THE LINK

February 2023







In this issue:

- My favourite gadget
- A green place to rest
- Bob Dockerty calls time
- That sounds familiar...who wrote it?
- A huge loss for Hever
- A school gets political

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the February Link

Blackbirds singing in the dead of night. I just love their enthusiastic determination that the day has not ended and that there is more singing to be done. I also love the blackness of the male with his yellow beak and the understated thrush-like garb of the female. They are sensible birds who do not migrate and the species is not under threat. So we can enjoy them in an un-anxious way.

Meanwhile good news for turtle doves - following a European Commission scheme, hunting of the doves has been banned for now in France, Spain and Portugal. The lives of over two million birds have been saved and this should help the species recover - certainly there is a growing number in the Knepp estate in Sussex, home of a rewilding project. Now spared the European firing squad, the migrating birds are also finding more suitable habitats in the UK.



And as for us humans, unable to fluff up our feathers and tuck our heads under our wings... Boormans serially saved the day in this area by delivering heating oil to the many who had run out due to the cold snap, including Hever Church. Thank you Boormans! And we hope you enjoy the photos in this edition of the now-distant snow in early December. The current road closures round Hever are proving less photogenic.

Finally, if you like Cezanne, and even if you feel you have seen all there is to see, do try to catch the exhibition at Tate Modern which is on until 12 March.

Joanna Wade

THE LINK

pets of the month

My dogs Murphy and Pesto are wire haired vizslas. The breed comes from Hungary but they come from the Yorkshire Dales and also they support Hungary as a football team. Murphy and Pesto share some characteristics but also they have some differences such as Pesto doesn't like his ears being played whiles Murphy does or Pesto likes playing in the garden with a ball but Murphy likes playing with a ball on a walk.

Pesto



Pesto is an attention seeker and doesn't like Murphy having attention. He also, as I have mentioned, hates his ears being played with and he doesn't like his paws being played with either. He is a dog explorer but gets quite scared of things. For instance, he is scared of the broom so he's a bit of a wimp. Pesto LOVES to watch TV and really enjoys watching dogs. He thinks they are real so goes to the back of the TV to see them. Pesto does growl but not in an angry way such as I am going to hurt you. He growls when he's grumpy, not getting any attention, bored and doesn't like what you are doing. Last of all Pesto likes to suck your hand which I think is the cutest thing he does.

Murphy



Murphy likes to be tickled on his chest and he does his snort. Murphy is less hairy than Pesto and less wirey too. He likes to run and is very speedy. He also is a very friendly dog and his tail is like a helicopter. When he runs, he always has his nose to the ground, which always leads him to something or someone. Murphy is always a dog who will do absolutely ANYTHING for food and exercise. He has a powerful bark and many people will find him scary or big which once you have been with him for a while you know he's just a softy. The cutest thing he does is nudge his back into you.

Martha Daville

what I do



After many years working as an occupational therapist and a career spanning disciplines such as Neuro Rehab, Acute Stroke, in-patient Mental Health and Adult Social Care to name but a few, and time spent working at various London hospitals including King's College Hospital, Hammersmith Hospital, I decided on a change of career.

I loved working as an occupational therapist, enjoyed the challenges and found it incredibly rewarding but felt I would like to do something completely different.

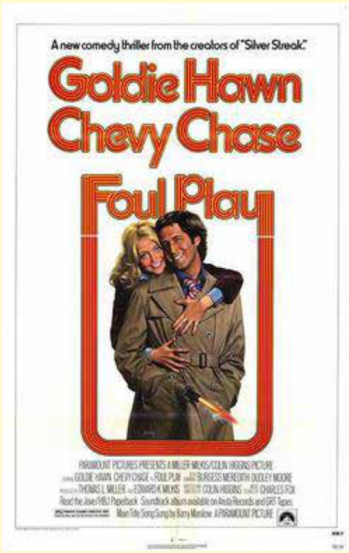
With 20 years of painting experience, and more recently redecorating a large house under my belt, I've discovered a natural talent for painting (and a very happy husband to boot!). Unusually (for most) I enjoy painting and the creativity of using colour to transform a room into a beautiful space. I find the whole process of applying paint to wall quite zen and am happiest with a paint brush in my hand and a podcast to listen to!

I decided to take it further and completed a City and Guild's-recognised painting and decorating course covering all aspects of painting and decorating. With this qualification under my belt, it was time to start and Hever Painters was launched! The feedback has been amazing, particularly 'female led and local' seem to go down well. The diary is getting booked out so if you are looking for high quality results then look no further than Hever Painters!

Rebecca Daville
of Hever Painters
Rebeccadaville@btinternet.com

village screen film club 2022/23 at Hever Castle golf club

Friday 10 February - Foul Play
This popular 1978 film is a "romantic neo-noir comedy thriller" starring Goldie Hawn, who is wonderful across all these genres, as librarian Gloria Mundy. She leads a relatively uneventful life but then she looks to shake things up she somehow arrives in the middle of an assassination plot against the Pope! This is when she meets hapless detective Tony (Chevy Chase) who is working on the case



Save the date for the final film of the season:
Friday 10 March - The Duke, starring Jim Broadbent and Helen Mirren

The films (all less than two hours long) start at 7.30 and doors open at 6.30 for the pre-show meal and bar - with ice cream in the interval.

Tickets are a suggested donation of £3 for the film (increased from £2 to cover costs, sorry!) or £16.50 to include the meal - scampi and chips or vegetarian quiche. You can book with Joanna Wade on 07958 919631 or heverbrocas@gmail.com or buy tickets at the door. However please pre-book your meal by the Wednesday before the show if you would like to eat. Please bring cash if possible.



Desert Island whisks

- which kitchen implement would you save from the waves?

We all have favourites we could not do without, favourites which make us happy, efficient and/or soothed in the kitchen

Jan Tolfree did not pause even for a second before reaching for her jar opener. Indispensable and clever. They come in many shapes and forms and now you can get electric devices which look like mini space ships landing on top of the jar and gnawing it off - but Jan's version is marginally more sedate, and it fits into the drawer better No one should be without one!

a prodigious output

What do All things Bright and Beautiful, Once in Royal David's City and There is a Green Hill Far Away have in common? Answer: they were all written by Victorian Irishwoman, Cecil Frances Alexander.

Cecil was born in Dublin to English parents in 1818. By her 20s she was already writing poems which were included in Church of Ireland hymn books; by the time she died in 1895 her Hymns for Little Children had reached its 69th edition. Her husband William Alexander was Archbishop of Armagh and both he and their daughter Eleanor and son Robert were also poets although their work has not stood the test of time. She was very devout and did many "good works", including opening a school for the deaf with her sister.

Almost every wedding features All Things Bright; carol services traditionally begin with a solo of Once in Royal and Easter always features Green Hill. So this traditional Victorian matron has completely and enduringly imprinted herself, rubbing shoulders with the Latin O Come All Ye Faithful and traditional medieval The First Noel. I think this is partly because, although her words were simple, she was a good and evocative poet - as a child I loved to imagine and draw the purple headed mountain and river running by and the green hill without the city wall. Also the rhymes are not strained and the rhythms work well for the composers of the tunes, which are as memorable as the words.

So, in February, we now confidently wait for Easter to hear Green Hill, set to music by the American George Stebbins.

Joanna Wade



Bob Dockerty

It is with great sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of our founder and dear friend Bob Dockerty. Much loved, not only in the local community but far and wide for his kindness, warmth, hospitality and great humour. Our thoughts are with his family, close friends and all who knew him and we will be announcing more details soon for those who would like to pay their respects. Larkins, as Bob would have wanted, is brewing away so we look forward to raising a glass in his honour with you very soon



Eden Valley Woodland Burial Ground wins prestigious award!

Eden Valley in Edenbridge has been awarded the 'Best Natural Burial Ground in the South-East' in the Association of Natural Burial Grounds 2023 People's Awards.

These esteemed awards are based on feedback from those organising funerals at the site and Eden Valley was particularly recommended for their exemplary customer service. Families using the site were especially appreciative of the care and consideration shown and the time spent with families and friends supporting and guiding their decisions. 'We could not have asked for a more appropriate way to celebrate and respect my mother's life. Thank you'. January 2022

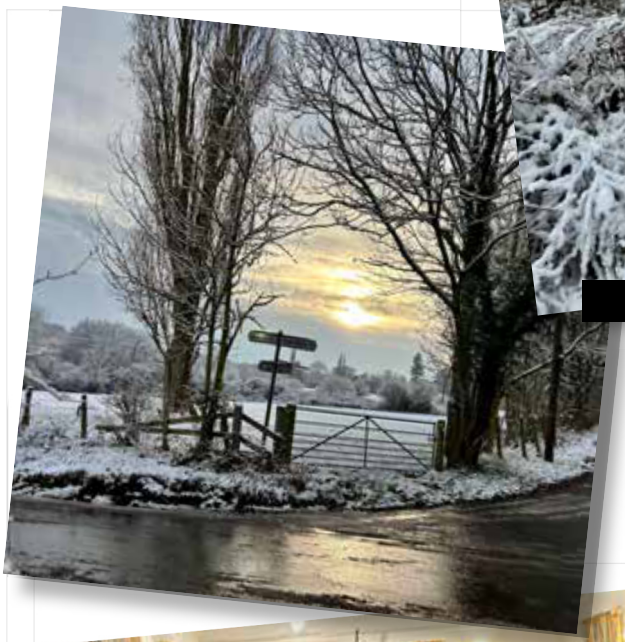
Along with providing a tranquil, natural place for people to be buried, Eden Valley's aim is to return 14 acres of grassland back to its natural state of deciduous woodland. In 2022 we planted our 500th tree and at the end of January we'll be adding around 100 more. It is a beautiful, peaceful place and will become a living, breathing legacy, a protected nature reserve to be enjoyed and treasured by people and wildlife.

Eden Valley welcomes visitors, please contact Amy or Martin if you would like to visit contact@edenvalleyburials.org.uk or 07802 630012.





Snow in Hever





Hever carol supper

tributes to Bob Pullin

Former resident of Hever, and retired Managing Director of Hever Castle & Gardens, Bob Pullin, sadly died in December, aged 82.



Many, many thousands of children will have been grateful to him for the water maze which invokes so much shrieking and glee from tiny wet people as they dodge the spurts or deliberately stamp on the wrong spot and get doused. John Scott remembers him as a good and honourable friend who went out of his way to make sure that Castle and village got on well together, using local tradesmen whenever he could. The following tribute was written by his children.

Bob and his wife, Sally moved to Hever in 1985. They lived in Medley Court within the grounds of the Castle for over 20 years and both became part of the village community until Bob's retirement in 2006, when they moved to Edenbridge.

Starting his working career as a PE and Geography teacher having graduated from Loughborough University, Bob quickly moved on from a hands-on role, at private schools Churchers College and Bedales in Hampshire and Polytechnic in Nottingham, to a leisure advisory role for Hampshire County Council.

In the mid 70s Bob was appointed Managing Director of Queen Elizabeth Country Park in Hampshire, creating a new leisure and education centre for the area. This Iron Age farm, visitor centre and country park gave Bob the experience he needed to then become Estate Manager of Broadlands, home to Lord Mountbatten in Romsey, Hampshire. He opened the large stately home to the public whilst Lord Mountbatten was alive and organised many occasions and exhibitions where the Royal family were in attendance.

Throughout Bob's career he continued his passion for sport. In 1965 Bob joined Petersfield Cricket Club where he was the 1st team's captain for a number of seasons.

He always opened the batting and regularly topped the Club batting averages when it was in Division 1 of the Hampshire League and in their Southern League Days. Bob also played rugby for Hampshire at a time when county rugby was very competitive. Whilst at Loughborough Bob concentrated on playing soccer and played for Reading. He was also a very accomplished hockey player, and this is where he first met Sally, on the hockey pitch playing mixed hockey.

Later in life however, golf became Bob's main passion, and he loved being part of the setting up of Hever Castle Golf Course once it was bought by Broadland Properties, as well as being a member there.

During his many years at Hever Castle, Bob strove to make it an outstanding visitor attraction that appealed to all ages. With a keen interest in history and art, he was instrumental in the acquisition of many pieces that has resulted in one of the best collections of Tudor Art in the country. He worked closely with the Guthrie Family, who bought the Castle from the Astors, to create varied and interesting attractions such as Anne Boleyn's Book of Hours exhibition, The Miniature Houses and Jane Asher Wedding Cakes Through the Ages Exhibition, as well as the water maze and a wooden maze within the children's adventure playground.

The Castle and gardens required a great deal of restoration and maintenance when it was first opened to the public. Areas of the gardens were thoughtfully re-developed and a new gift shop and Moat side Restaurant were built. Throughout his time at the Castle, Bob ensured that the integrity of the historic home and gardens was maintained and he helped to strengthen the relationship between the current owners and the Astors. Managing Director of the castle was a role that Bob was passionate about and felt honoured to have held.

Sadly, Bob had struggled with health issues for a few years, but he continued to visit the golf club with his close friends when he could. Bob passed away in hospital on 7th December 2022 and leaves behind his widow Sally, and children Gregg and Debbie. A Thanksgiving service was held at St Peters Church, Hever on 7th January 2023.

Christmas Fun and Festivities

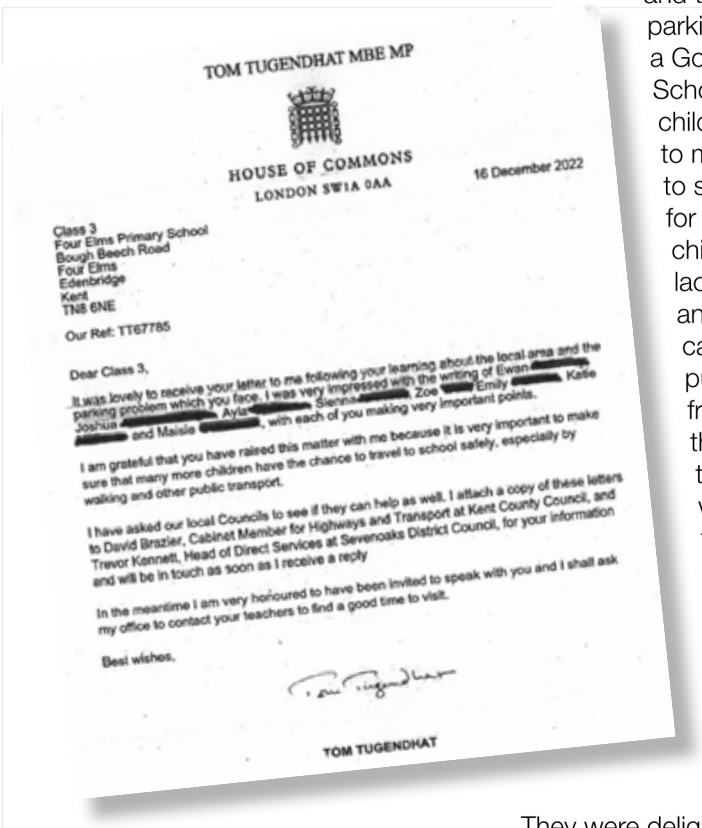
The children at Four Elms Primary School ended 2022 by enjoying a range of different celebrations.

Key stage 1 put on a wonderful Nativity called 'Everyone loves a baby!' and our choir performed as a Federation for the first time at our Christmas concert. All of the children displayed amazing levels of confidence and we were incredibly proud of them.

The whole school visited St Paul's Church for our Christingle Service which is always a highlight for the school community. The children also enjoyed other festivities including a trip to the Pantomime, Christmas dinner and parties galore.

Class 3's involvement with the MP

In a recent learning experience, years 3 and 4 were finding out about transport in the local area and the issues we have with parking by the school. As a Gold Rights Respecting School, we encourage children to use their voice to make a difference and to speak out to campaign for change. So, when the children learnt about the lack of transport links and about how many cars are used to get pupils and staff to and from the school, and the impact this has on the environment, they were keen to explore this further. Once the children had gathered their research, they decided to write letters to Tom Tugendhat to outline their concerns about local transport.



TOM TUGENDHAT MBE MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

16 December 2022

Class 3
Four Elms Primary School
Bough Beech Road
Four Elms
Edenbridge
Kent
TN8 6NE

Our Ref: TT67785

Dear Class 3,

It was lovely to receive your letter to me following your learning about the local area and the parking problem which you face. I was very impressed with the writing of Ewan [redacted], Katie [redacted], Zoe [redacted], Emily [redacted], Joshua [redacted], Ayla [redacted], Sienna [redacted], with each of you making very important points. [redacted] and Maisie [redacted].

I am grateful that you have raised this matter with me because it is very important to make sure that many more children have the chance to travel to school safely, especially by walking and other public transport.

I have asked our local Councils to see if they can help as well. I attach a copy of these letters to David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport at Kent County Council, and Trevor Kennett, Head of Direct Services at Sevenoaks District Council, for your information and will be in touch as soon as I receive a reply.

In the meantime I am very honoured to have been invited to speak with you and I shall ask my office to contact your teachers to find a good time to visit.

Best wishes.

TOM TUGENDHAT

They were delighted to get a response from the local MP.



Federation Farming

As part of our curriculum, our children take part in farm education lessons.

Each class study a particular animal at our Federation farm, based in Seal, and they go to visit that animal throughout the year.

Recently, Reception enjoyed their first visit to the farm and met all of the animals.

Jess Fermor
Four Elms Head of School



district council news

You can almost picture it now: huddled around tiny television screens, it was with baited breath and a nervous energy in the air that the Chancellor's Autumn Statement was received last year. Scarcely since the collapse of the South Sea Company some three centuries earlier did an event quite so grip the imagination of the country's finance chiefs. Indeed, earlier that same week, Kent County Council's Leader declared his authority required immediate help to avoid filing bankruptcy notices. And since then, Thurrock Council has joined the ranks of Northamptonshire, Croydon and Slough in serving the Government with a declaration of insolvency.

But against this backdrop of apparent chaos, there remains a beacon of cautious calm. Because as I write, I have been putting the finishing touches to Sevenoaks District Council's budget, and I can tell you it does not find itself in a similar predicament. Local authority budgets might seem a little esoteric but they're worth reflecting on since Council Tax these days is a not inconsiderable sum and we rightly wish to be confident our bins will be collected, taxis safe, restaurants clean, homeless housed, fly-tippers pursued, and so on and so forth.

Although the image with which I opened might have involved some artistic licence, it is in a spirit of neither triviality nor triumphalism that I pen these remarks. Instead it is one of reassurance. In marked contrast to many other authorities, Sevenoaks finds itself in an enviable position partly on account of good fortune – for instance, the seemingly limitless costs of social care, highways and education are handled at county level – but principally thanks to sound financial management over the years. I shan't dwell on this since we've covered it before, rather what it means for us as taxpayers is more important.

There will be a rise in Council Tax this Spring. However, it will be well below inflation, it will be tempered by maintaining our record of embracing novel ideas to deliver savings and secure income from other sources, and it will continue to see the average household benefit from the District Council's services for less than £5 a week. Moreover, it will result in yet another balanced budget in which services are protected not only this coming financial year but for the next decade. This stability and security remain achievements unmatched anywhere else in the country and are, I know from conversations throughout our villages, welcomed.

As stimulating as it is be to be involved with exciting initiatives, often it is the more humdrum, day-to-day, competent administration which is the most important work of councillors.

Matthew Dickins
District Councillor for Cowden & Hever
∀ Sevenoaks District Council,
Argyle Road, Sevenoaks,
Kent, TN13 1HG
: cllr.dickins@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Hever Parish Council

I cannot quite believe my first anniversary as Parish Clerk has just passed. It has been a busy year with very much still to learn. Reflecting back at events over the year, there were a number of highlights across the parish such as:

- The purchase of Four Elms Pond and the subsequent appointment of Pond contractor
- The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations at Hever castle
- The Family Fun Day in August
- The continued bulk refuse collection success

In addition, there were sixty-eight planning applications the Parish Council were consulted on, plus several projects across the community that were supported with grants.

Here are some useful contact details:
Roads, potholes and pavements – please report any issues via the Kent County Council reporting tool on their website or if the issue is urgent and could cause an accident please call KCC on 03000 418181 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday or on 03000 419191 at all other times

Public footpaths and rights of way issues/ blocked routes – please report any issues via the Kent County Council reporting tool on their website.

Planning – to view information on planning applications and planning enforcement, details can be found on the Sevenoaks District Council website.

Cost of living support -For advice on energy bills and energy efficiency, contact Simple Energy Advice: 0800 444202 or visit https://www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/

Find your way through to the cost of living support available with Kent Together on the KCC website or call Kent Together on 03000 41 92 92 or Sevenoaks District Council at https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/homepage/97/help_with_the_cost_of_living

Reporting crime – Please report any incidents via the Kent Police website: https://www.kent.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/ or call 999 in the event of an emergency.

Missed refuse collections – please report any missed refuse collections on the Sevenoaks DC website or by calling 01732 227000

- **Litter pick 11 March**

Details of how to join the litter pick in your village will be published in the March Link and on the website Hever.org
The next bulk refuse freighter will be on Saturday 18th February
Other useful contact details:
Kent County Council: Telephone 03000 414141
Sevenoaks District Council: Telephone 01732 227000

The next Hever Parish Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 7th March in Hever Village Hall (7.00 pm Planning and 7.30 pm full HPC Meeting) to which all are welcome.

Mrs Rachael Turner
Clerk and RFO
077849 12645 clerk@hever.org

business directory

to add your company email the Editors.
Just £25 per annum

Building & Design Services

Albourne roofing	slating, tiling, flat roofing, repairs	01732 700 353
Causeway Joinery	bespoke joinery for the public and trade	01342 850170
Clare Elizabeth	painting and decorating	0777 5328781
G Moss	joiner & builder	07778 440 644
Hever Painters, quality decorating service	heverpainters@gmail.com	07530322629
Jem Pickard	painting and decorating	07850 371558 or 01732 863062
M & M Walker	painting & decorating, plumbing, heating	07774 218 684
Richard A Maslen	Fine furniture and bespoke joinery	07930 341 415
W Smithers & Sons	listed building, conversions, extensions,	01342 850 559

Catering

Gorard Dean Catering -	all events undertaken call Melanie Dean	07710 005 635

Cleaning

Housecleans	cleaning, ironing	01959 532 223
Rockport Cleaning	dry carpet & upholstery cleaners	01732 387 046

Commercial Property

Hever Business Centre Office Suites - Karrison Property	01959 563800

Education

Markbeech Nursery	for children 2-5 years	01342 850403
Chiddingstone Nursery School	for children 2-5 years	01892 871315

Fitness

Hever Castle Golf Club	golf course	01732 701017
Chiddingstones' Tennis Club		07434841421
Falconhurst Cricket Club	cricket and training sessions	07434841421
Pilates by Lorna at Four Elms and Ide Hill village halls		07747 628993
Smart Nutrition and Fitness personal training for midlife women and beyond		0771 8588847
Soul Fit	personal training, classes, injury clinic and spa	01732240398

Funeral Services

Alex Jones	funeral directors & monumental masons	01732 860047

Financial advice

Adam Tyrrell	Wealth Management	07769642590

Funeral Services and Burial Grounds

Alex Jones funeral directors & monumental masons	01732 860047
Eden Valley Woodland Burial Ground on the Kent/Surrey border	07802 630012

Garage Services		
Stuart Rieman	luxury passenger car servicing & repairs	01883 715 037
Gardening and landscaping		
APF Trees,	tree surgery and garden maintenance	07786 884924
Hever Landscapes	for all your garden projects	01892 740133
French's Fencing	gates, automation, fencing supply & fitting	0779 5551436
R. Bennett	hedges, fencing, grass cutting	01732 862971
Thompson Tree Care Ltd,	tree surgery, tree felling, hedge cutting	07747345815
Health		
Paul Marro	Cognitive Hypnotherapy www.htherapy.co.uk	01732 808211
Step by Step	foot health practice	07786 038149
Home services		
Andy Sayers	electrical services maintenance and repairs	07836 256146
Daren Wood	Chimney sweep, pots and cowls fitted	01959 564263
Pegrum	fuels, boilers, plumbing, solar panels, water/oil tanks	01732 463256
Sure Kill	pest control services	01732 863206
IT		
My IT Wizard Ltd	Computer problem solving	07779 285839
MR Computing	computer repairs in your home, no call out charge	01732 590077
Local Produce		
Allman Butchers	meat & groceries	01732 863214 or 700288
Falconhurst Farm Shop and deli		01342 850172
Travel, Taxis and bike hire		
Country Hire and Go,	electric bike hire and local taxi service	07723054863
Relyon Cars	local taxi company	01732 863 800
Venue Hire and Weddings		
Falconhurst Weddings		01342 850526

Church in February

Please watch out for any late changes with details of services below and also at https://threespires.wordpress.com/2021/06/08/our-next-service/

Date & time	Service details	Readings	Sunday
5th Feb 10am	Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Isaiah 58:1-9a; 1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20	3rd before Lent
5th Feb 6pm	Songs of Praise Holy Trinity Markbeech	Psalm 1:1-3; Acts 10:9-20	3rd before Lent
12th Feb 8am	BCP Morning Prayer at St Peter's Hever	Genesis 1:1-2:3; Romans 8:18-25	2nd before Lent
12th Feb 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	Psalm 136:1-9, 23-26; Genesis 1:1-2:3; Romans 8:18-25; Matthew 6:25-34	2nd before Lent
12th Feb 3pm	Forest church Hever churchyard	Psalm 23 Guidance	2nd before Lent
19th Feb 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Exodus 24:12-18; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9	Sunday before Lent
19th Feb 4pm	Four Elms at Four Family service	Love	Sunday before Lent
22nd Feb 6pm	Imposition of ashes at St.Paul's Four Elms	Isaiah 58:1-12; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; John 8:1-11	Ash Wednesday
26th Feb 8am	Said communion St.Peter's Hever	2 Corinthians 6:1-10; Matthew 4:1-11	1st of Lent
26th Feb 10am	Family service Holy Trinity Markbeech	Temptation	1st of Lent

Lent starts with our Ash Wednesday service on 22nd February. For the five Mondays in Lent starting on 27th February we will be running a Lent course 'the Lectio Course' see https://www.24-7prayer.com/resource/lectio-course/ with our two Bible studies combining to meet in person and including a meal. Watch out for more details and if you are interested in joining us please contact Simon. Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone during this time or any other help.

Rector
Revd.Simon Braid
07802 809849 and
simonbraid@icloud.com

Wardens
Hever
Mandy Yarnold
01342 850028
Four Elms
Christina Hodson
01732 700247
Richard Bennett
01732 862971
Markbeech
Nicki Talbot 01342 850526
Marielou Linklater
01342 850579
Administrator
Ana Roxburgh
beneficeemail@gmail.com

our rector's thoughts

This month will mark the anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24th February 2022. This coincided with Ash Wednesday and at our service in St.Peter's we displayed the Ukraine flag. The following Sunday we held an evening service focusing on Ukraine, we prayed and generous gifts were made.

But looking into 2023, I read that Russia may be mobilising up to 500,000 troops and the West will be supplying heavy armour to enable the Ukrainians to fight a proxy war. We all feel the impact through the exacerbated economic crisis, which hits the poor hardest both in this country and across the world.

Over the past year people in Edenbridge and in our community have been very generous in taking in families fleeing the war in Ukraine as well as supporting the foodbank and giving in many other ways. But I suspect many of us look at the news with resignation as to what we are to do and feel powerless.

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Ash Wednesday, which this year is on 22nd February, marks the start of Lent. At the service people come forward to be marked with the sign of the cross in ash often made from burning of palm crosses from the previous year. These words are said: God our Father; you created us from the dust of the earth: grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our penitence & a symbol of our mortality; for it is by your grace alone that we receive eternal life in Jesus Christ our Saviour….Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

It is a reminder that we are not in control and that we are mortal. I remember a preacher once reminding me that war does not increase death; but it does bring untimely and often violent death and suffering. As Lent progresses towards Easter, the atmosphere of the season darkens and our bible readings begin to anticipate Christ's suffering and the Cross.

Someone said: Suffering is not a question that demands an answer; it is not a problem that demands a solution; it is a mystery which demands a presence. The Christian message is that in Christ, God himself suffered on the cross for us and so knows our pain. Consequently, he is able to comfort us in our sufferings.

I pray that we might know Christ's presence with us this Lent as we remember those we know who are suffering in whatever way and especially pray for an end to the war in Ukraine.

God bless

Simon

Markbeech

I feel like this Benefice is in a good place! It's beginning to feel like normal. We have got into a great groove with regular services of all kinds happening in each parish. There are regular communion services rotating around the parishes and three different styles of Family worship. Not to mention Healing services, Songs of Praise, Mothering Sundays, Christingles, Carol services etc. Amazing!

Markbeech is now firmly the SECOND Sunday of each Month, ok, except for the odd month when it's Easter, holidays, Remembrance or Christmas, but we can cope with that. And we nearly always have our beloved Family Service on the FOURTH Sunday of each Month. Our Family service includes a Children's choir which is coming on brilliantly. If you have a child aged between 5-15 who loves to sing, please do get in touch. There is always a craft activity and coffee for the grown ups so plenty of time for a chat as well.

From the register

Wedding

28 December Hever
Claire Andrews & Ross Bailey

Funerals

5 January Hever
Robert Allen Pullin aged 82

Last month we welcomed members of the Edenbridge Churches to an Evensong during a week of Prayer for Christian Unity. A lovely reason to gather an enhanced choir, introduce new people to our beautiful church and meet fellow worshippers from different local churches. Maybe from these small acorns of different faith groups coming together we can grow great oaks of Christian unity for future generations.

Nicki Talbot
Churchwarden

Four Elms

Epiphany Sunday (first Sunday in January) celebrates the Baptism of Christ. The Gospel reading from Matthew is a simple and beautiful and Piero della Francesca's "The Baptism of Christ" is for me one of the most beautiful depictions of this subject. It says everything. If you wish to see the original take a visit to the National Gallery in London.

In January a new style Family Service was launched. While aimed at families it is for all ages, those without families and for those who don't wish to come to a more traditional service. There are activities, all the service is on the screen and the service lasts no longer than half an hour. Refreshments are served which we hope will appeal to all ages. If you have a young family and would like them to participate and enjoy a less formal service please drop in. There is also a very nice churchyard which provides an outdoor space for the more

active of our visitors. Our Patronal Service, celebrating St. Paul, was held on 29th January at 10 am.
Our "Be our Guests - Enjoy a Cuppa" continues and the next date is Tuesday 14th March at 10.45am. Please just drop in.

At the time of writing this, my fellow Warden, Richard Bennett, has been unwell with seasonal flu. Unlike Richard he has been unable to either work or come to church. I am sure you all wish Richard well and as a Churchwarden I cannot tell you how very much I miss his invaluable work here in St. Paul's.

Ending on a very happy note – the two swans have returned to the Four Elms Village Pond.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever
The Church will open again to visitors on a daily basis from Wednesday February 8th between 9.30am and 3.30pm, if you need access outside these times please get in touch.

We would like to thank Jan Tolfree for all the hard work she has done to organise flowers in the church and liaise with our wedding couples' florists over the past few years. Susie Braid has kindly offered to take over the reins. We are delighted that a number of people have offered to help with flower arrangements throughout the year.

We still have some gaps in the diary so would welcome more volunteers to ensure we can have flowers all year round.

The next Parish lunch will be held on Thursday 9th February starting at 12.30. We normally have between 18 and 24 people and serve soup, fruit and a delicious home-made cake. Everyone in the Parish is very welcome but it would be helpful for catering, if you can, to let us know that you are coming or have any special dietary requirements.

Mandy Yarnold
Churchwarden



gardening

It only seems like yesterday we were opening our Christmas presents and raising our glasses to another New Year! January was particularly wet and time in our gardens was limited. As we head into February, it is a prime time to get out into the garden. Firstly, there are so many plants that start to wake up to give us a visual treat and those that give a lovely scent. Secondly, there are many jobs that need doing before the onset of Spring.

It is the best time to cut back and tidy herbaceous perennials & deciduous ornamental grasses before the new emerging growth appears. Using sharp secateurs or shears, most can be cut back hard almost to ground level. The exception to the rule is evergreen grasses. They do not respond well to cutting back hard and should be tidied or combed to remove old foliage. Also, Stipa tenuissima and Pennisetum should be treated this way. We get asked plenty of times what plants we could recommend for a low maintenance garden – herbaceous perennials & grasses fit into this category – one annual cut-back.

It is also a good time to prune Winter flowering shrubs such as Mahonia & Forsythia but only after they have flowered. Prune Wisteria, Buddleja and Summer flowering Clematis. Patio pots and baskets can also be planted with hardy Spring plants such as Pansies & Polyanthus. If you have a greenhouse, February is a good time to sow seeds for the coming season. This may include veg., Summer annuals and perennials.

There are so many plants that can be enjoyed in February! It is always worth considering planting winter interest near to the house, or at least in a position that can be seen from a window. This way they can be enjoyed without the need to venture out in inclement weather!

Here's our February favourites:

- Hellebores – there are so many to choose from nowadays! We recommend the 'Pretty Ellen' series – the blooms face slightly upwards
- Galanthus (Snowdrops) – Snowdrops have gained in popularity in recent years, some varieties selling for 100's of pounds! We recommend Galanthus elwesii with larger blooms & glaucus foliage
- Iris reticulata – Miniature bulbs that give a pop of colour in the gloomiest of months! Try varieties such as 'Harmony', 'Pixie' or 'Katharine Hodgkin'
- Cornus (Dogwood) – A tough, reliable deciduous shrub with colourful stems in Winter. 'Midwinter Fire' with orange stems, 'Baton Rouge' with bright red stems & flaviramea with yellow stems
- Edgeworthia 'Grandiflora' – Very interesting shrub with clove scented, nodding, bright yellow flowers.

Happy gardening!

Simon Sutcliffe
How Green Nursery

Benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Four Elms	**2020**	66	106	55	38	6	45	21	42	35	142	59	88
	2021	134	46	30	6	58	79	45	54	41	121	21	78
	2022	22	55	27	7	58	12	7	36	79	75	201	86
Hever	**2020**	77	125	48	38	13.5	45	25	41.5	41	160.5	55	97
	2021	127	42	41.5	5	65.5	84	61	73	41	139	14.5	87.5
	2022	16.5	44	22.5	2	62	19	15	39	85.5	58	195	80
Markbeech	**2020**	96.25	140	47.5	40	10	49.25	31.6	36	54.6	163.75	40.5	95.6
	2021	120	40	51	4	55.5	38.5	48	0	39	141	11.5	86
	2022	21	80	23	12	55.5	21	3	0	82	76	226	114

Hall Bookings

Four Elms:
Village Hall
– Kevin Haydon 07787 394 806
Parish Rooms
– John Southworth 01732 700670
Hever
– Mrs Ryan 01732 864168
Markbeech
– Mrs Paige 01342 850328

Councils

Kent County Councillor
Margot McArthur 03000 414817
Margot.McArthur@kent.gov.uk
Sevenoaks District:
Matthew Dickins 07910 328110
Hever Parish:
Rachael Turner
07784 912645
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The Link Team

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Benefice website threespires.wordpress.com **Community website** www.hever.org

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Copy for the **March** edition should reach us no later than **15 February**

Subscriptions cost £5 pa if delivered by a volunteer. For payment there are two options:
a) Send a cheque payable to ‘The Link’ with your address to
1 Triangle Cottage, Hever Road, Hever TN8 7NL or
b) Make a bank transfer or set up a standing order payment to ‘The Link’ at Lloyds a/c 01057697
sort 30-92-92 with postcode and surname as reference.
A copy of The Link can be viewed in The Link section of the community website www.hever.org

February diary

2 Feb **Weekly Outdoor Nature Play sessions for children** 18mths to 3yrs, £5 Bore Place 9.45 – 11.45 am

2 **Feb Weekly Outdoor Nature Play sessions for children 3-5yrs,** £5, Bore Place 12.30 – 2.30 pm

3 Feb **Wildlife Gardening Club,** Nature and Wellbeing, Bore Place 10am - 1pm

4 Feb **Penshurst Farmers Market** 9.30-12 noon

5 Feb **Astrophotography for beginners,** Bore Place £10 adults 5-7pm

9 Feb **Hever Parish lunch,** Hever Village Hall 12.30pm

10 Feb **Hever Film Club – Foul Play,** Hever Golf Club 7.30pm

17 Feb **Family Wildlife Day,** Bore Place, free admission 10.30 - 2.30pm

18 Feb **Bulk Refuse Freighter,** Four Elms Village Hall 9.15 – 10am

18 Feb **Bulk Refuse Freighter,** Hever bottle bank 10.15 – 11am

18 Feb **Bulk Refuse Freighter,** Markbeech Village Hall 11.15 – 12 noon

22 Feb **Drama Club, Games for Life,** Bore Place, free 4.30 – 6.30pm

25 Feb **ID Walk, Winter Trees,** Bore Place adult £8 child £6 10 – 12 noon

7 Mar H**ever Parish Council meeting**, Hever Village Hall 7.30pm

9 Mar **Hever Parish lunch,** Hever Village Hall 12.30pm

10 Mar **Hever Film Club – The Duke,** Hever Golf Club 7. 30pm

11 March - **Parish-wide litter pick (times vary**)