



Benenden Magazine

November 2021

PERSONAL & GROUP TRAINING FOR WOMEN

Build strength, boost bone health, improve mobility and balance and feel good in your body. Tailored for all life stages, including pregnancy, postnatal, and pre, peri and post-menopause.

Elizabeth // Benenden



www.thiswomanlifts.com



Hand-Finished Curtains
& Blinds

Fabrics & Poles

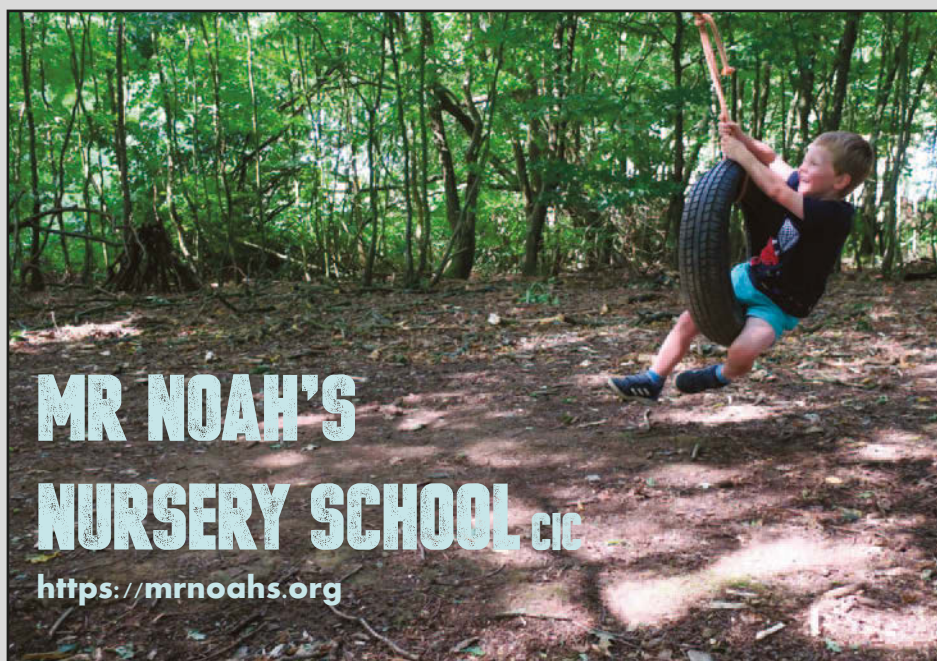
Upholstery & Loose Covers

Wallpaper & Paint

Lighting & Carpets

The Paper Mill Oast Benenden Kent 07930 507047

@lucyandrewinteriors ~ lucy@lucyandrew.co.uk ~ www.lucyandrew.co.uk



**MR NOAH'S
NURSERY SCHOOL c/o**

<https://mrnoahs.org>

Abigail Burrett MCIPD

Human Resource Business Services

07565 519727

aburrett20@gmail.com

www.abigailburrett.co.uk

[linkedin.com/in/abigail-burrett-mcipc-95287015b](https://www.linkedin.com/in/abigail-burrett-mcipc-95287015b)

Are **you** looking to
reboost and develop
your HR?

I am a highly experienced fully qualified Human Resources Consultant working for over 13 years in various industries such as Education, Corporate, Healthcare, Health and Safety and for local SMEs.

If you are looking to review your contracts or want to know if your policies and procedures are legally compliant and up to date or just need good solid advice please get in touch!

The Cranbrook and District Probus Club



PROBUS is a local, national, and international association of retired people who come together in non-political, non-sectarian, non-profit, autonomous clubs which provide regular opportunities for members to meet others in similar circumstances, with similar levels of interest, make new friends, and maintain and expand their interests.

We have recommenced our regular monthly lunchtime meetings at The Bull, Benenden.

Currently there are vacancies for new members. If you are retired and would welcome friendly, relaxed company at a lunch, with interesting speakers, then please contact the Hon. Secretary on 01580 211814 for more information.



UK Electric Bike Centre Ltd

BIDDENDEN AND BODIAM

www.ukelectricbike.co.uk

www.ukelectricbiketours.co.uk

**ebike hire
ebike tours
ebike sales
ebike repairs**

Telephone: 07768 194400

info@ukelectricbike.co.uk

TOMPSETT LANDSCAPING

GARDEN LANDSCAPE AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTORS

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



Nick Tompsett

07746 672946

Rob Tompsett

07961 637275

E: info@tompsettlandscaping.co.uk

W: www.tompsettlandscaping.co.uk

PLEASE CONTACT US TODAY FOR YOUR FREE NO OBLIGATIONS QUOTATION

Editorial



I'm fascinated by people, by what makes them tick and the stories of their lives. When I was asked to join the magazine as co-editor, I quickly realised that this fascination would come in very useful as I travelled the highways and byways of Benenden and Iden Green, discovering and writing about the amazing lives so many villagers have led and are leading.

Many have asked me if my co-editor Peter and I worry about not having enough to write about every month but, fear not, there is a rich vein of gold running through this village and there's no danger of it running out - particularly as we welcome new people to the village. It's not just those over 40 either; we also like to spotlight the lives of our enterprising youngsters (aka the under 40s) and we will be highlighting some of these over the next few months (they didn't see me coming and couldn't outrun me!).

I volunteer in the café every Monday morning and, while valiantly trying to master the magic of the perfect cappuccino, I meet a great many characters, some passing through, most lovely and, rarely, a real grump. Again, a good spot to listen to stories and gently cajole some into letting us write about them, or even inviting them to contribute an article.

Writing about our refurbished village sign this month (page 29) led me on an historic hunt to discover the madcap stories behind the two cricketers it features. It must be something in the water that energises and inspires so many villagers through the ages, young and old. If you would like to nominate someone for a special Spotlight then please email us. Also, if the muse takes you and you would like to write about something you think will interest us all, then please send us your idea for consideration. Our new Talking Point feature (page 7) has been well received and is the perfect spot for a (considered and relevant) rant, musing or general observation.

Ruth Clark, Co-Editor

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

Editors: Ruth Clark, Peter Thomas

Editorial Board: Tracy Claridge, PCC Rep: Martin Pexton, PC Rep: Nicola Thomas,

Treasurer: Charles Trollope, Acting Advertising Manager: Paul Leek, Advertising Assistant: vacant

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

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

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

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

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

Village Calendar

October

Saturday 30	Churchyard Working Party, St George's, Benenden, 9.30-12noon	
Saturday 30	Stephen Message, Art Exhibition, Memorial Hall, 10-5pm	p.13
Sunday 31	Stephen Message, Art Exhibition, Memorial Hall, 10-4pm	p.13

November

Saturday 6	Cyril Moore Skittles Evening for the Poppy Appeal, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Saturday 13	Autumn Village Clean, Benenden's Shop and Iden Green Pavilion, 9am	p.3
Monday 15	Parish Council Meeting, Memorial Hall, 7pm	
Tuesday 16	Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.15
Tuesday 16	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Annual Winter Party, Memorial Hall, 1pm	p.17
Tuesday 23	Merry and Bright, Memorial Hall, 2pm	p.25
Saturday 27	Benenden Pre-School, Tracy Claridge's Wine Tasting, Memorial Hall, 7pm	p.19
Saturday 27	Cornhole Tossing, St George's Club, 8.15pm	

Wednesday Coffee Mornings

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-11.30am

Benenden Bowls Club

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

Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

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

Parish Council



The missing link

Let's start with some good news: having completed our rather lengthy co-option process, we are really pleased to welcome Guy Hagan as our new parish councillor. Guy, of course, needs little introduction, but for those of you who are new to the parish, he is the driving force behind the Benenden Action Team, an ongoing volunteer support group known better as BAT, set up when the darkest days of Covid were looming, offering support as a 'good neighbour' to villagers in need. Guy's inclusion brings our council back up to its full strength, and you can look forward to him writing his first piece in his new role in next month's issue.

One of the parish council's ongoing projects is to move forward with the repair and restoration of the Queen's Well (at Benenden crossroads) and the Pump House (at Iden Green crossroads). The Benenden well was built in 1887 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, and the Iden Green well was built ten years later for her Diamond Jubilee. Both are Grade II listed and are in desperate need of careful renovation.

We have quotes from specialist contractors, and the work required will come to somewhere between £15,000 and £17,000 for each well. Obviously, these costs are way beyond the parish council funds, and unfortunately grants from organisations such as Historic England are currently only available for Grade I and Grade II* buildings. This means we will need to raise funds via alternative methods, such as a JustGiving page. In the meantime, if you are in a position to offer financial help with this, please do contact Caroline, our clerk. Any donations will be very gratefully received.

Finally, we are hoping to arrange our autumn village clean-up for Saturday 13 November. We will post confirmation of this on our website and social media and post notices in all the usual places.

Nicola Thomas, BPC Chair
nicolat@benendenparishcouncil.org

Caroline Levett, Benenden Parish Council Clerk
01580 240371 clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org
For more information see our website www.benendenparishcouncil.org or find us on Facebook

Parish Council Meeting
Monday 15 November 2021,
Memorial Hall, 7pm

Church Calendar

St George's Church

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

Churchwarden: David Collard 241944 julia.collard@btinternet.com

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

www.benendenchurch.org 850849 benendenchurch@gmail.com

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

Tuesday 2 November			7.30pm All Souls' Day Service
Sunday 7 November	8am Communion	10am Family Communion	
Thursday 11 November		10.55am Act of Remembrance War Memorial	
Sunday 14 November	8am BCP Communion	10.45am Remembrance Service followed by an Act of Remembrance, War Memorial	
Sunday 21 November	8am Communion	10am Sung Eucharist	
Sunday 28 November	8am Communion	10am Morning Worship	5pm Advent Service of Light
Morning Prayer	8am Mondays and Fridays		

Mission Church, Sandhurst

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

Morning Prayer 8am Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Mid-week Communion 10am Tuesdays

Iden Green Congregational Church

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

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

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

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

Fr Barry Grant 713364 www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

From the Parish Registers

Funerals 8 October Fiona Duval Funeral and burial

17 October Robert Hookham and Mark Hookham Interment

Rector's Letter



Let's help normality get the better of madness

Another little bit of normality has returned to the village: an incredibly joyful village fete in support of St George's and a lovely Harvest Festival with a beautifully decorated church. We could not have been blessed with any better weather than we had on the day of the fete and the number of people that turned out was amazing. The feel of the event was just wonderful; just seeing people having fun together as families and with friends made all the hard work so worthwhile. So I add to Tracy Claridge's words of thanks elsewhere in the magazine to everyone involved, and say thank you to Tracy for all his efforts in making this a great community event.

We were also blessed by receiving a wonderful amount of food donations from the primary school and the church-family for the harvest service. All of the food has been passed on to Nourish in Tunbridge Wells to support local families, and we will be continuing this community support by collecting for Nourish throughout the year, not just at harvest time, as the need is there all year round.

Another bit of normality returning is in the church service pattern. From the beginning of November we will be returning to an 8am Communion service at St George's every Sunday, and a 10am service at St George's every Sunday. We will also be reintroducing the monthly choral evensong service - at 5pm on the first Sunday of the month - which will begin in January. We are also planning for a normal Advent and Christmas this year, with carol services, crib service, and a 'midnight' service (all of this, of course, subject to any Government restrictions and also local Covid rates). I am also thinking about how we can 'do church and be church' in a more effective way for young families. If you have ideas that you'd like to share, please, please get in touch with me.

There are the good things of normality slowly returning, but there has also been the madness of the bow-and-arrow attack in Norway killing five innocent people; and the killing of an MP, David Amess, in a knife attack as he undertook his constituency work of serving others. A decent man simply holding a face-to-face surgery, in a church, to try to help people in need. What has gone wrong within society that things like this happen? The time has come to stop thinking, 'I can't do anything about this sort of thing'. We can all play our part. We can all play a part in our society, in our local community, by modelling tolerance and respect of other people. We can all live life valuing all human life, valuing our planet, valuing one another, valuing our community. Let's get back to the normality of this way of living, and away from the madness of being so self-centred that we end up permanently damaging the society in which we live.

Revd David Commander, Rector



Why not consider micropigmentation to boost self-esteem and maybe even restore confidence?

My treatments include:

Permanent makeup for brows and eyes
Brazilian scar and stretch mark treatment & camouflage
Hair loss camouflage for women and men
MESO needling and peel to improve skin tone & texture,
fine lines & wrinkles, pigmentation, and acne scarring

A TWEAK
TO CHANGE
YOUR LIFE?

Contact me today
for more information
or to book a free, no
obligation consultation

lorrainesinclairpmu@gmail.com
07721 880114
01580 720586

Geoff Tiltman

Gardens & Groundworks
City & Guilds in Horticulture, NCT
Creating Gardens of Distinction

Drives, Patios, Walls, Fencing, Pergolas,
Turfing, Regular Grass Cutting,
Unruly Gardens Made Tidy,
All Garden Construction and
Garden Maintenance Work Undertaken

Free Quotations - Keen Prices

Smarden 01233 770777 - 24 hours
Mobile 07775 694 963
geoff.tiltman@hotmail.co.uk

**EMPLOY A QUALIFIED CONTRACTOR AND
SEE THE DIFFERENCE IN YOUR GARDEN**



**Iden
Landscapes**

Jay Weekes

Idenlandscapes@gmail.com
01580 389531
07720 817577

Hadlow trained and experienced in
Soft Landscape and Landscape Construction
COMPETITIVE PRICES

Border design
Aspects of outdoor woodwork and treatment
Winter garden (one-off blitz)
Garden regeneration
Hedge planting/cutting
Fencing
Turfing
Fruit tree, rose and vine pruning
Regular maintenance (including mowing)

See above for contact information
and feel free to contact for
more details, quotes and prices.

Dream
LASHES
NAILS &
BROWS

Tel. 01580 388190

The Street, Benenden, Kent TN17 4DB
www.dreamlashesnailsandbrows.com



Matilda Delves Photography

WEDDINGS & PARTIES
with elegance & rustic charm

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

Luxurious & award winning eco-venue



THE OAK BARN
Frame Farm

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

Talking Point



Reflections on a country churchyard

Some years ago, I was helping with the regular working party in St George's churchyard when something shocking happened. I was mowing around a very old gravestone when much of what remained of the inscription on the stone fell off and broke into little pieces on the ground. Years of weathering had taken their toll and the stone had delaminated. Getting too close with the mower had been the final straw.

I was distraught (much as I told myself that it would have happened anyway). Would the person in the grave be forever forgotten? What about descendants trying to trace their ancestors? What about historians piecing together the story of Benenden and its people?

Fortunately, I learned shortly afterwards that there is a comprehensive, indexed record of the graves in the churchyard, including photographs of inscriptions and a detailed plan. This has been a labour of love for several people over the years, culminating in a superb database put together by David Harmsworth, which is now online (burials.benendenchurch.org).

So, I needn't have worried too much that this person might become a blank in the pages of history. However, when I am in the churchyard now, I am all the more conscious of the people whose lives are remembered there, and of what an extraordinary community Benenden is. As the years pass, an increasing number are old friends.

For me our churchyard is a wonderful place, and I know many agree and visit regularly. A number of things make it special. It is a rich natural habitat, home to some very unusual mosses and lichens. It is a beautiful place with a great sense of timelessness. But two things in particular are brought home to me when I am there.

The first is about people. In the rush of each day, we often don't devote enough good quality time to those we care about: family, friends and neighbours. It's no good having regrets when they are no longer around and it's too late.

The second is about perspective and peace. It seems there is always so much to worry about; and no sooner have we escaped one crisis than we are in the midst of another one. By then we have almost forgotten the one from last month that then consumed our thoughts. No doubt the residents of the churchyard had lots of things to worry about, whether they were rich or poor. But, like us, they probably worried about the wrong things and it didn't do them any good.

So, for a bit of perspective, you might want to visit the churchyard. You might also consider joining the working party, which takes place on a Saturday morning roughly once per month. The dates are published in the Village Calendar in this magazine, or you could contact Dick Hill (dd.rhill@btinternet.com).

Martin Pexton

ANTIQUE FURNITURE RESTORATION



MICHAEL GOATER
Fully accredited member
of BAFRA

01580 212234
mgoater.restoration@gmail.com



A beautiful collection of
rustic & vintage furniture
and accessories
available to hire for any
location or event
www.village.vintage.co.uk

Private Care Service



**Domestic
Care**
£9.77
per hour

Our Private Care Service offers tailored packages of personal care that can help people stay in their own home for as long as possible, rather than going into a care home before it's really needed. We assist those who need help due to frailty, disability or illness to live as independently as possible, with comfort & dignity, in their own home.

For a free assessment
of your care needs or to
receive your brochure
Call us on 01580 762244



Town & Country Homecare Limited
102a High Street, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HT

www.townandcountryhomecare.co.uk



BENENDEN PRE-SCHOOL

www.benendenpreschool.co.uk

Every Weekday in St George's Hall, by Benenden Cross-roads

Small and friendly pre-school - Awarded 'Outstanding' by Ofsted
Large secure gardens with slide, sandpit, playhouse and more!
All weather suits provided, for daily outdoor play in all seasons
Experienced, qualified staff including Graduate Leader
Weekly 'Sporty Tots' session with qualified instructor
Regular trips throughout the year - Close parental partnership
Children may start from age 2 - Childcare vouchers accepted
Full/half days/lunch clubs to suit your child's needs

Tel: 01580 241137 email: supervisor@benendenpreschool.co.uk

A non-profit making pre-school run by a committee of parents

Established 1967 a Registered Charity No: 1027577

Hemsted cars professional private hire

**Providing private hire and taxi service
from Benenden.**

We offer a reliable, professional service
including airport and station transfers,
courier service and
informative tours for visitors to the area
across Kent and Sussex.

Fully insured, licensed and DBS checked.

Contact us to discuss availability
and tariffs on:

01580 242898 or 07707 242898

or visit our website
for further information

www.hemstedcars.co.uk

All Souls' Day service

Tuesday 2 November, St George's Church,
7.30pm

If you would like the name of a loved one read out in this reflective service please let Revd David know by emailing him at benendenchurch@gmail.com.

Revd David Commander, Rector 240658
revdavidcommander@gmail.com

Remembrance events

On Thursday 11 November, the Benenden Branch of the Royal British Legion will, as usual, invite Year 6 of the primary school to join a gathering of local residents at the war memorial at 10.55am to remember the armistice that took effect at 11am on that date in 1918.

This brief assembly is open to all. On 14 November, we hope to resume the normal format of the annual Remembrance Sunday parish church tribute to those who lost their lives in the two world wars. That morning service will start at 10.45am at St George's. Members of the Legion's branch committee, the parish council, Benenden Hospital, and Benenden School's Combined Cadet Force will attend and lead the congregation to the war memorial after the service for the laying of wreaths. Trumpet calls will be sounded in church and at the memorial.

If you wish, please gather around the war memorial in Walkhurst Road as soon as you can after the church service. All those with service medals are invited to wear them for this special act of Remembrance.



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
POPPY APPEAL

This year once again our volunteers will not be collecting door-to-door.

Instead we have set up an online JustGiving page.

To donate please go to:
www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jane-dalton-holmes4

Jane and Robin Dalton Holmes
Benenden Branch Royal British Legion

Poppy Appeal collection

Our house-to-house collections for the Poppy Appeal this year will be unavoidably curtailed. However, we shall place collection boxes at the Benenden's community shop, Benenden Hospital, Wards the butchers, the primary school, Benenden School, the St George's Club, and the Bull and Woodcock inns from Saturday 30 October.

During the mornings of Saturdays 6 and 13 November, we shall establish a small stall at Benenden's community shop, and will offer a wider range of poppy items, including this year's enamel badges.

We have once again set up an arrangement for contributions to be made through the JustGiving system. These will be recorded as part of our total collection. This allows you, if you wish, to make your donations eligible for Gift Aid. Please search for JustGiving through the website detailed in the box above. You should please enter everything, exactly as shown in red print.

Royal British Legion, Benenden Branch



WE ARE PLEASED TO OFFER

**SKILLED GARDEN
MAINTENANCE,
PLANTING & PRUNING**

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

WISTERIA A SPECIALITY

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

**TN17 DOG
walking**

- Professional • Friendly Service
- Fully Insured • One-Off or Regular

www.tn17dogwalking.co.uk
07719 070864

K JONES ELECTRICAL

Electrical and Solar Contractors
Accredited, qualified and trusted local
family business
for over 40 years
Free Estimates

01580 848118

kevin.kjoneselectrical@gmail.com

Benenden Village Hall

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



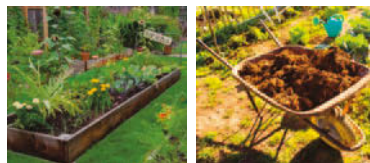
Call Holly on
07419 989830 for details

www.benendenvillagehall.org



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

Delivered throughout the South East



gardenscape



Freephone 0800 854663

www.gardenscapedirect.co.uk

sales@gardenscapedirect.co.uk

The Wharf, Rye Road, Newenden, TN18 5QG



ELECTRICIAN

Do you want a safe, reliable, reasonable priced Electrician?

New Fuse Boards - Smoke Detectors - Rewires - Extra Sockets
Fault finding - LED Lighting - New Builds & Extensions

GARDEN POWER & LIGHTING

Fully insured qualified electrician. 6 year Guarantee



I assure you of a quick response
Call Nick now 01580 279907

email: nick@njhelectrical.co.uk

www.njhelectricalservices.co.uk



TIM'S TOOLS
MACHINERY REPAIR

Service and repair of all types of
garden machinery.

- Lawn mower servicing and repairs
- Lawn mower blade sharpening
- Chainsaw blade sharpening
- Carburetor cleaning and adjustment
- Hedge trimmer, Strimmer, Leaf blower repairs

Tel: 07977 562329

Email: timtoolrepair@gmail.com

Donated in error?

An item of value was amongst the donations given to the Benenden Village Fete. Given the value we believe that this may have been given in error. If you believe that you donated such an item by mistake please email the parish magazine with details. All messages will be scrutinised to try to help with identifying the owner. If no evident owner comes forward, the item will be sent to auction.

benendenparishmagazine@gmail.com

Benenden Village Trust

We are investigating ways to improve footpath access to the Benenden playground, which has become so popular that the main path to it has become rutted and muddy with use. At the same time, we are looking to address concerns raised by parents about dips and holes in and around the playground.

The Trust, which owns and manages important recreational facilities in the parish, held its annual general meeting on 11 October, at which Jonathan Strong, the chairman, said that despite Covid, the Trust was in reasonably good shape, and outlined a series of initiatives being explored to further improve village facilities.

He thanked members who had attended the meeting but noted that the turnout was disappointingly low. This led to a discussion about ways to engage members more fully in the work of the Trust.

Members elected a new trustee, Julie Lewis, who is also vice chair of Benenden Parish Council and played a pivotal role in the creation of the new Iden Green playground. The three longest-serving trustees - Kent Barker, Tom Dawlings and Jonathan Strong - were re-elected by members after standing down as required by the Trust's constitution.

Draft minutes of the meeting and the chairman's report can be found on the Trust's website: www.benendenvillagetrust.org.

Martin Dickson, Benenden Village Trust

Arnold Cole Trust

The Arnold Cole Trust would like to invite applications for its annual disbursements from those clubs and societies within the parish in need of funds. Dr Arnold Cole was GP in the village from 1930 until his death in 1960, after which his daughter, the late Joan Weston, set up the Trust in 1968. The aim of the Trust is to apply its income for the "general benefit for the Parish of Benenden with special consideration being given to both the elderly and young".

All applications in writing please to:

The Secretary, Arnold Cole Trust, Scribbins, Benenden, Kent TN17 4DT. Please note applications must be received no later than 30 November 2021.

High Weald Academy change of use

The Leigh Academy Trust is beginning a listening period on the plan for the closure of High Weald Academy (HWA) by 31 August 2022. It wants to expand its Snowfield Academy and set up a satellite specialist of school for children aged 11-16 with autism by using the buildings currently occupied by HWA.

It is consulting with a range of parties as set out in the relevant Department for Education guidance. The consultation started on Monday 27 September and closes on Monday 1 November. You can contribute your views via this online form: www.tinyurl.com/ee7b9nje. Alternatively, you can email your views/objections/concerns to the following:

Secretary of State for Education:
nadhim.zahawi.mp@parliament.uk

Helen Grant MP:
helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk (must include residential address)

Lindsay Roberts



A Wood Fired Oven can provide fantastic, fresh and fast food for you and your guests.

We are local to Benenden and can cater for private parties, wedding receptions and events of all kinds.

Most people only think of pizza, but there are lots of alternatives.

Give me a call to discuss on:
01580 279000 or 07788 279000
info@wowcooking.co.uk

or visit our website
www.wowcooking.co.uk

APPLE PIE FARM STORAGE

Short and long term storage requirements solved!



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

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

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

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



I offer home visits to address your footcare needs

Treatments include:-

- Nail trimming
- Hard skin removal
- Corns & calluses
- Foot massage
- Fungal nails & testing
- Thickened nails
- Diabetic foot care
- Cracked heels
- Verrucas
- Skin & footcare advice



Justine Oliver TCFCDip, MCFH
FOOT CARE SERVICES

07760 340119 or
justineoliver.fhp@gmail.com
www.joliverfootcare.com

Fully insured ~ Registered ~ DBS checked
Foot Health Professional Association
(R.F.H.P.) No 3244951




Hannah's Garden
www.hannahsgarden.net

SCENTED AND SEASONAL
ABUNDANT VARIETY
ENGLISH GARDEN FLOWERS

WEDDINGS + BOUQUETS + DIY + ONLINE
CALL: 07958 081915

THE BIKE WORKSHOP

B E N E N D E N

SPARES, REPAIRS,
SERVICING & NEW BUILDS
BY A QUALIFIED &
INSURED MECHANIC.

GILES CLARK

T: 01580 240202
M: 07968 181921
GILES@THEBIKEWORKSHOP.COM
WWW.THEBIKEWORKSHOP.COM



Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Importance of Green Spaces

Neighbourhood Plans were conceived by central government to encourage local input to the planning process. They enable communities to set planning policies for the local area, including allocating sites for development. But NDPs go beyond a simple blueprint for housing, they also provide the opportunity for communities to identify and protect important local green spaces.

In urban areas such as London or Birmingham, identifying and protecting green space is an essential way of preserving and improving the quality of life for local people. Here in Benenden, with our beautiful countryside and many quiet footpaths, the need to identify and preserve local green spaces may seem less apparent, but in fact, listing local spaces and providing protection for them is an aspect of our NDP that the six volunteers of the Landscape & Environment Committee took seriously from the start.

National guidelines do not allow NDP groups to set up a massive green barrier across the parish as a protection from development. Local Green Spaces must be properly assessed, and they must meet national guidelines. Local Green Spaces need to be small, not an extensive tract of land, and they need to be a space valued by the community, either as an amenity for local residents, such as a tranquil area of peace and calm, or a space for recreation and exercise, or to preserve biodiversity.

With your help during the build-up of the plan we identified, assessed, and allocated 11 Local Green Spaces. Some favourite spaces are already protected, such as the historic parkland at Benenden School and the village green, and do not need further protection from development, but once the NDP is finally approved at referendum, it will provide further protection for sites dotted around the parish and will help to support local



wildlife. So where are the sites? Here is the list, taken from Policy LE2 of our NDP.

- East End - Old Cricket Pitch
- East End - Corner green at junction of Goddards Green Road and Walkhurst Road
- New Pond Road - Catholic Chapel Field
- The pond at Benenden crossroads - New Pond Corner
- Central green area, Cherryfields
- Glebe Field/Playing Fields
- Benenden Recreation Ground
- Beadle Platt beside St George's Church
- St George's churchyard
- Beacon Field by the Primary School
- Iden Green Recreation Ground

Charles Pope

NDP Steering Committee Member

www.benendenneighbourhoodplan.org

Wednesday coffee mornings

We are now back up and running again and would love to see you all for coffee and biscuits and chat between 10am and 11.30am every Wednesday in the Memorial Hall. Come and meet old friends and make new ones.

All welcome.

Gilly Walton 242855 and Julia Collard 241944

Namibian school children support

Many of you will remember that I have been fund raising to keep two children in their schools in Namibia. My safari company, Wild Dog Safaris, didn't survive Covid and, whilst many of the projects we supported had to be dropped, I just couldn't let these two down.

The children are seven-year-old Mercy Shikongo at Zanele Mbeki Private School and nine-year-old Rusia Haufiku at The Holy Cross Convent. Both are doing well at school and have places awarded to them for the new academic year in January 2022. We now need to raise funds to pay their fees. The schools have reduced the fees to help them and, believe it or not, £2,600 will fund their education until the end of 2022. Our daughter, Hazeley, loves to swim and her school, Bethany, is supporting her to hold a sponsored event. Hazeley, and some of her friends, will swim 10km during their lunch breaks for the next few weeks.

Mercy and Rusia have been given life-changing opportunities and we hope that they can be supported so that their education may be continued. The JustGiving account: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/liz-kirby is still active, or a payment can be made into an account I have set up in my name: Elizabeth Ruth Kirby, First Direct Bank, Branch code 40-47-81, account 90196576. This account is checked by our church treasurer, Charles Trollope. If anyone should prefer to post a cheque, please make it payable to Elizabeth Ruth Kirby and send to Little Haywards, Cranbrook Road, Benenden, Kent, TN17 4ES.

I can't thank you all enough for supporting this project. It gives my husband Tembo, Hazeley and me such warmth to know that the Benenden community care and are willing to help where they can.

Liz Kirby

Primary School

Since returning to school in September, it has been fantastic to see the children really getting back into their stride with their learning. Forest School is back up and running and I think it is fair to say that all the children have been very excited to be going to the woods again.

We are very fortunate to have a Teaching Assistant who works across the Federation and, because she is Spanish we have introduced Spanish to our curriculum. Indeed, all our Key stage two classes have been having great fun learning where Spanish is spoken, some of the key places, sights and customs of Spain and starting to learn how to greet each other, starting to count and say how they are feeling.

Year six have already had the opportunity to engage with a STEM project which helped them find out about routes into Marine Engineering, discover more about the Sea Cadets and have a fun afternoon full of fun and hands on experiments. Their final challenge was to see who could make a boat to carry the most weight and a close fought competition was won by Finn and Lori. STEM teamwork and lots of questioning, problem solving and laughter - a great afternoon's learning and hopefully inspiring some engineers of the future.

We are now allowed to sing, and it has been a delight to hear the children's voices both in class music lessons and in the hall during singing practice. All instrumental lessons have also resumed and it is wonderful to hear the sound of the trumpets and djembe drums filling the air, when I walk down the corridor. All after school clubs are now up and running and already some of our children have represented the school in a number of local sports festivals.

The highlight of the term so far must be attending our Harvest Festival in St George's



Church. This was our first whole school community event and it truly was a joyous occasion; a full church, lots of smiles, a massive feeling of togetherness and celebration. It definitely feels like we are getting back to 'normal'.

If you are considering your child joining our Reception in 2022 please contact the school office to make an appointment to view the school (details below). Tours will be available in groups of six and we ask that only one parent from each household attends, no children, and that a face covering is worn. In addition, you can take a virtual tour on our website.

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

Village lunch

The village lunch will take place on Tuesday 16 November in the village hall at 12.30pm. £5 each and all welcome. Please could you let me know if you would like to come by Thursday 11 November, so we can plan and shop, as well as cook.

Sheila Hume 854627

Parent, Teacher and Friends Association

Please save the date: Friday 3 December. Our school will hold its Christmas market, the first one in two years, so wrap up warm and come and enjoy a magical outdoors event within our school courtyard from 3.30-7pm. Spread the news to your family and friends.

The children's school choir will sing carols and Santa will delight with story time. Support our school and the children by visiting each of the class stalls. You'll find anything from hot chocolate to sweet treats, candy floss and popcorn fun, to make your own reindeer food, chocolate tombola and local business stalls for some Christmas shopping. Be sure to write a wish down and hang it on our wishing tree, and don't miss out on getting raffle tickets to win one of 20 amazing hampers filled with goodies.

A key highlight will be a vintage carousel from 1912 with beautiful horses and carriages. Any local business who would like a stall for just £10, do get in touch with us at enquiriesptfa@benenden-cep.kent.sch.uk (please bring your own table and gazebo).

We're also excited to announce that we've kicked off our school bake sales for all to enjoy after school. The classes are taking turns and get to keep the raised funds for some class fun. Our children are all busy making their personal Christmas card designs and we again envision selling some in the village shop, as they were so well received last year. We had plenty of fun with a non-uniform day, where all children brought in an item to fill those beautiful Christmas hampers.

As always, we want to say thank you to the community for supporting our school.

For all events and Christmas activities, just scan QR code or visit our website:

www.tinyurl.com/2bpyw54h

Astrid Miller, Benenden CEP, PTFA Chair



Yoga with Naomi

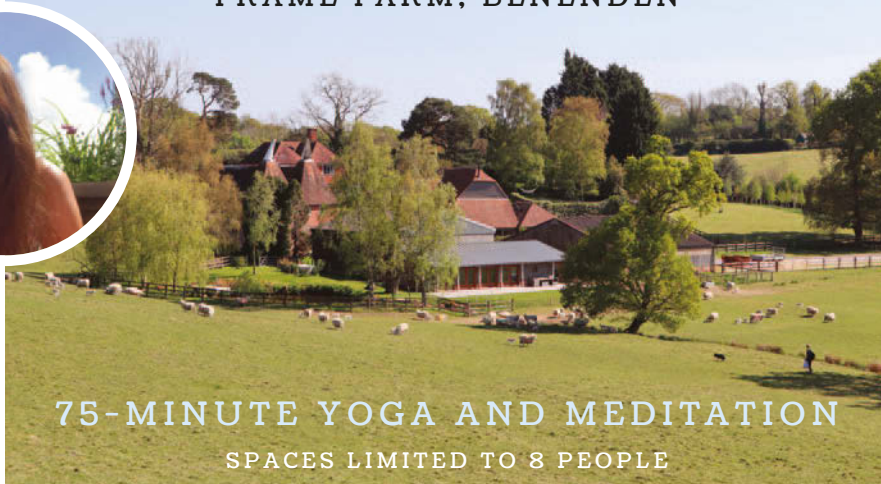
Find strength,
space and
stillness in
beautiful
natural
surroundings



To book your place or
for more details email
naomifeatherstoneyoga@gmail.com
www.naomifeatherstone.co.uk

Tuesdays at 9.45am and 7.30pm

IN THE BYRE AT THE OAK BARN
FRAME FARM, BENENDEN



75-MINUTE YOGA AND MEDITATION
SPACES LIMITED TO 8 PEOPLE

JACKSON-STOPS



LETTINGS AND SALES PROPERTY EXPERTS

Local Specialists with a Network of London & Regional Offices

FOR YOUR FREE MARKET APPRAISAL PLEASE CALL US



Lettings: 01580 720400

Sales: 01580 720000



cranbrook@jackson-stops.co.uk

www.jackson-stops.co.uk



EAGER TO GET MOVING? WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

SAVILLS CRANBROOK, 53/55 HIGH STREET, CRANBROOK, TN17 3EE
CRANBROOK@SAVILLS.COM | 01580 720161

Planning Matters

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

- 21/02575/FULL Land At Nineveh Lane.
Installation of a reservoir for horticultural irrigation purposes, pump house, and extension to an existing farm track.
- 21/02947/FULL Under Mount, Cranbrook Road. Change of use of land from agricultural to equestrian; erection of proposed stables and associated riding menage, tractor store and muck heap.

Fibre optic cable installed

We are pleased to say that the installation of the 'fibre to property scheme' for parts of Standen Street and Woodcock Lane is now complete. This scheme was community funded using the government voucher scheme for rural internet connectivity. The Standen Street scheme includes about 59 properties under the postcodes TN17 4HP, TN17 4HR, TN17 4HS, TN17 4HT, TN17 4LA and TN17 4LB. There is a link below to check whether or not your property is able to access fibre to property.

The final properties included in the scheme were decided upon based on a number of factors, including the network layout and the current speed you could obtain. We are sorry if your property is not included (even if it's within the postcodes listed) but that was out of our hands.

The following link will allow you to see if you can take advantage of up to 1GB speeds: www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/. The next step is to choose a provider for your service and contact them directly to place your order, and then they will then arrange for Openreach to install a new modem and connect you by fibre optic cable to the new service. Please check to make sure you are aware of any contractual obligations you have with your current provider.

Katie Carr and Liz Bewley



**The Rhythm
of Life**
*Community
Choir*

Benenden Church
Thursday morning
10-11.30am
during term time

ALL WELCOME
£45 per term

To book your place call
Carla on 07743 430 797

Iden Green and Benenden WI

Some members recently joined a talk on zoom given by Ben Cross on 'growing alstroemeria', at his nursery in Sussex. We enjoyed listening to him promoting British plant production and agreed that this species seems to be one of the most long-lasting and resilient flowers in our gardens.

An enjoyable, relaxing social afternoon was held on 1 October when members were pleased to be entertained by Peter Batty speaking about the hidden gems of Kent. We heard about some exceptional places which only a few already knew.

The October meeting was also excellent when Delia Taylor talked about the MGM movies. She explained the origins of the company and members were delighted by the snippets of old musicals which brought back many happy memories.

Our last gathering of the year will be our annual winter party on Tuesday 16 November, in the Memorial Hall at 1pm when we eagerly look forward to enjoying a meal together with traditional, seasonal jollies.

Jackie Liffen 752232 WI@daisystar.co.uk



BENENDEN PRESCHOOL

CHRISTMAS FAIR

SATURDAY DECEMBER 4TH
2.30 - 4.30PM

BENENDEN VILLAGE HALL

- * Local Business Stalls
- * Meet Santa (Booking Required)
- * Craft Corner
- * Festive Refreshments
- * Raffle
- * Lucky Dip



SANTA'S GROTTO

TICKETS ON SALE NOW
BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

GROTTO ENTRANCE **£5 PER CHILD**
To book or for more info contact Rachel
Fundraising4BenendenPreSchool@gmail.com
The St, Benenden, Cranbrook TN17 4DE



The Bull at Benenden . Village pub with rooms . *Est 1608*

Warm up at the pub! Now taking bookings for festive lunches, suppers, drinks parties & gatherings. A warm welcome & roaring fire awaits!



Please see our website for menus, opening hours & B&B Thank you

01580 240 054 . enquiries@thebullatbenenden.co.uk . Book now to save the date!

Benenden Pre-School

Half term is upon us, which is a sure sign that autumn has arrived. Children are bringing in conkers, a kind mum donated a bag of rosy apples from a local orchard for the children to enjoy at snack time and there is a crisp cool to the air as we play in the garden.

The children and staff are benefiting from all our local partnerships. Hayley, our yoga teacher, lives in the village, and even the youngest members are quickly building up their ability to listen attentively throughout her enchanting half-hour sessions. Children follow the stories, try out new poses, become more aware of their breathing and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

The Tuesday afternoon volunteers from Benenden School are so popular with the children. The girls are brilliant at engaging with them in play, taking account of the interests of different children and encouraging turn-taking and sharing. They are great ambassadors for their school, unfailingly thoughtful and polite, and taking an active interest in child development.

Our parents continue to be amazing partners in many aspects of pre-school life. The staff and trustees hugely appreciate the time and energy they commit to supporting our village setting. Our open day on a sunny September morning was very well attended and the cakes, face painting and traditional games, including hook a duck and lolly luck, were enjoyed by all.

Parents are organising two more fantastic fundraisers this term. On Saturday 27 November, Tracy Claridge is kindly hosting a wine tasting for us in the Memorial Hall, and on Saturday 4 December we have a Christmas Fair with Santa's Grotto in the village hall. Please join us - we look forward to seeing you.
Lucy Oakley, Supervisor
supervisor@benendenpreschool.co.uk

Talking Shop

We are happy to say that you are flocking to the shop and the café is beginning to look and sound like the cheery, busy meeting place that it was before the pandemic. We are delighted to extend a warm welcome to our three new volunteers, Ian, Becky and Jacky. Thank you all very much for coming forward to help.

Christmas stock has arrived in good time and will be on display from the end of October, so keep an eye out for that. However, because of the continuing fuel shortage we are experiencing a few difficulties with obtaining some of our regular supplies, so please bear with us while we try to resolve the problem. The Hawkhurst Bread Shed, a local family run company, is now supplying our ready-made sandwiches and these seem to be selling very well, with some tasty new fillings in this brand. We are also selling locally-grown walnuts.

You can't miss the scaffolding around the building as essential works are carried out on the roof. This will last about 16 weeks and we apologise for the inconvenience during that time. On a lighter note, Kent County Council, in collaboration with councillor Sean Holden, has awarded us a welcome £1,000 towards some new CCTV. We have also received a very generous bequest in the will of the late Mr Raymond Riley. We extend our grateful thanks to both.

As business ramps up towards Christmas, we are always in need of extra help. Please do come forward to volunteer if you are able. We always need more volunteers and it's such a great way to get to know people in the village. Just pop in and have a chat with a member of staff; signing up is easy and it's great fun.

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

Whatever you want to store...

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



01580 713231

www.barn-store.co.uk



BEACON HALL HOUSE

LUXURY BED & BREAKFAST

Visit England 5* Gold with breakfast award

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

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

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

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

Relaxed evening suppers available by prior booking.

CHEESEMANS GARAGE

B. J. NASH



BENENDEN, KENT

TELEPHONE
CRANBROOK 240583

POGLE'S GARDEN MAINTENANCE

Mowing
Strimming
Hedge Cutting
and more



Please call
Sue and Andy
01580 241792
07887 997551



Help is on hand from your local Mind

www.westkentmind.org.uk
01732 744950

Information given, volunteers welcome
and donations needed.

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

www.lambertandfoster.co.uk



Lambert & Foster

PROPERTY PROFESSIONALS FOR OVER 100 YEARS

RESIDENTIAL SALES & LETTINGS | REGISTERED VALUERS AUCTIONS | PLANNING
RURAL PROFESSIONALS | SITE PROMOTION & DEVELOPMENT | BUILDING SURVEYING

CRANBROOK OFFICE 01580 712 234

Email: cranbrook@lambertandfoster.co.uk

OFFICES ALSO AT PADDOCK WOOD & MAYFIELD



arla | propertymark



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

bloomfields
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

9 OUT OF 10 CUSTOMERS RENEW WITH US EACH YEAR

To find out why, talk to us today about your home and car insurance needs.

Speak to your local NFU Mutual Ashford, Tenterden & Whitfield agent on 01580 766 174 or email Tenterden_Agency@nfumutual.co.uk



NFU Mutual
INSURANCE | PENSIONS | INVESTMENTS

D P Jackson, G R Ashby & D M Smith is an appointed representative of The National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Society Limited (No. 111982). Registered in England. Registered Office: Tiddington Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 7BJ. Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. A member of the Association of British Insurers.

Benenden School

It has been a lovely start to the term, with highlights including the return of our two-generation sports event - when parent-daughter teams compete in tennis, badminton, croquet, rounders and, for the first time this year, cricket - and our bumper leavers' ball, belatedly held to celebrate the departures of both the 2020 and 2021 year groups.

Last week I attended the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference in Cardiff, where important themes included focusing on how education continues to evolve as we come out of Covid, the broader reform needed of our GCSE and A Level method of assessment as we prepare our students for employment in 2030, and the character development required to enable our school leavers to survive in a professional landscape dominated by technology.

The Girls' Schools Association Conference, which I will be running in November, will pick up on these themes, with a particular emphasis on how schools such as ours can enable girls to develop their voice to successfully effect change, whether it be in their professional or local communities. We will be exploring the role that women play in science and technology, leading the way on sustainability and of course continuing to challenge equality in the workplace.

This week also saw Ofqual confirm its intention that GCSEs and A Levels will go ahead next summer, but with a back-up plan of reverting to teacher-assessed grades should there be ongoing disruption caused by Covid. A decision will be taken to this effect in February.

I returned from the conference to a fabulous spectacle of our Nigerian students dressed in traditional attire to celebrate Nigerian Independence Day, which culminated in an excellent assembly. This began a busy weekend, in which we also held an A Level fair for the Upper Fifth, welcomed over 70 prospective pupils for our taster weekend and managed to avoid a near total sporting washout when some netball matches against St Paul's survived the rain.

Samantha Price, Headmistress

VINEHALL INTERNATIONAL CLASSICAL CONCERT SERIES 33rd Season 2020-21

SACCONI STRING QUARTET
MICHAEL COLLINS (Clarinet)
Sunday 7 November 2021 at 3pm

Programme

Weber Clarinet Quintet in B flat major, Op.34
Mendelssohn String Quartet No.2 in A minor, Op.13
Brahms Clarinet Quintet

For full details, free mailing, tickets call 01580 883092
or write to A.G. Whitehead, Vinehall School,
Robertsbridge, East Sussex TN32 5JL
geoffreywhitehead@vinehallschool.com

Music Scholars return in triumph

One of the casualties of Covid last year was the annual concert in St George's Church by the music scholars of Benenden School. Their return in October was eagerly awaited.

Fifteen young musicians gave sparkling individual performances on a range of instruments: flute and clarinet; trumpet and trombone; violin and double bass; piano and harp; and a soprano voice. Some superb playing which vindicated the many hours of work put in by the girls and their teachers.

It is usually not appropriate to single out any of the performers for special praise, but on this occasion an exception has to be made. The first half of the evening closed with Caitlin Chiu singing 'Je veux vivre' from Gounod's opera 'Roméo et Juliette'. To say that the audience was enthralled would be an understatement. Her beautiful voice soared and filled the church, and it was easy to picture her as the young Juliet pouring out her heart.

The audience loved the performances and showed their appreciation. As well as everyone having a memorable evening, the Friends of St George's raised over £400 towards maintaining the fabric of the church. Thank you to Benenden School and to all those involved in making the evening such a success.

Martin Pexton

Bargain Carpets & Floors

Carpet and Vinyl supplied and fitted at reduced rates

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



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

01424 855882 / 07734 659834

bargainfloors@hotmail.co.uk

www.bargainfloors.co.uk

Checkatrade.com
Where reputation matters



Forest
Farm
Cat
Hotel

Idyllic rural location
Individual heated chalets
housing up to four cats
Also welcome rabbits,
guinea pigs, hamsters etc.
Come and see us before booking

Call Lucy on 01580 242961
or 07720 966374

email enquiries@forestfarmcathotel.co.uk
or see our website
www.forestfarmcathotel.co.uk

Benenden's

SHOP POST OFFICE CAFÉ

B's

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

An excellent range of groceries, breads, vegetables, beers and wines
and with Post Office services ...

For those who are self-isolating and have no one to shop for them, we will be able to take orders and payment over the phone. We can also supply frozen ready meals with instructions. Please note the opening hours: 7.30am-5pm Monday to Saturday and 9am-1pm on Sunday. Café open 8.30am-4.30pm Monday to Saturday and 9am-1pm on Sunday, for takeaway drinks, hot snacks and some cakes, with outside tables for service.

info@benendens.co.uk

Tel: 01580 279808

ANITA MEEKINS PRIVATE HIRE

FIRST CLASS SERVICE

Ordinary & Executive Vehicles
& 8 seater minibus with seat belts

All drivers & vehicles
licensed & tested

Long & short journeys
& courier service available

Business accounts welcome

Tel: 01580 240713
Mobile: 07774 672 043

anitameekinsph@btconnect.com

EVERYTHING OUTSIDE

Every job is treated with a professional,
friendly and reliable service.

**GARDENING • LANDSCAPING • PATIOS
FENCING • MOWING • HEDGE TRIMMING
DRAINAGE • CLEARANCE • DIGGER WORK
TREE SURGERY • CONCRETING**

Free no obligation quotation / Fully Insured
William Smith

T: 07795 465 861 / 01580 766232

E: smith_25@hotmail.co.uk

www.everything-outside.co.uk

Topical health

In the era of coronavirus, it is easy to understand why some people regard the prospect of winter flu as a bit of a non-issue. Sadly, this is not the case. Flu is not 'just a bad cold', it is a potentially life-threatening illness responsible for around 20,000 deaths in England alone in 2017-18.

Flu, or more properly influenza, is a contagious (sometimes highly so) respiratory illness caused by any number of influenza viruses. Flu causes a wide range of signs and symptoms, which vary between flu types and individuals, including a high fever, body aches, fatigue, coughing, a sore throat and headache among others. Unlike coronavirus infection, flu is not usually associated with a loss of sense of smell or taste and the cough tends to be dry rather than continuous.

The best defence against seasonal flu is isolation; during the recent lockdowns, we saw a huge downturn, perhaps as much as 95%, in the number of people suffering with seasonal flu. Isolation aside, the next best defence is vaccination. Vaccination is widely and freely available to people over 50, pregnant women and those living with certain long-term health conditions. As with most vaccines, the site of the injection can ache for a few days and the individual can experience mild symptoms.

Some people think that the choice of flu vaccine used each year is random. It isn't. The choice is based on national viral surveillance, which identifies the common viruses in circulation each year alongside epidemiological modelling of which viruses are most likely to be in circulation during the flu season. Given that coronavirus is still in circulation and that we are all trying to return to some form of social normality, getting the flu vaccine, even at the same time as a coronavirus vaccine booster, will prove to be the healthy option for many of us this year.

Peter Ellis

Benenden Hospital

Allied health professionals (AHPs) are the third largest healthcare workforce, who assess, diagnose, treat, discharge and/or refer patients, as well as teach, train and mentor other clinicians, students, patients and carers. Thursday 14 October was Allied Health Professions Day, although at Benenden Hospital we celebrate all 14 professions all year round and recognise the hard work of those who positively impact and support healthcare.

The day started not too long ago in 2018, when Carrie Biddle, a speech and language therapist, and Rachael Brandreth, a dietician, were sharing a bus home after a long, challenging day at work. They both had the idea of starting a social movement to celebrate everything that is great about AHPs.

I am proud of our highly skilled podiatric consultants, operating department practitioners, dietitians, physiotherapists and diagnostic radiographers, as well as our pharmacists. Our on-site pharmacy dispenses medicines to both inpatients and outpatients. Andrew Turton, our pharmacy manager says: "One of the best things about being an AHP is working closely with my fellow AHPs, alongside our nursing and medical colleagues, to provide the best care for our patients."

Each year the support for AHP Day grows as healthcare professionals continue to inspire people from around the world. Anyone can celebrate the great work that AHPs do: if you're interested in our current clinical job vacancies, please visit the careers page of our website.

We are encouraging local care homes and schools to draw a Christmas jumper design, which will be displayed in our hospital window entrance. Get colouring and send in your creations by 1 December. I look forward to seeing your festive designs.

Jane Abbott, Hospital Director and Chief Nurse

Thinking of selling or letting your property in or close to Benenden?

For straightforward sale or letting advice regarding the value of your house please contact us.

Specialist Rural and Village
Agent. Full Professional Estate
Agency service.

01580 766766

www.hobbsparker.co.uk



HOBBS • PARKER

The Villages



SUTTON VALENCE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

The heart of Kent
education, where each
cares for all and
individuality is cherished



Quality Mark awarded for English and Mathematics provision across the whole School

Little Lambs Nursery - available all year round

Set in acres of glorious Kent countryside

Pupils aged 2 - 11

Visit our website for more information – www.svs.org.uk

Call us on 01622 845800

Email our Admissions department at admissions@svs.org.uk



little lambs
NURSERY



Village Hall

At the village hall we are full to the brim with lovely things to do this month. We have another new class on offer on Wednesday mornings: Charlotte is running a Zumba class to get you all warmed up on those wintry mornings. We also have a couple of pilates classes available to join, on either a Tuesday evening with Beck, or Thursday morning with Lizzie. Our long-standing yoga teachers are going strong, Ruth is leading power yoga on Monday mornings and Charlie has both Monday and Friday sessions open. Ami Piper has a wide range of dance classes throughout the week and on Saturday mornings, and if dance is your thing, then why not try Friday's Scottish dancing or Jean Chapman's senior dancercise sessions?

Contact details for all of these are:

- Charlotte classeswith0@gmail.com
- Beck beckspilates@gmail.com
- Lizzie lizzietuff@gmail.com
- Ruth ruth@wealdpoweryoga.com
- Charlie yogahartley@gmail.com
- Ami ami@amipiperschoolofdance.co.uk
- Ros ros.maggs@yahoo.co.uk
- Jean jeanlchapman@aol.com

So feel free to reach out if you're interested in a little more information on any of these options, and we are always happy to accept new classes if you feel you have something to offer of your own.

Holly Clayson, Manager 07419 989830
enquiries@benendenvillagehall.org
www.benendenvillagehall.org

Merry and Bright

Come and join us for an afternoon of chat, games, quizzes, raffle and talks with a lovely afternoon tea included. Our next meeting in the Memorial Hall is at the new time of 2-4pm on 23 November.

Joan 240672 or Dawne 240458

Richard Household at Benenden School Café



Saturday 11 December
7 for 7.30pm
Wines from the Rhone

60 Tickets Only - Available At The Shop

£17

To include eight wines
from top producers
and regional French food



Taste the wines of Rhone

If I hadn't known better, I'd have sworn that none of the guests at the latest Benenden wine tasting had drunk a drop since we last met up, such was the gusto with which they attacked nine very decent wines from southern France when we reconvened after an 18-month break.

The last time had been pre pandemic, but clearly nobody had forgotten how to enjoy a night out, as we sipped our way enthusiastically through a pale Provencal rosé, three whites from Bordeaux and Languedoc; and five reds from Roussillon to Corbieres, chosen by Tracy Claridge, Alfred Nicol and myself.

Our crowd of 60 people helped us raise £530 for the Fresh Visions charity, and so the bar is set high for the next event, again at the Benenden School café, again hosted by Richard Household (who captivated everybody with his Loire wines at that far-off pre-Covid tasting), this time featuring the Rhone Valley.

The wines are yet to be confirmed, but rest assured they'll be top notch, so do book early to avoid the disappointment of missing this great value evening, on Saturday 11 December at 7 for 7.30pm. Tickets cost £17 and are available at the community shop, cash with order, please. Raffle tickets will be on sale.

Peter Thomas



Residential Sales • Management and Lettings

01580 242700

wealdproperty.net



Recently SOLD BENENDEN £775,000

**LEADERS IN
LOCAL PROPERTY
SINCE 1985**

Weald Property has been successfully handling exceptional local Property whilst supporting the villages of Benenden and Rolvenden since 1985. Offering a complete, professional and personal service in Residential Sales, Lettings and Property Management Agency, our successful and unique approach is not to be found on the High Street. Located at our inviting offices at Windmill Farm, Benenden Road, Rolvenden, we offer cost effective solutions for selling, letting and managing your Property.

To benefit from our 30 years experience leading the way in Wealden Property, please call Alex Hill on 01580 242700 for a complimentary market appraisal.



Recently LET ROLVENDEN LAYNE £3,250 PCM



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

Webb's

45 & 51 High Street
Tenterden

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

HARDWARE and DIY

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

KITCHENWARE

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

HOME and LINEN

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

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

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

Nourish

Community Foodbank Charity Number: 1154716

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

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

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

**P.F. WARD
& SONS**
FAMILY BUTCHERS
FRESH LOCAL
PRODUCE

VARIETY of HOME
MADE SAUSAGES
& BURGERS

Phone: 01580 240612



OFFERING LONG-TERM RESIDENCE,
CONVALESCENCE & RESPITE CARE
FOR INDIVIDUALS AND COUPLES
WHO VALUE PRIVACY, LUXURY
AND HAPPINESS

PEASMARSH PLACE For Brochure & Details
Church Lane, Peasmarsh, Rye, East Sussex TN31 6XETel: 01797 230555

Theobald Upholstery

Established 1975



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

www.theobaldsfurniture.co.uk

Tel: 01580 890055

Professional and
traditional upholsterers

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

Village Charities

Making a difference

Every year the St George's Church Mission allocation committee (part of the Parochial Church Council) gets together and decides which charities it will support in the coming year, aiming for about 15 local, national and international organisations, including the Children's Society, Medecins Sans Frontiers, Hospice in the Weald, the Weald Family Hub and Sight Savers. Much of the money comes from the annual village fete. Earlier in the year, Chris Parkinson told us about Tools with a Mission, Crossroads and Dolen Llanbrymair. This month I focus on three further charities: Nourish, Catching Lives and Demelza House.

Nourish is our local food bank and provides help when it's needed most. The support it offers to those across the whole borough of Tunbridge Wells, including Benenden, is more than a bag of food, it's a helping hand for people. People like you and me who come from all walks of life. What they have in common is that life has dealt them a blow and they need support to get back on their feet. In 2019/2020, Nourish needed over £120,000 a year to run and it forecasts that this year that will double. As well as covering the costs of its storage and packing unit, its staff and its van delivery costs, donations allow it to fill the gaps in supplies. It buys wholesale so every £1 donated goes further. It often buys tinned items that haven't been donated, breakfast cereals and healthy snacks for children, sanitary products, laundry powder and nappies. Please see the website for further information on how to apply for help or make a donation.

www.nourishcommunityfoodbank.org.uk

Catching Lives supports rough sleepers, the homeless and the vulnerably housed in Canterbury and East Kent; those who have, for many reasons, fallen through the gaps in society and feel they have nowhere else to turn. Its vision is of a society where all are included and all, no matter how disadvantaged, can contribute. It does this by offering immediate respite at the Canterbury Open Centre. In addition, it works with clients to help them to tackle any issues



The St George's Church Fete has become the Benenden Village Fete in support of St George's Church

Many people have said that this year's fete was the best they have ever been to, which is wonderful as it marks my last year as chairman. I want to thank you all for your wonderful support and to thank the committee of the Revd David Commander, Pippa Sartor, Sam Caddick, David Wellman, Helen Jewsbury, Tim Maw and Ruth Clark for their tireless work and energy and wonderful attitude to life; it made my role so much easier, and it is they who must take a lot of the credit. Thank you all and thank you to all the other volunteers and all the people who attended this year's fete, you know who you are. A great day to remember.

Tracy Claridge

that they may have, get access to suitable accommodation and find the motivation to take steps towards personal recovery and independent living. There are more homeless people than ever before, and this is likely to rise as renting and house prices continue to go up and there is not enough so-called 'affordable housing'. Just where are people on a low wage supposed to live? I have been trying to help Catching Lives since about 2006. They need our help. Please see the website and see how you can make a difference.

www.catchinglives.org

Demelza House supports families who have children or young people with a serious or terminal condition throughout their time together. It helps young people with complex needs to get the most from life, achieve ambitions, do new things, and it supports their families to manage and thrive. The charity provides clinical care, therapies, specialised activities and practical support across Kent, South East London and East Sussex, both at its two hospices and at home. Please see the website for further information on this most amazing charity.

www.demelzahouse.org.uk



The *Care* Company

Inspected and rated

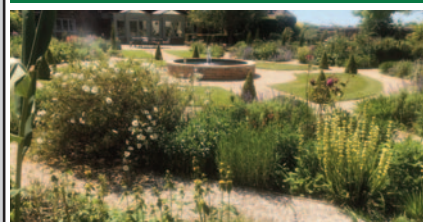
Good



Caring for you at home

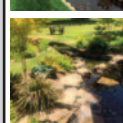
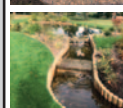
Well established, family run business, providing care for people living in the Weald of Kent. Our tailored service allows you to live at home with independence and dignity. Call Karen Irving at our Tenterden office to arrange a no obligation visit. 01580 762202 www.carecompany.care

GREENACRE LANDSCAPES



Specialists in private garden design & construction

Creating beautiful gardens since 1963



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

**07595 024330
01892 722412**

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

EST



2014

argo life & legacy

Caring for someone can be difficult...

it doesn't need to be
Life can be so much easier

Call our team on

01580 766135

Weald of Kent office



info@argolifeandlegacy.co.uk
www.argolifeandlegacy.co.uk

We can help

Wills
Trusts

Probate specialists
Life & Tax planning
Lasting Powers of Attorney
Social care advice
Carer Support

A sign for our times

It's lovely to see the Benenden village sign beautifully rebuilt in oak by Fox Construction and restored to its place on the green once more. I hate to admit that I'd never really taken much notice of it, until it was no longer there after it suffered from the slings and arrows of outrageous weather, and I found its absence unsettling. Seeing it back in its rightful place prompted me to investigate its history and that of the two cricketers it portrays.

The tradition of village signs is believed to have been started by Edward VII on the Sandringham Estate in the early 20th century, when he suggested they would aid motorists.

Our sign was commissioned in 2000 as part of our millennium celebrations and features Edward Gower 'Ned' Wenman and Richard Mills, both first-class cricketers who played for Kent and England. The sign was painted by Guy Bedford and unveiled by the descendants of Wenman and Mills. Unfortunately, the painting lasted only nine years before it began to suffer from the wind and rain. The image you see today was painted by Stephen Message (a cricketer himself) and installed in 2009.

The portraits are based on old prints of the two players and Stephen recalls: "I asked a friend to dress up to match the prints, complete with top hat, so I could get the right effect." The painting was then scanned and printed onto a metal plate by Iden Signs, using a process that would ensure it lasted many years.

It seems Benenden produced a number of fine cricketers who went on to play for Kent. The most notable were Mills (1798-1882) and Wenman (1803-1879), who are both buried in the churchyard. Mills, who was considered one of the best cricketers of his era, was born at Pump Farm and made his first-class debut in 1825. He played mainly for Kent sides, including one match for the newly formed Kent County Cricket Club in 1843 in Hemsted Park (now Benenden School). He also played for the Players in the Gentlemen v Players series which was popular at the time. Players were working class

professional cricketers who earned their living through the game, while Gentlemen were middle and upper-class and played cricket for leisure.

Wenman also made his debut in 1825, alongside Mills, and while he was also a first-rate batsman he is generally remembered as one of the greatest wicket keepers of the 19th century. He was clearly a character and very confident of his cricketing skills, so much so that he and Mills liked to challenge cricket teams to play a match against just the two of them for money. As you would expect the 'Two against Eleven' competitions attracted considerable crowds and lots of side betting!

I found a lovely description by an eyewitness of one of these two-day matches in

1834, against the Isle of Oxney XI in Wittersham, in 'Benenden. A Pictorial History' compiled by Michael Davies: "Upwards of 2,000 spectators assembled to witness this singular contest which has no parallels in the annals of cricket. The chances against the two enterprising players were great: the two against the eleven in every point of the game, they having none to field, and their opponents being all in the field. And what was more particularly against them was that when one was out, both were out." The match ended in a victory for Wenman and Mills by 66 runs and a prize of £20.

This match was re-created on its 150th anniversary in 1984, when Derek Underwood of Kent and England and Alan Ealham of Kent played a Benenden XI. Rain stopped play, which ended in an honourable draw.

I expect that Mills and Wenman would be extremely pleased to be 'playing' still on the village green over 200 years later.

Ruth Clark



Spotlight

Pilgrim on the long, hot walk to faith

Robin Dalton Holmes describes what inspired him to walk 800km along the Camino Way in Spain for the first time 12 years ago. My first visit to Santiago de Compostela was 33 years ago on a family holiday spent driving in Spain. Then we stayed in the 500-year-old former hostel for pilgrims to the city. Since the early Middle Ages, Santiago has been third only in importance to Jerusalem and Rome as a destination for Christian pilgrimage. St James the Great was believed to have a mission connection to northern Spain, and after his execution in Jerusalem, tradition relates that his remains were shipped to Spain in a stone boat and rediscovered 800 years later on the site of what is now one of Spain's most striking cathedrals: Santiago de Compostela. James is also credited with a significant part in the battle to terminate centuries of foreign domination of Spain 1,200 years after his death.

On that first holiday I had noticed a handful of individual trekkers plodding westward and learned of the pilgrimage route to Santiago from France - the Camino de Santiago, known in English as the Way of St James or, colloquially, the Camino Way - of which 800km lie in Spain. In my working life I had never had enough annual leave for long walks, but I resolved that when I retired in 2003 I would follow the Camino Way.

After I had trekked several times in Morocco, Sinai, Namibia and Ethiopia, I was ready to walk the Camino. Santiago can be approached from various directions, and I learned that many spaced hostels had been opened on the route down from France. I was attracted by the challenge of walking the Camino, on what I thought



could be a four-week stretch, and meeting my wife, Jane, at my Santiago destination.

My first pilgrimage began in 2009. Not knowing how I might respond to 29 days of walking, the comfort was that, without the need to book ahead, I could stop each day whenever and wherever I liked, or when I had been confounded by August heat.

I flew to Bilbao with a rucksack containing all I needed for the four weeks of walking ahead. Years of trekking have shown me there is an art to selecting, packing and carrying all one's possessions for a remote journey. Self-

sufficient, I set off from near Pamplona and soon became tuned to the conventions of the Camino.

Proof of walking and accommodation was validated by getting a pilgrim pass stamped at the hostels and places of interest en route. Sleeping in bunk beds, in large, unisex hostel dormitories, lights out were at 10pm and we had to leave by 9am. I adopted early starts, getting up an hour before dawn so that, in the cool of the pre-dawn air, I enjoyed first light, and an hour later seeing my shadow stretch 40ft ahead of me, shortening as the sun rose.

Breakfast consisted of tonic water, coffee and toast in the first open café of the day. Depending on temperature, I would repeat this pit-stop mid-morning, and then, around lunch time, start looking for somewhere to stay the night. Hostels were rarely re-opened before 2pm, but being first in the queue outside gave the best choice of bed,

hot water for a shower, and getting my washing on the line to dry by sunset.



In clean clothes, I could explore each village or city in the afternoons, when nothing stirred except domestic kitchens, rattling cutlery, and cooking. Unlike Spaniards, who eat supper very late, pilgrims were hungry, ate early, and were snoring by 10.30pm.

There are three significant, but not over strenuous, mountain ranges on the 820km route from France, but long stretches are at over 4,000ft above sea level. In addition to hostels there were many monastic refuges, several of which had been used by St Francis of Assisi, and some convenient hotels, but the latter required advance reservation. So, the religious ambience grew for me while staying in the monastic refuges with voluntary evening prayers led by monks and nuns.

During the day, the company of others was intermittent, sometimes just walking alongside or sitting with a fellow pilgrim for 15 minutes over coffee. However, the universal greeting of 'Buen Camino' was a catalyst for companionship. Conversing with walkers from every continent tested my linguistic capabilities, but we all felt equal in our non-discriminatory trekking clothes and, despite few native Britons, everybody seemed keen to practice their English if we ate together.

Fortunately, I never felt tired, despite daily distances up to 25 miles in the dry air; I suffered no blisters and found I was approaching Santiago four days ahead of my schedule, so I slowed down.

Recalling the city from our previous family holiday, I knew when to expect a first sight of the great cathedral spires; and the urban bustle grew. At last, after 28 days and much anticipation, I was finally walking into the main square dominated by Santiago de Compostela Cathedral. Musicians played in the shade of an ancient archway and the space thronged with the triumphant arrival of a fairly steady stream of pilgrims, elated to set down heavy rucksacks and sharing noisy greetings in the camaraderie of reaching a journey's destination.

To my right was the ancient Hostal dos Reis Catolicos or Hotel of the Catholic Kings - which still

gives free lunch to the first 12 pilgrims to arrive each day - while to my left was the town hall, part of the university and the grand

facade of the cathedral. I climbed the cathedral steps to find the column in the porch where centuries of arriving pilgrims had placed their hand and worn a five-finger grip on their destination.

Walking into the cathedral and up the south aisle past the early arrivals' midday pilgrim mass, I joined a queue that looped behind the apse. Fifteen minutes later I had shuffled my way to the narrow smooth steps up behind the altar to take my turn in clasping the jewelled bust of St James. Then I shuffled again, squeezing my rucksack down the crypt steps, into the small space in front of the silver casket containing the remains of St James the Great, apostle of Jesus Christ. I had arrived!

Emerging from the crypt, I then crossed another huge square to find the first floor Dean's Credencial Office to gain the final stamp in my pilgrim passport. Among a crowd of pilgrims, my ascent into the office was paused. I was asked to complete a form with name, place of birth, journey start point, age and mode of travel and then asked if the purpose of my journey was 'recreation or faith'. After hesitation I opted for faith and showed my pilgrim or Credencial passport. A Latin certificate with an unfamiliar 'Roberto' as first name was granted to me as validation of achievement of my pilgrim status.

What definitely started as a physical challenge transmuted into much more of the pilgrimage experience, which embraced me on its fringe. I had morphed, from a mere sceptic of St James' alleged influence on Spain, into a more rounded pilgrim.



J. PERIGOE & SON

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

PROUD TO BE SERVING THE
COMMUNITY SINCE 1852



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

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

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

Golden Charter
Funeral Plans

Bank Street, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 3EF.

01580 713636

Dixter Road, Northiam, East Sussex TN31 6LB.

01797 260316

enquiries@jperigoeandson.com

www.jperigoeandson.com



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



**FEELING LONELY OR ISOLATED?
NEED TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS?**



**Join our weekly Zoom chat groups.
Open to anyone aged 18 and over.**

If you're not on the internet, we also have
face to face 'Circles of Six'

[adhering to government guidelines].

Once lockdown is over we will resume
our other regular activities.

Please check our website for full details
and other useful resources.

www.wellbeingintheweald.co.uk

email hello@wellbeingintheweald.co.uk
or leave a message on **07961 669 575**

Promoting health and wellbeing to build a stronger community

Charity No. 1190083

Private Tuition

Remote Sessions
Now Available

Boosting Confidence & Developing Potential

With Clare Leek

clare.intuition@btinternet.com

07711 619536



Primary Subjects
Singapore Maths
French

Pipes & Nails

• Home • Garden •
Property Maintenance
Plumbing & Handyman Service

Local & Trusted

~ We'll take *care* of your home ~

Fast, local emergency help.

No job too small.

No call-out charge.

Chris Leach 07919 143755

leachfamily@gmail.com

www.pipesandnails.com

Helen Grant

MP for Maidstone and the Weald

I am here to help you in any way that I can.
If there is an issue of concern to you, where
you believe I can assist, or if you would like
to arrange a meeting with me, please email
me at helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk
or telephone **020 7219 7107**.



helengrant.org



[@HelenGrantMP](https://twitter.com/HelenGrantMP)



[helen-grantMP](https://www.linkedin.com/company/helen-grantMP)



Promoted by
Helen Grant MP, of
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA



Alan Pickett: his life and love for Benenden

Bev Beveridge marks the recent passing of one of Benenden's most inspirational and well-loved residents

After serving as a flying officer navigator in the RAF Volunteer Reserve from 1943-47, followed by three years at the North British Rubber Company, Alan Pickett took over the management of Park Farm in Biddenden. During his varied career, Alan was also a publisher and international conference organiser. In 1962 he was invited to become the first Weald of Kent Preservation Society (WKPS) life member and greatly admired their pioneering work. He was also a long-standing member of the British Legion and of the St George's congregation, where he regularly read the lesson with great clarity.

Alan was a long-term partner of the late Angela Lloyd-Jones, with whom he shared many interests, particularly the same tastes in music and theatre productions. For 30 years, they lived on the Cranbrook Road in Benenden, the village



for which Alan had a great affection. His love for Benenden and its community engendered many selfless acts on his part as he engaged in setting up the 'Save Our Shop' Campaign in 2012. He continued to devote much time and energy to this project until its completion.

His relaxation came from the many walks he took in Hemsted Forest with his beloved dog Monty - he was a member of the Kennel Club. He also had a passion for jazz. For many years he was the guitarist in a band called The Last of the Summer Jazz, which included several WW2 veterans, and they played together for fun and, of course, for charity.

Alan was an amazingly energetic, intelligent, and capable man with a high degree of humanity. In his 80s he achieved a degree in psychology and, as a Jungian psychotherapist, became a counsellor. A member of the family explained that one of the people he counselled gratefully believed that Alan had saved her life. He wrote two books about life and relationships, no mean feat at that stage of life, yet imbued with the wisdom of years of experience. Long after retirement,



he was meticulous in keeping organised, once exclaiming: 'I can't do this - I'm 48 hours behind on my paperwork!'

He was fortunate in that he enjoyed good health for most of his life, regularly taking a mixture of vitamins to maintain his fitness. Alan was 96 when he died and although, tragically, it was Covid which finally claimed him, as he was laid up with a broken hip, it is plain to see that his was a life well lived and he will leave behind a legacy of service to Benenden, where he wanted his funeral to be. Alan will be much missed by all those who knew him and all those who have benefited from his kindness.

Food and Drink



Entering into the spirit of the Wealden gin revolution

Ruth Clark talks to Will Edge, founder of Greensand Ridge Distillery, and samples his eco-friendly Kentish delights

First off: full disclosure. I like gin and I really like a carefully crafted gin, straight up with ice, as a gimlet with an equal measure of fresh lime juice or tempered with a light Fever-Tree tonic (other

brands are available). So, I was very happy when my co-editor agreed to let me have a go at reviewing a Kent-based distillery.

I find that I am not alone. My research shows that the number of UK distilleries has dramatically increased from about 160 in 2013 to over 440 last year. Six million cases were sold in 2018 and this is predicted to rise to ten million in 2023. The trend

shows that drinkers are looking for locally produced, unique spirits with great stories and that's what attracted me particularly to Greensand Ridge Distillery in Shipbourne, near Tonbridge.

Everything about Greensand Ridge appeals to me: the evident passion of its founder Will Edge, its considerable eco-credentials and use of Kent botanicals and surplus produce from local farmers. And that's even before I tried Will's range of superb gins. He also produces a brandy, a rum and an eau de vie which, in the 'spirit' of research, I also sampled - but more of these later.

This is an award-winning, carbon-neutral distillery, which takes its name from the Greensand Ridge where it is situated, a line of

hills which surrounds the Weald of Kent and Sussex, and around which Will grew up. The building is an old Victorian coach house, and the distillery operations spill out of the huge doors into the large open courtyard. Through a massive archway to the front is a view over the fields and woods to the Greensand Ridge - a view that inspires the label design.

"The flavours of our spirits are directed by the produce grown or growing nearby in the fields, orchards, nutteries and hedgerows," he explains. "The ridge encircles and contains these flavours and gives us a focal point for our quest for great flavours and lost ingredients.

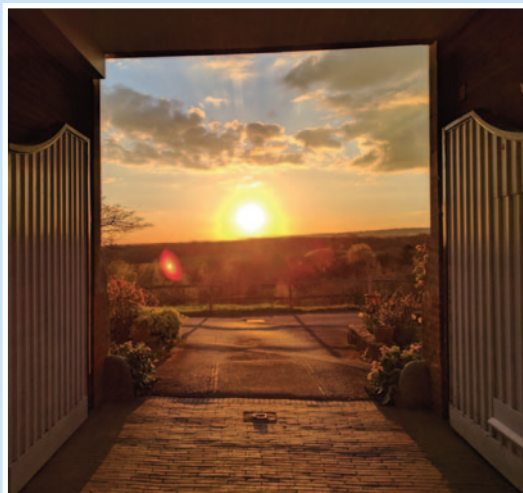
"Gin is a natural way to represent the flavours of the lands around us in a beautiful spirit. Anything with carbohydrate we can of

course ferment and represent in its pure form, as with our apple brandy, but many of the aromas around us are bound in oils or resins, for example. The incredible complexity of some of those aromas lend themselves perfectly to my gin, which is like a walk through the Wealden woods, fields and orchards, with sweet/floral and woodland/herbaceous characters."

The backbone of Greensand Ridge gin is eight local botanicals: bay, laurel, poppy seeds, oak moss, cobnuts, gorse flowers, hawthorn berries, rosehips and honey. These can be found growing within a mile of the distillery, although Will sources the botanicals for distilling from suppliers to ensure consistency of flavour and because, in some

cases, he'd be stripping the local environment of important parts of the ecosystem. "Better to source from where they are sustainably produced," he says.

Before Will started the business, he had spent ten years working in IT, marketing, finance, all the



while making alcoholic drinks at home. “First it was those awful lager kits but that eventually led to full mash brews including my all-time favourite, brett-fermented Flemish red ales. I served my craft cider at my wedding in 2009 and over the years have had various infusions and macerations secreted about my dwellings.”

A Masters in Brewing and Distilling at Heriot-Watt accelerated his move from passionate hobbyist to full-time career only six years ago. “My vision from the start has been to build a different kind of distillery: one which has the lightest possible touch on the lands, but also benefits the community by preferentially fermenting and distilling surplus produce.”

Will believes that any business should be run sustainability by default and takes great pride in being the UK’s first carbon-neutral distillery: “Re-engineering a traditional business to be sustainable is incredibly difficult but it’s important and defines every decision we make here. We use only renewable energy and some of the things we do are innovative, like using the heads from distilling as a sterilant for lines and fermentation vessels.

“We make most of our spirits from surplus produce from local farmers, but we also focus on what goes out,” emphasises Will. “Our own organic waste feeds local boar. Our total non-recyclable waste output is one bag every six to eight weeks. We don’t use any non-biodegradable chemicals, and where we absolutely have to use plastics, we use plant-based options.”

The time had come to sample some of the Greensand Ridge spirits - it’s tough what we go through for this magazine!

Will makes three gins: a classic London Dry Gin, Rye Cask Gin and PX Cask Gin. The London Dry is perfect, aromatic with a fresh taste evocative of forests. I’m not a fan of flavoured gins, but I was blown away by the Rye Cask and PX Cask versions. Will ages an adapted version of the London Dry in rye whiskey casks for up to a year to produce a gin that combines oaky undertones with vanilla, toffee-apple and citrus (his tasting guidance helped here as my aroma identification vocabulary is sadly lacking, I’m afraid). I took Will’s advice and tried this

neat over ice and a coil of orange zest.

Cleverly, he has taken a similar approach to create the PX Cask by ageing gin in oak casks originally used to hold Pedro Ximénez sweet sherry. The result is an intense sweet and spicy character layered over the already aromatic gin. Again, delicious straight up over ice or long with ginger ale and fresh lime.

If you would like to try a selection of Greensand Ridge spirits before choosing your full-size favourite(s) then I recommend buying a selection box. It contains six 5cl bottles, including the three gin flavours, a Wealden Rum, Apple Brandy and the intriguing eau de vie ‘Raspberry Ghost’, which is

stunning and captures the delicate aroma of Kentish raspberries in a dry spirit. These last three are also excellent and use quality surplus fruit which can’t be sold to supermarkets.

If you want to tour the distillery, learn about the origins of distilling, try a cocktail and create your own bottle of gin, selecting from Will’s extensive botanical library, then you can join one of the weekly gin-making experiences. Check out the website for dates and details.

You can buy Greensand Ridge spirits online or locally at Biddenden Vineyard or the Eggs to Apples farm shop in Hurst Green. Cheers.
www.greensanddistillery.com



In Your Garden



Spring bulbs in pots

Deciding on which bulbs to plant for spring pots is one of my favourite parts of the gardening calendar. Over the years I have smoothed the process to make it an enjoyable task that I look forward to rather than the frazzled approach I used to have, almost always last minute, with whatever was left behind on the shop (or my own) shelves. I also believe having to pot up displays for clients has cornered me into a more streamlined system, for which I am thankful.

I have definitely discovered planting one variety of bulb in its own pot works extremely well. Not only is it easier to label, but later on in the spring, when everything is in full fettle, you can group pots together depending on what display you are after. A favourite combination of mine is blue hyacinths, some tiny 'Tete-a-Tetes' and anything in white (anemones or snowdrops dug up from the garden and dressed with moss). It makes a very pretty spring display, which I often pair with a bowl of primroses. Paperwhites flower in weeks and fill a room with scent, grape hyacinths are brilliant too (I like 'Valerie Finnis', a light blue) as well as iris reticulata ('Harmony' is tiny and blue and 'Purple Hill' is more jewel-

like in purple), both of which are reliable in early February. My other tip would be to really pack the bulbs in cheek by jowl, they don't mind at all and the display is worth it.

If you are planting bulbs into pots without drainage holes (for indoors) you could fill the pot with bulb fibre that contains charcoal - this absorbs any odours should the display be over-watered and the bulbs start to decompose. Otherwise, use any container with drainage holes and put a saucer underneath.

To top-dress displays, I cover the soil with either alpine grit or a fine gravel, or I find moss taken from the garden looks attractive and fresh, especially bun moss, if you can find some. Be generous with any top-dressing and fully cover the soil.

Finally, and to get some height into the display, I break off hazel twigs or coloured dogwoods, and push them into the soil around the bulbs - again be quite generous and you will find they also act as a useful plant support once the flowers arrive. It's possible the twigs may root - if so then at least you will have new plants for free.

Annabel Lear GARDENS

Planting . Design . Consultancy

07759 440922 annabellelear@btinternet.com



Dream Big, Shine Brighter

An incredibly nurturing day and flexi-boarding
school inspiring 3-13 year old boys and girls
to fulfil their extraordinary potential.
dulwichprepcranbrook.org



Dulwich Prep
Cranbrook



Student Wellbeing

T.W. FUGGLE & SON

FAMILY FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Private Chapels of Rest

24-HOUR SERVICE

All arrangements undertaken with personal attention

Pre-paid funeral plans arranged through Golden Charter

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



Benenden's
SHOP POST OFFICE CAFE



Volunteers Needed
For
Shop Service
&
Café Service

Learn how to make
that perfect coffee
and serve it!

01580 279808

www.benendens.co.uk/volunteers

info@benendens.co.uk



PETER CHRISTOPHERSON

Expert Mortgage Advice

30 Years of Experience

Tyler Mortgage Management

L: 0207 48 49 207

M: 07909 562 579

E: peter.christopherson@tylermm.com



Above: An outward looking parish: The Benenden Art Show; the monthly village lunch; Apple Day at Standen Street Fruit Farm; Mercy Shikongo and Rusia Haufiku at school in Namibia with support from the Benenden community
Front cover: The village sign restored. Photograph: Graham Beveridge