIGHT

Thursday: 3pm til 10pm

Friday: 3pm til Late – MEAT RAFFLE

Saturday: 12pm til Late

With regular entertainment, events and activities throughout the week, there's always a reason to pop in and enjoy your local social club.

New members always welcome! Pop in for a drink and find out more. The Committee, Management and Staff look forward to seeing you all soon.

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▲ HAMS PANTO - ROBIN HOOD/BABES IN THE WOOD ▲

▲ THE TOWN CRIER AWARD FOR BEST DRESSED WINDOW ▲

▲ SANTA'S GROTTO IN LENHAM SOCIAL CLUB ▲

▲ CHRISTMAS MARKET ▲

▲ FESTIVE FOOD AND DRINK ▲

▲ LENHAM FIRE BRIGADE ▲

▲ HORSE & CARRIAGE RIDES ▲

HAMS



Saturday 28th November 2026

EVENT STARTS 2.30PM | SWITCH-ON 6:00PM | FINISH 6.30PM
| THE SQUARE, LENHAM |

A message from your Community Warden, Laura Worthington-Plant

I would also like to say a huge thank you to everyone in the local community for their continued support, generosity, and valuable ideas. The kindness of individuals has helped me settle into the community, and I am grateful for the warm welcome I have received.

I would like to highlight the Community Coffee, Chat and Quiz Group, which takes place every Wednesday at Lenham House from 13:00 to 15:00. Everyone is welcome, and it is a great opportunity to meet others, enjoy a chat, and get involved in local community activities.

Unfortunately, due to poor mobile signal in the area, not all calls are reaching

my phone. However, if residents leave a voicemail, send a text message, or email me, I will get back to them as soon as possible.

I have also been working alongside local agencies and businesses to support individuals within the community and help connect them with the assistance they need.

Thank you again for your continued support.

My contact details are:

M: 07812 086465

E: Laura.Worthington-Plant@kent.gov.uk

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The Black Death in Lenham



by Henny Shotter

Until recently we had no idea how the Black Death affected the people in Lenham. A short while ago, the curator at the Museum of Free Masonry in Canterbury found, a mysterious notebook which provides many interesting historic details. On one page, it gives the names of Lenham people who died of the plague in 1582.

Among them the son of the vicar of Lenham. The priests, who visited the sick in their flock, often fell ill themselves, many died and some carried the illness home. Reverend Partriche's son was Thomas. For the keen family historians here the list of names: *'Elizabeth Brooker, Margret, the daughter of James Clark, Mary Brooker, Thomas Kenn, An infant of Wilhelm Brooker, John the elder, son of James Clarks, Richard Knocke, John Kenn, James, the son of James Clarke, Sara, the daughter of Robert Kenn, Peeter, the son of John Davie, Margaret, daughter of Robert Kenn, Margaret, daughter of James Clarke, William Jonson Robert Kenn's wife.'*

When Covid started nobody knew how the disease spread and how deadly it was. The terrible images from Italy where there was a shortage of coffins and hospital beds sent a shock through society: Is this a similar scenario as the 'Black Death'?

In retrospect some say that it was wrong to shut down schools and the non-essentials parts of our economy in order to minimise the risk of the disease spreading. Those who lost a loved one, those who experienced the suffering at first hand in the NHS or because they fell seriously ill themselves, will probably tell you something different.

The Black Death cost the lives of 50 to 60% of the population. It changed

medieval society fundamentally. There were fewer people left to work on the fields and in farming generally. Food shortages and starvation were a consequence.

However, the remaining workforce became more powerful as there was a shortage of labour. The powerful elite, the manorial lords had to make concession to their serfs and cottagers who until then were almost without any rights and personal freedom. The population in their despair turned to God and religion.

We, today, frequently take 'Covid' as a marker in history. We talk about the time before 'Covid' and the time after 'Covid'. It is as if Covid has changed society for ever. In economic terms it has. It showed the vulnerability of our economic system which relies on international trade. We have somewhat recovered from the economic impact of Covid and other factors like wars and climate change cause problems.

Covid however has changed how we access the real world. Many of us don't go shopping anymore but prefer to shop online. Many other activities which we did 'in the real world' are now done virtually and online. This will impact on the art scene. Australia for example banned AI generated music from their charts. The increased uses of digital media after Covid will, without any doubt influence how we perceive the world and society, in music and in images.

This is exactly what happened after the Black Death which will be the topic of our exciting next talk.





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'Kent Loves...' – handmade gifts by local artisans

This is the first in a series of articles about some of the local designers whose work you will see in Kent Loves... at 11 High Street, Lenham.

Made in the Malthouse is an independent ceramics studio based in a beautifully restored Victorian malthouse in the heart of the Kent countryside.

Every piece is thoughtfully designed and handmade in small batches using traditional hand-building techniques, celebrating the character and individuality that only handcrafted ceramics can offer.

Inspired by nature, simple forms and the beauty of everyday rituals, our collections are created to be used, enjoyed and treasured for years to come.

Rather than following fast-changing trends, we believe in making timeless, functional pieces that encourage people to buy less but buy better. From soap dishes and kitchenware to serving pieces and home décor, each item is carefully crafted with durability and longevity in mind.

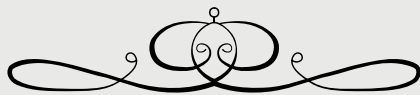


Sustainability sits at the heart of our approach. Producing in small batches helps minimise waste and overproduction, while every piece is made with close attention to material use and quality. We strive to make conscious choices throughout our process, creating objects that replace disposable alternatives and become part of everyday life rather than ending up in landfill.

Alongside our handmade collections, we offer pottery workshops where people can slow down, learn traditional skills and reconnect with the satisfaction of making something with their own hands.

At Made in the Malthouse, we believe that beautiful craftsmanship, mindful living and sustainable choices belong together – creating ceramics that are made with care, made to last and made to be loved.





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Lenham WI

The latest news from Chris Godden

We had a lovely afternoon back in August celebrating National Afternoon Tea week. We invited ladies from the North Downs District to join us in a crafty afternoon where we demonstrated Card Making, Decoupage and Cross Stitch. All the ladies enjoyed a cream tea and went home with something lovely they had made.

This month we have a speaker talking about Sign Language which will be interesting. It's something maybe we should all learn and some schools are teaching it now.

essentials like toiletries and pyjamas and comfort items like blankets, teddies and books when they have been removed from everything and everyone they know.



COMFORT CASES



The WI are also supporting Comfort Cases UK for children who are going into foster care or moving

between placements. They have given us patterns for draw string bags and knitted sloths to go into a Comfort Case for each child.

There are 107,000 children in care, with 36,000 new children entering every year. 1 in 10 will move placements in their first year. 80% of them still move with their belongings in bin bags, bags for life or with nothing.

Comfort Cases UK replaces that moment of shame with belonging and dignity to inspire hope. They provide children and young people with an age-appropriate bag of their own filled with new practical



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 rrgodden@btinternet.com



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Recipe of the Month

Chicken In A Different Way

Ingredients:

4 Large Chicken Legs

Pepper, salt & Mustard

4 slices Ham

4 slices Edam Cheese

Method:

Rub the chicken legs with salt & pepper and put each leg in a separate piece of greased foil. Cook for 45 minutes in a medium oven. Once cooked, open the foil packets and put on top of each chicken leg a slice of ham, spread with mustard and a slice of cheese.



Leave the packets open and put back in a very hot oven for about 10 minutes or until the cheese is nicely browned and crisp.

Serves 4

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The Church on Google Earth

By Lesley Feakes

If, like me, you enjoy seeing the Earth from space, the new Google Earth is now up for 2026. It is even more detailed, you can see your own house and with any luck, yourself sunbathing in the back garden.

Zooming in on the church it got me thinking again... why is the graveyard essentially to the north of the church? That really was a no no, the evil position in early times. Perhaps LAS investigations of the Thorneloe garden in 2017 were not so far off the mark.

If the original Saxon Church was once there before it was burnt down in 1297, then it would explain things. The northern graveyard would become the eastern, much better for the poor souls buried there! Church Square would have real reason for its name.

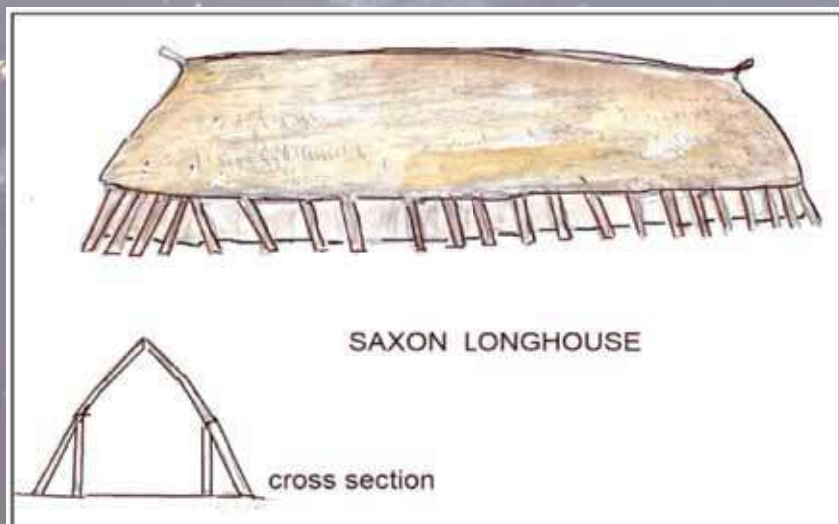
In our investigation we found no evidence except there was a hole, loose soil and a

few stones! It could have been soil filling a void. So much of archaeology is making theories, that then need proving. It is a thought worth bearing in mind if there is ever any construction in that area in the distant future.

The date on tomb stones has little bearing on previous burials, for we now know that six people were found in the recent construction close to the tower and hastily reburied. The churchyard is a mass of older burials one above each other.

I remain convinced that Lenham had a Saxon Church and that it was; a very important place, was royal, owned by a Saxon queen and with one of the largest Saxon longhouses in the UK.

Perhaps the Barn was once Saxon or Iron Age or even older, as it is a fact that longhouses were built over the same footprint.



Countryways Quilters and Stitchers

From Pamela Gillard

It's moving towards the close of our year, when we start thinking about Christmas!!

Yes that's right, winter is coming. During the summer garden meetings we were working on hand stitching but in October we are back in the Lenham Community Centre. So the first meeting will be finishing the construction of the lavender bags and the quilted make-up bags. At the second meeting we will be starting work on our Christmas project. We are using raw edge free motion applique to decorate either a Christmas tree skirt or small hand Towels.

Come join us at one of our meetings and try your hand at something new or just enjoy the company, have a chat and a cup of tea.

An enjoyable way to spend an afternoon.



Our meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of every month except December and we'd love to see you. We meet in the Osborne room in the Lenham Community Centre from 1:30 to 4:30. If you'd like more info on our group or a copy of our 2026 programme, please contact me, Pamela Gillard at 07914 809946 or email moonbeamspinner@gmail.com

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Dance-Fit

by Paula Hickford

When I moved to Lenham, just over a year ago, I planned to find a hall and start a fitness class. And I hoped people would come along. As a personal trainer, I've been helping people exercise, one to one and in classes, for 12 years, but elsewhere in Kent.

Not only did a whole new fitness community form, but I found a warm, welcoming, supportive group of women, who have become firm friends, with me and each other. And one Fitter Stronger class has now become three busy classes – two dance fit classes and a 60+ exercise class. And it doesn't end there! They get along so well, that they started a WhatsApp social group, arranging regular lunches, cinema and theatre trips.

When Lenham Fest happened, at the Tithe Barn, in August, the organisers kindly invited us to dance. I wanted our lovely community to see that my class is full of fabulous women, who love to embrace music and movement and all are welcome. If you step left and others go right, it really doesn't matter. If you think you have two left feet, that doesn't matter either, as long as you are having fun. My amazing Harrietsham dance fit class, confidently and stylishly wowed the crowd in the summer sunshine and richly deserved their applause. As soon as they had finished, they asked, 'when can we do it again?!' I could not have been more proud of them!

My routines include elements of lots of the dances you see on Strictly Come Dancing. There is samba, cha cha, jive, salsa and much more. When the class requested a line dance, I added one of those, too. We take our time working through a new dance.



When that choreography has landed, we add another. And there are videos to work on at home, while you learn.

My Dance Fit class leads to improved stamina, coordination and posture. We have arm and leg-focused dance tracks that target those areas, too. Recent comments include, 'I have never stuck at an exercise class before, but this one flies by and I always look forward to coming' and 'I have much more energy than when I started, all from a bit of dancing.' I've had videos of my clients leading my dances, with groups of friends, at parties and weddings, which is fabulous. We have a bhangra dance to Sapphire by Ed Sheeran which one client couldn't resist dancing to in the supermarket, much to the amusement of her husband!

New dancers are made very welcome at my classes and encouraged to move at their own pace. Dancing is great on a good day and perfect for lifting your mood on a difficult day. Leave any worries at the door, relax with us and have fun!

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Wednesday 14th October:

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To find out more please visit: www.theartssocietyegerton.org.uk or contact our Membership Secretary, Christine on cmwillis75@gmail.com or 01233 756377

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Hollywood Rome – Exhibition

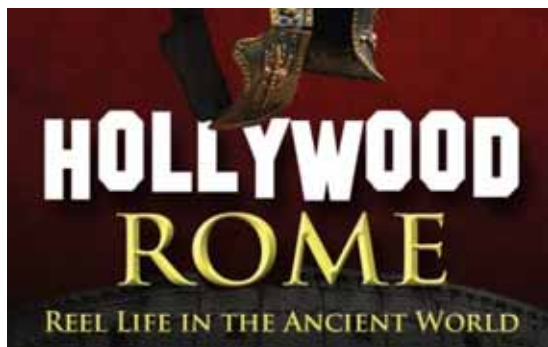
Saturday 31st October 2026 – All Day

Maidstone Museums, St Faiths Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1LH

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This exhibition brings together Pop-Up Exhibition's outstanding collection of screen-used cinema and television props, costumes and armour, from films such as *Gladiator* (2000), *King Arthur* (2004), *Centurion* (2009), *The Eagle* (2011) *Ben-Hur* (2016) and *Spartacus* (2010-13). It interprets them in the context of the history and archaeology that have inspired the filmmakers, presenting historical figures in a way that will connect with modern audiences and fans of historical cinema.



The exhibition includes interactive and handling elements, original cinema posters and banners, screen-used fabric hangings from *Gladiator* and museum-standard graphic interpretation. It also includes a section on classic sword and sandal cinema of the 1950s and 60s.

Admission: Adults (18+) £4.50; Child £2.25, Under 5's FREE, Family £12 (2 adults and up to three children). Tickets are non-refundable unless the event is cancelled by the museum.



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Climate Change Is Happening

From Patricia Crawford & RURAL FOCUS PRESS GROUP

The gravity of Climate Change is being brought home with a vengeance this year. Planet Earth in entirety is heating up but Europe is heating at more than twice the global average. (Copernicus provides comprehensive information: climate.copernicus.eu/ why-are-Europe-and-arctic-heating-faster-than-rest-world). Despite our understanding what is driving global warming, greenhouse gas emissions are continuing to rise partially as a result of cash-strapped governments reducing or even scrapping measures that tackle climate drivers. (Scientists predict that greenhouse gas emissions will have risen to 75 billion tonnes a year by 2050 which is roughly 50% higher than today). On that basis we can expect temperatures in many parts of the UK to reach 40C-plus.

The U.N. Environmental Protection Agency predicts that by 2050 life-threatening heatwaves will be affecting nearly half the global population and World Health Organisation projections indicate 250,000 additional deaths from heat stress, malnutrition and disease. Crop failures and hunger will push 130 million more people into serious poverty and one third of the world will suffer extreme water shortages.

This year our part of the UK has suffered hot weather with temperatures exceeding 30C and, at the time of writing, Met Office forecasts indicate that we can expect more very hot days. Hosepipe bans are in operation and there is no indication of when they will be lifted. The hot weather resulted in farmers harvesting most crops

early but in general yields were down. The ground is dry and rock-hard and water restrictions are creating vast problems with lack of grass forcing livestock and dairy farmers to tap into feedstuffs that were set aside for the winter months. Winter wheat is normally sown this month but that may be delayed because of the state of the ground.

The problems experienced by our farmers are being replicated in most of the countries from which we import food (currently about 60% of the food we consume is produced in this country, the remainder is imported). Massive fires in France, Spain, Italy, Greece, the USA and elsewhere, as well as here in Suffolk and Scotland, have taken a toll on food production and major supermarkets are issuing warnings about shortages and higher prices.

It is even more important to value, appreciate and support our own farmers. The livestock husbandry standards they maintain are amongst the very highest in the world, the food they produce is safe and they undertake vast projects that benefit the natural environment. All this whilst they grapple with 'weather' related problems on a daily basis.

It is time we stopped taking food for granted, ceased wasting it and took a realistic perceptive on availability now and for the future. Climatologists are predicting weather that will defeat many gardeners, imagine how much more difficult to produce food on the scale of farming and horticulture.

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
Community Warden	Laura Worthington-Plant	07353 004630 Laura.Worthington-Plant@kent.gov.uk
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
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Mothers' Union	Mrs J Thomsett	07803-937345
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	Vacancy	churchoffice@lvb.org.uk
Wellbeing Community Group	Vladimir Barkanov	07877-143088 wellbeingcg@outlook.com
Women's Institute	Chris Godden	01622-858658

Lenham Community Centre - Regular Clubs/Classes/Societies - September 2026

ACTIVITY	WHEN HELD	Time	CONTACT NO
Abundant Energy Tai Chi	Weekly Monday	0930-1030	07985 001782
Abundant Energy Qigong	Weekly Monday	1045-1145	07985 001782
Country Ways Quilting	1st & 3rd Tuesday	1330-1630	01233 879507
Country Ways Rugmaking and quilting	2nd & last Wednesday	0900-1300	07784 892160
Feathers Badminton	Weekly Monday	2000-2200	07984 948524
Gardening Society	3rd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 430649
Hatha Yoga	Weekly Monday	1815-1945	07850 355918
Kent School of Bridge	Weekly Thursday	1330-1730	01622 891964
LenARA Bowling	Weekly Tuesday	1330-1700	01622 858439
LenARA Line Dancing	Weekly Wednesday	1900-2115	01622 859725
LenARA Members	4th Wednesday	1230-1700	01622 851763
LenARA Petanque	Thursday if weather allows	0900-1300	01622 858439
LenARA Zumba Gold	Weekly Wednesday	0900-1030	01622 850278
Lenham Art Group	Weekly Thursday	1000-1300	01622 858238
Lenham Badminton	Weekly Tuesday	2000-2200	01622 858561
Lenham Ballet School	Monday/Tuesday	1700-2030	07866 316056
Lenham Ballet School	Thursday	1630-2100	07866 316056
Lenham Ballet School	Friday	0930-21.30	07866 316056
Lenham Ballet School	Weekly Saturday	0900-1530	07866 316056
Lenham Heritage	4th Thursday	1900-2130	01622 850228
Lenham Meadows Trust	3rd Thursday	1900-2100	07831 308267
Lenham Toddlers Pre-school	Weekly Tuesday	0930-1130	01622 858919
Lenham WI	2nd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 858658
Parish Council	1st Wednesday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Parish Council F & G P	3rd Wednesday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Parish Council Planning (P&I)	1st Monday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Pathways Church	Weekly Sunday	0830-1330	01622 850366
Telisa Tai Chi	Weekly Wednesday	1730-1830	07734 108683
Zumba with Rosie	Weekly Tuesday	1830-1930	07809 490982

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The Measure of Time

From Jacky Offen

For the last few years of his life, my Dad, Roy Clifton, lived at Atwater Court, Lenham and his ashes, along with my mother's, are in the churchyard of St Mary's Church. Dad was, from a child, very interested in the workings of things and was highly successful in his field. One of his many interests in his retirement was the workings of sundials. I recently came across a small one that he made for a birthday one year and set me thinking about the one he was looking into in St Mary's Church. There is a very old one on the inside of the church wall before the annex area was built).

St Mary's sundial, although very much in disrepair as can be seen from the picture above, was called a 'mass dial' and dates back to the 13th/14th century. Mass dials consisted of a central hole which contained a central peg called a gnomon (great word for crossword fans) which cast a shadow indicating the time of day.

According to The British Sun Dial Society: it is thought that some showed the time of Mass and other services during the day. These dials may be just a few radiating lines or many, a ring of dots or within scribed circles or semi circles. Another name is a scratch dial as many were scratched, rather than carved into the stone. They are certainly not mathematically correct and best described as 'event markers.'

In the early part of the 19th century, Britain did not have a national system for time keeping. Towns and villages throughout the country had their own local time zones based on local solar time (local sundial readings). The sun travels



across the country from east to west so 'sundial time' in the east will be ahead of 'sundial time' in the west.

This time was of little consequence when travel and communications were slow but with the advent of speedier transport (trains and electric telegraph), these time differences became unacceptable and the cyclic variations in the length of the day caused by 'the equation of time' were inconvenient. The 'equation of time' is when solar time differs from clock time by a varying amount. To overcome these problems, a national standard system was adapted throughout Britain – Greenwich Mean Time.

From 1884 until 1972, GMT was the international standard for civil time, before being largely replaced by Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), which is based on atomic clocks and is more precise.

Despite this, GMT remains the legal time in the UK during winter and is still widely used in broadcasting, navigation, and international communication (Royal Museums Greenwich).

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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
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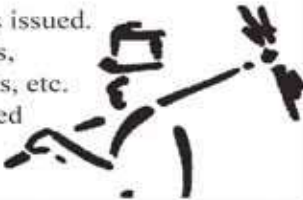
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Parish Council news

Chair – Cllr John Britt

You will see regular updates on all the parish council's activities in the *Focus*, www.lenhamparish.org.uk and social media.

The Parish Council budget 2027/28 and prioritising community-focused spending

Between now (October) and December the parish council will be considering the budget for 2027/28. This must be finalised by the full council meeting in January and presented to the borough council by the end of that month. There are lots of considerations but this year, as well as moving forward with the anticipated major capital projects of the new nursery, resurfacing of the Maidstone Road carpark and alterations to the service road at the Lenham Cemetery, the parish council is seeking your views on some of the community-focussed priorities.

The kind of help we are looking for covers the following areas:

1. Which areas do you think should be the Parish Council's priorities?

Please select up to 3.

- ☐ Green spaces, planters and village appearance
- ☐ Litter picking and keeping the parish tidy
- ☐ Planting and maintaining flowers and greenery
- ☐ Community events and activities
- ☐ Community facilities and spaces
- ☐ Footpaths, public areas and accessibility
- ☐ Benches, noticeboards and other village amenities
- ☐ Wildlife and environmental projects
- ☐ Supporting local community groups
- ☐ Other: _____

2. Are there any existing Parish Council services or projects that you feel are particularly important to maintain?

3. If the Parish Council had a limited amount of additional funding available, which ONE area would you prioritise?

- ☐ Village appearance and planting
- ☐ Community events
- ☐ Facilities and amenities
- ☐ Environmental projects
- ☐ Supporting community activities
- ☐ Other: _____

We will be capturing the responses via an online questionnaire, but if you are not able to respond in that way it will be great if you could use the questions to form your answer and then put a note into the parish office.

The closing date for responses is Friday 30 October, the parish council will consider the outcome of the public consultation and that will be reflected in the budgeting for the next financial year.

Cherry Downs picnic area

The Parish Council would like to enhance the picnic area, particularly access to and on the site. If you have any thoughts about that, or would be interested in helping with the potential improvements and then ongoing maintenance please contact Cllr Hannah Dale: hannah@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk

Remembrance services

This year Remembrance Sunday is 8 November; there will be a service in St Mary's Church, Lenham and then a further service at the Lenham Cemetery to mark the fallen REME soldiers.

We will also mark Armistice Day (11/11) on Wednesday 11 November at St Mary's Church, Lenham. All are welcome.

...and finally

As well as noticing posts on local social media, the Parish Council gets direct complaints about speeding in the village.

There is a way that everyone can play a part in making sure the roads around our

village are used in safe and legal ways, that is for us to form a Speedwatch group. More information about the Speed Watch programme can be found here:

www.kent.police.uk/speedwatch

We are looking for volunteers and there is free training, supported by Kent Police. If you feel you would like to become a member of the new group, and you are over 18 (the minimum age), please contact the Parish Office.

Lenham Fun Bike Ride 2026

It was another great turn out from all the locals who dusted-off their cycles to support this fun fundraising event.

We raised a whopping **£2,200 for the Heart of Kent Hospice**, who recently cared for our friend **Terry Davison** during his last days.

So many thanks from me, Dave Flisher, and our organisers. It was a lovely village community day which included a BBQ, bouncy castle and a raffle.

There will be a **presentation night on 24th October at the Lenham Social Club** – everyone is welcome to join in another fun event with 'Chinese Bingo', Heads and Tails for the younger people and 'open-the-box' with prizes of £30 and £20. Once again, money raised will be for the Hospice. So come along Lenham people, join us and support this great cause.

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Biodiversity boosting bus shelters set to transform Maidstone



Plans to install new biodiversity boosting bus shelters across Maidstone will take a step forward this month, with installation set to begin in the town centre.

The installation of the Landmark II bus shelters forms part of the council's ongoing investment in a greener, more attractive and sustainable borough. They will replace existing town centre shelters, providing improved facilities for passengers while delivering a range of environmental benefits.

Provided by Bauer Media Outdoor UK, they feature Living Roofs planted to support bees and other pollinators, while also helping to improve air quality, absorb rainwater and reduce surface water runoff.

The shelters will also include low-energy LED lighting to improve visibility and safety for passengers. Sensors ensure lighting is only provided when needed, helping to reduce energy consumption and minimise light pollution.

They are fully recyclable and have been designed to allow for future technology upgrades, including improved passenger information services.

Councillor Clive English, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Enforcement said: "These new shelters represent a significant investment in Maidstone's public transport infrastructure and our commitment to creating a greener, more sustainable borough."



As well as providing improved facilities for bus passengers, the shelters will help support biodiversity, improve the appearance of the town centre and contribute towards wider environmental goals."

To minimise disruption, installation work will be carried out overnight between August and October. This approach has been chosen to reduce impacts on bus passengers, businesses, residents and visitors during the daytime. While some temporary disruption may be unavoidable, every effort will be made to keep this to a minimum. The council would like to thank residents, businesses and bus users for their patience while the improvements are carried out.

Once complete, the new shelters will provide a more welcoming environment for passengers while contributing to the council's ambitions for a greener and more sustainable town centre.

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Nature Watch

By Darren Hammond

The only Hummingbird in Europe

Every spring from about April to roughly December the UK sees the arrival of the only hummingbird-like creature in Europe, the Hummingbird Moth. This stunning moth makes it way up from southern Europe to our shores. So what is the Hummingbird Hawk Moth and where can you find one?



What is the Hummingbird hawk moth?

The hummingbird hawk moth has greyish-brown forewings, bright orange hindwings, and a greyish body with a broad, black-and-white 'tail'. Its hovering flight is a distinguishing feature; it flutters its wings so quickly that it can appear orange and makes an audible hum. This feature is where it gets its name and a fun fact is that there are no actual hummingbirds in Europe, they all live in the Americas.

Where can you find one?

This moth is a small, day-flying hawk-moth. It is a summer visitor to the UK (more frequent in the South and near the coast), migrating from Southern Europe in variable numbers each year. In some



years, it can be common and may be seen in gardens, hovering like a hummingbird as it feeds on the nectar of honeysuckle, red valerian and other flowers. It can also be found along woodland edges, and on heathland and scrub.

How can you attract them to your garden?

To attract butterflies and moths into your garden, plant nectar-rich borders for them to feed along and climbing Ivy and shrubs for overwintering insects. They are particularly fond of nectar-rich flowers that are long and narrow, since they can then take advantage of their long proboscis and avoid competition from other insects.



Flowers with longer tubes typically present the feeding animal a higher nectar reward. They are reported to trap-line, that is, to return to the same flower beds at about the same time each day.

The early stage of life

Newly hatched caterpillars are clear yellow and in the second phase of life assume a green colour. The caterpillar is green with two grey stripes bordered in cream along the sides and has a horn at its rear end. The horn is purplish red, changing to blue with an orange tip in the last phase of being a caterpillar. They feed fully exposed on the top of the host plant and rest in among a tangle of stems. Although dependent on warmth and sun, the larval stage can be as rapid as 20 days.

The mating life cycle

As the caterpillars feed on various species of bedstraw, the female adult moths lay their eggs on the buds or flowers of these plants. Two or more broods can be produced each year. The adult moth may be encountered at any time of the year, especially in the south of its range, where there may even have three or four broods. The adult moth overwinters in a crevice among rocks,

trees, and buildings. On very warm days it may emerge to feed in mid-winter. Unlike other moths, the male and female have no difference in the size of their antenna.

How they behave

The hummingbird hawk moth is incredibly quick and as with its namesake it hovers while feeding and as its wings beat very fast they hum which is another reason for its name. Like hummingbirds, it feeds on flowers which have tube-shaped petals. It flies during the day, especially in bright sunshine, but also at dusk, dawn, and even in the rain, which is unusual for even daytime hawkmoths. It will move from flower to flower with quick sharp movements, drinking deeply.

This year has been a particularly good year for the hummingbird hawk moth in the UK with many more sightings than has been usual in the past. The hotter weather and more sunshine along with plants flowering more undoubtedly have a part to play in this.

Such fascinating and beautiful creatures, keep your eye out for them on large flowering bushes in particular lavender and buddleia.

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An update from your local MP, Helen Whately

Did you know Kent is widely known as England's oldest county with roots going back to the fifth century when it became an early Anglo Saxon Kingdom?

But our proud history and identity is now under threat by the Government's plans to abolish Kent County Council, Medway Council and all the Borough and District Councils including Maidstone and Swale to create just four councils in their place. The Government cares nothing for our heritage or identity – it's an abomination.

Kent as a county has real clout with the Government. With over 1.6 million residents behind it Kent County Council is guaranteed to have the ear of Government. That matters when it comes to opposing Operation Brock and standing up to the Mayor of London when they want to increase our rail fares for example. But it looks like the Government is so scared of Kent they have decided to destroy it.

The reorganisation plans say nothing about a Mayor for Kent or strategic authority for the county. We are just to be broken up into four parts with no single voice to represent the two million residents of Kent and Medway. Four small councils just won't cut it in the same way, and we will suffer as a result.

Meanwhile, other counties and regions are getting Mayors with extra powers, and extra money. Kent risks being overlooked and left behind.

Even if we do get a mayor someday, it's going to be too late - after Kent County Council has been disbanded and split into the four new councils. This is madness. Any savings made from the reorganisation will quickly disappear.



Helen Whately MP at Leeds castle

Despite questioning the Government and raising this in Parliament, I still don't have an answer about their long-term plans for Kent. So, I have taken this up directly with Andy Burnham. Follow me on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/HelenWhatelyMP/> for more updates and let me know your views on the future of Kent.

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

Best wishes

Helen

**e: helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk
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Simple Wellbeing: Another Look at Mindfulness

By Vladimir Barkanov

Today, I want to talk about extremes. Are you someone who has — or do you know someone who has — an “all or nothing” attitude to life? Someone who believes that, in order to achieve anything, you *must* sacrifice something?

When we think about achieving a goal, it often feels as though we need to go “all in”, because it promises fast, visible results (or so we imagine) and gives a sense of momentum. However, the reality is that extremes rarely lead to lasting change. In fact, they often undermine it.

Whenever we push ourselves to extremes, we create limitations. Do professional athletes go “all in”? Yes — during performance. But not during training, or there would be no performance at all. Training requires mindfulness: building strength and skill gradually, step by step. Restrictive diets tend to produce a seesaw effect. Extreme views — not extremist views, but the belief that *“this is the only correct interpretation or understanding”* — inevitably lead to conflict, segregation, and tension in relationships. Whenever we introduce harsh restrictions into our lives, it affects our wellbeing negatively, because on some level we experience it as suffering.

A mindful approach offers a different perspective. You begin by establishing

what you want to achieve, and then you take conscious, deliberate steps towards that goal, paying attention to what happens to you along the way. If

you want to become more active, you don’t go “all in”; you start with small, regular actions and notice how they affect your body. Instead of imposing a restrictive diet, you reduce certain components gradually and observe the impact. For example, rather than adopting a “zerocarb diet”, you adjust the amount of carbohydrates on your plate, step by step, until you reach a healthy balance. In other words, you stop being driven solely by your head and start listening to what your body genuinely needs.

The same applies to our views and beliefs. When we accept that differences of opinion can help us learn, and when we pay attention to why others express themselves or behave differently, we begin to break down barriers in relationships. This reduces irritation, frustration, and anger — and dramatically improves our wellbeing.

So, consider any restrictions you have introduced into your life, or any restrictions you fear, which may be preventing you from achieving something. Ask yourself whether you could approach them more mindfully. Reflect on how fixed your views are, and whether they help you connect with people or make you more judgemental. This kind of reflection can bring remarkable positive change.

Next time, I will talk more about change.



Christian Message

From Angela Benjamin

"See how much the Father has loved us! His love is so great, that we are called children of God." 1 John 3:1

As you look out of your window, it's clear summer is coming to an end, nights are drawing in and at the blink of an eye another year will be over. Where has this year gone? I don't know what your thoughts are, but for me it's just flown. I wonder, like me, parts have been good and parts may be sad or not so good. We had some of the hottest days on record long spells without rain. But the one thing that I know and I pray that you know too, that wherever I am and whatever I'm going through, we don't have to face things on our own. God our heavenly father is always ready to listen we can talk freely to him. You may well be thinking how can I speak to God? After all, I hear how great and powerful he is.

Jesus said "So I say to you: ask and you will receive; seek and you shall find; knock and the door will be open to you. Luke 11 verses 9-10. I find this so reassuring when we pray we are talking to God, but not like some of our friends and colleagues, he is never too busy to listen.

I do have some great friends, some I've known many many years, some not so long but are still good friends and I'm glad to have them in my life. All good relationships take a bit of working on,

but that doesn't mean we are not being listen too. Even though I've got valued friends, for me the best thing about building a relationship with God our Father, he knows what we need before we even ask. Further in this passage of Luke's Gospel, Jesus asks "Would any of you who are fathers give your son a snake it he asked for a fish?" He continues to say "Parent knows how to give good things to their children".

No, my life hasn't been a bed of roses but on reflection I know that the issues have been caused by my own doing. God is good and always there, not forgetting that he sent his holy spirit to be with us always. Whenever I've had hard times to face, I've not had to go through them on my own. *Isaiah 43.2: "When you pass through deep water, I will be with you".*

God is a God of love and compassion, who is always ready to listen and help us. Each of us is born, loved and cared for by our great Heavenly Father, who knows when we are sad, knows when things are good, just as any good parent loves their children, even when as my own daughter tells me she's big and grown up now. But she is still my daughter and I want to love and protect her. Many of you reading this will have heard of "footprint" I've read a couple of versions but they have the same amazing facts.

Footprints in the sand

Someone had a dream that they were walking on a beach with our Lord Jesus.

They noticed two sets of foot prints in the sand.

However during the saddest times in their life,
there was only the one set of foot prints.

So they called out our lord, I don't understand when,
why when I needed you most, you would leave me!

Jesus replied "During your worse times of suffering, when you saw
only one set of footprints it was then I carried you"

Hold on to this wonderful truth, be reassured that we don't have
to face our worst times on our own.

Len Valley Benefice

Everybody is welcome

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

Sunday 4 October

9:15am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Harvest Holy Communion

Wednesday 7 October

9.30am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 11 October

9:15am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 18 October

11.00am Benefice Holy Communion
Service at Harrietsham
celebrating the ministry of Revd.
Millie Hart upon her retirement

Sunday 25 October

8.00am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)

9:15am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Morning Worship

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*Please note that during 2026 some services may need to be altered or cancelled at
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Focus PRIZE Crossword October 2026

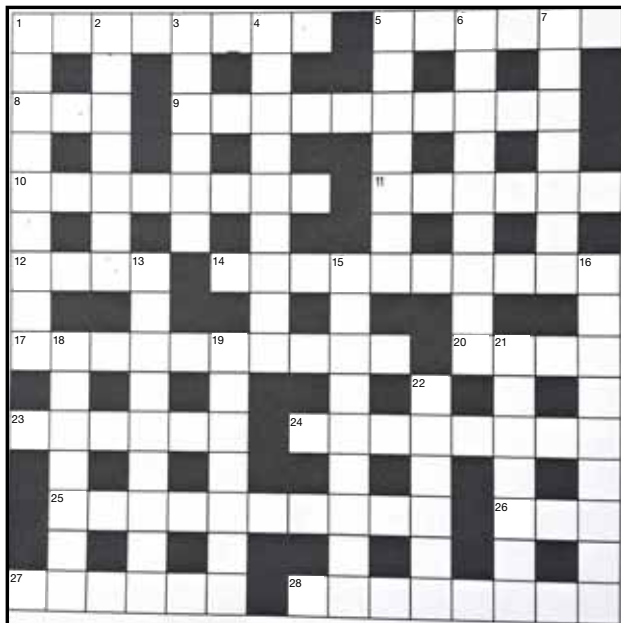
The winner of August 2026 is Doug Matthews of Lenham *well done!*

Across clues

1. Five-sided home for a present 'narcissus'. (8)
5. Huge home next to Buckingham. (6)
8. Choose pot to change. (3)
9. You might get through using this. (10)
10. Do this to your brain to help solve puzzles. (8)
11. Each first flower to celebrate this day of celebration. (6)
12. Bend over what you need for your visit to the supermarket. (4)
14. A little life in a meadow, certainly. (10)
17. You may need good ones for employment. (10)
20. A convicted person may dread this possibility. (4)
23. Control skin disease around ankle initially. (6)
24. Where teachers board essentials once may have originated. (5,3)
25. As shown by someone resting totally. (10)
26. Sounds like a couple as well. (3)
27. Count unavoidable each decade. (6)
28. Professionals on ivories but maybe not the piano. (8)

Down clues

1. Cause of movement under or over water. (9)
2. Named spices but are seeds. (7)
3. View a short list of details having time to begin with. (6)
4. Thing about the unpleasant smell returning before meeting. (9)
5. Nutrition in your sty. (3,4)



6. Settle here to be furthest east and miles south of the Canaries. (?)
7. Something to demonstrate if you are reserved? (13)
13. Similar to blood suckers. (9)
15. Where to pick your favoured candidates. (9)
18. Have a careful look at someone, especially a patient. (7)
19. Football teams consist of such numbers. (7)
21. What gravity gives to a swing at the highest point. (7)

Answers for September 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 October** 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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