December 2023

# THE LINK







In this issue:

- Happy Christmas! Lots to do!
- Homeless hens get happy
- Playing the spoons at Christmas
- What would we do without Bradfords?
- Post that card the Hever way

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

# Welcome to the December Link

**We greet you with the perfect Christmas gift, one which parfumiers across the world have struggled to perfect, and which Kate Moss has named "Sacred Mist" at a mere £120 a bottle.** This perfume captures a magical substance called geosmin which can be found for free by just getting out there and singing in the rain well, in the damp, because it turns out that the lovely comforting smell which rises from dry earth after the rain has remarkable health benefits. Dr Michael Mosley on Radio 4's "Just One Thing" explained how it promotes a feeling of wellbeing, it really does! So presumably the perfume helps everyone smelling it feel good from the comfort of their sofas. As well as a little sacred.

As I write this, the trees are dripping after a heavy duty downpour although the parakeets have recovered their equilibrium and are skirmishing overhead. The earth is too saturated for geosmin and I slightly envy the cuckoos which, unlike their exotic parakeet friends, have made it across the Sahara to their winter quarters in the Congo. Sadly the British Trust for Ornithology's cuckoo tracking project has recorded the usual fatalities but a cuckoo named Cuach Cores, I'm not sure why, flew 2,088 miles from Spain to Southern Niger in just four days!



Taken in Hever church on Remembrance Sunday – the Astor window reflected in the perspex silhouette of a WW1 soldier

The local diary on the back of The Link is stuffed full with Christmas events and Hever Castle is open with its magical lights and funfair (will I be brave enough to go in the ferris wheel this year? Probably not). There are plenty of church services and lots of carols so we hope you have a good time!

With very best wishes for Christmas from the Link team Ivan Furness, Bridget Harris, Paul Houlton and me, Joanna Wade.

**Joanna Wade**
thelink@hever.org

THE LINK

# pets of the month

**When we moved to Hever six years ago it was always our plan to keep chickens.** The thought of them waddling around the garden and, as a bonus, popping out fresh breakfast every morning made us smile. After researching what happens to commercial laying hens when their production drops, we decided to go down the “rehome/ rescue” route. Our hens come from a non profit charity - Fresh Start for Hens, allowing them to live out a normal chicken retirement when otherwise they would be culled at only about a year old.


on arrival

Upon collection they generally don’t look their best with a shortage of feathers and many bald bits. They have been kept in barns with constant artificial lighting to promote laying, so to see them flourish within weeks and enjoy the outdoors is a lovely sight.

In the early days we have to pop them to bed in their coop to protect them from foxes. Within three days they’ve got the hang of putting themselves to bed and out of danger as the natural light falls. Within five days they will follow you everywhere on hearing the tin rattle with corn. Chickens are exceptionally bright.

We also acquired Merlyn, our cockerel, who does a first class job of keeping his flock happy and in line. Merlyn can generally be heard cock-a-doodle-doing with his neighbouring competition.

**Janet and Phil Lindsay**


happy and settled

# desert island whisks

**which kitchen implement would you save from the waves?**

A story of twin spoons.



I have now inherited both of the family's wonderful cake mixing spoons and I would certainly want one of them with me on that desert island. The first was my Welsh Grandma's and eventually I gained my mother's as well. Both spoons have stirred Christmas cakes, birthday cakes and puddings so much that they have both worn away doing all those miles round the mixing bowls. They are very well balanced and comfortable to use and the holes are ideal for keeping air in the mixture. The curve seems just right for scraping down all bowls and of course the left-over mixture that sticks in all the holes just has to be licked off as a cook's treat or passed over to a waiting child.

Early in my life my mother started making speciality Christmas cakes. Long before Jane Asher became famous for her creations, we had a church or a mushroom or if there wasn't time a spectacularly decorated square or round cake; and the special spoon was always on call to mix that big bowl of heavy fruit cake mixture. Another favourite recipe was the rich chocolate mixture both my grandmother and my mother always had for their birthday cakes.



Who manufactured these 9 inch long spoons? I had a look on the back of the handle. 'Homesneeda' – sounds American! ERA SILVER – an internet search brings up 'A dark grey marble quarried in northern Greece', I don't think so. Ah: Patent No. 18879. The British Library only hold patents up to 1899 so I was diverted to a Swedish website at which point I gave up.

**Jane Thornton Higgs**

# What we do at falconhurst farm shop

**Hello! Our names are Dan and Charlie, a husband and wife team running Falconhurst Farm Shop in Markbeech.**

Dan grew up at Falconhurst and often explored the derelict barns at the top of the drive with his brothers. Fast forward 30 years and these barns have been transformed into Falconhurst Farm Shop, after many years in the planning and research. We opened in December 2019, shortly before a certain worldwide event! We had fantastic local support throughout the pandemic and, as word quickly spread, customers from further afield. From our small beginnings the shop has now expanded both in floor space and in offerings. Everything from daily delivered fresh bread, fruit and vegetables plus fridges stocked with charcuterie, local cheeses, quiches and sausages rolls and frozen ready meals and ice cream. You can browse our shelves which are laden with both local artisan products and unique gourmet products from our Italian and Spanish suppliers. If you appreciate fine wines from small, newly discovered producers then pop in to explore wines hand selected by local expert Tim French. His wine tastings held in Falconhurst Barn are a highlight for local wine lovers!

Halstead Bakery are here every Friday with a fantastic, mouth watering array of hand made goodies, with porridge bread, olive fougasse and, our particular favourites, pumpkin cookies, to mention but a few. We were absolutely thrilled when the renowned Veasey and Sons fishmongers agreed to have a stall here on Fridays just over 3 years ago. Due to the obvious love of quality fresh fish in the area we now host them every Friday and Saturday.

With Christmas just round the corner we have lots of delicious things to tempt you, from authentic Italian panettone, Turkish delight, tins of Spanish hot chocolate, biscuit tins and a table of stocking fillers to please all ages plus much more! From 1st December you can come along and pick your perfect Christmas tree from a selection of 6ft and 7ft Nordmann Firs supplied by Hole Park, Cranbrook. This year we are able to offer a re-wrapping service using biodegradable netting.

Pop in and see what we have on offer and take the opportunity to try our legendary locally roasted coffee plus a little sweet something from our wide range of cakes made daily on site.

Christmas order forms are available from the shop or www.falconhurst.co.uk. We will be open until 3pm on Saturday 23rd December. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our customers who have supported us and we look forward to welcoming new faces in 2024.



## robins

**Robins really are a Christmas bird, that is because during the winter there are more robins around than in the summer.**

British robins are largely sedentary, and most do not move more than 5km. Whilst some UK robins, mostly females, will cross the Channel to spend their winters in warmer climes, in some cases as far south as southern Spain and Portugal, the resident birds are not left alone. Continental birds pass through Kent on their passage further south and our resident birds are joined by immigrants from Scandinavia, continental Europe and Russia, which come to the UK to avoid the severe winters there. These visiting birds are generally paler in colour and are less 'tame' than UK birds. This is likely to be because in their home countries they are woodland birds and have less contact with humans.

Much research has been carried out into the lives of robins and it has revealed that they are one of the few UK species that sing all year round. Both males and females sing to declare and defend their own individual territories outside the breeding season, and their songs are more or less identical.



Around Christmas-time, robins begin to explore other robins' territories in the hope of finding a mate. The majority will have paired up by mid-January and the females will stop their territorial singing. However, the males will continue to sing to declare the 'ownership' of what has now become a joint future breeding territory; one which they will fight to the death to defend - in some populations, up to 10% of adult mortality is accounted for by territorial disputes.



On occasions, robins will sing long into the night. They are often the earliest birds to start the dawn chorus and one of the last to stop in the evening.

Thanks to the RSPB for this information.

# Bradfords

**Bradfords is an Edenbridge institution and one of the tiny handful of "old" businesses left in the High Street.** I spoke to Sarah Bradford, third generation of the Bradford dynasty, about their Aladdin's cave of a shop

The shop first opened south of the Eden river in 1960. The proprietors were Edenbridge man Reg Bradford and his brother in law Bert Edwards and they sold electricals - televisions, radios and record players. Tim Higgs remembers going to buy from their stock of records and that Mr Edwards was a lovely man. Then, as now, if they didn't have an item they would "get it in for you" promptly. In 1968 they moved to larger premises at 98 High Street, taking over Cheal's, the hardware business, which is where they are today. Sadly disaster struck later that year when the river flooded to a depth of 5 feet, and also inundating Hever Castle. Bradfords saw their ruined stock floating away down the river towards Tonbridge it took months to recover and a big effort to re-stock for Christmas. In 1969 Honour's, their neighbouring seed merchant and horticultural business, closed and so Bradfords started to stock pet food and garden essentials - and the cornucopia of offerings we have today was complete!

Reg's son Paul joined the business in 1971, at first as a television service engineer, and in 1985 they re-located the homewares up the road to Bradfords Household where Aniseed takeaway is now. The manager was loyal Bradfordian Helen Kemp until 2004 when Mary Smith bought the branch which she ran for 10 years until she retired and the shop closed in 2014. When we first moved in we were delighted by Mary's shop



Helen Chilcott and Sarah Bradford outside the shop



and bought many items we *almost* needed!!

In 1987 Bradfords joined Euronics, an electrical buying group which enabled its members to buy stock at competitive rates. The electrical side moved to its own premises, the site now occupied by Lidl, in 2005. It moved back "home" in 2016/17 and that back part of the shop is now run by South Point Electricals, though the staff have not changed.

After a long career Reg retired in 1992 and Paul took over the running of the business, which, today, is all back under one roof after the pet food section had a (relatively) brief spell in a nearby annex.

The secret of their success? Their staff - friendly, willing to help, knowledgeable and loyal, not least Helen Chilcott who has worked there for 34 years since the age of 18! They try to keep competitive and are part of a buying group called Home Hardware which gives them buying power. Paul is very much still in charge but Sarah works in the shop now, combining that with bringing up a young family. She and her father were proud to stay open over lockdown to help and give back to townspeople who had so loyally supported them over the years. Essential pet food and other products were handed out from the door or delivered by long-serving delivery driver John Kemp.

Bradfords prides itself on stocking quality products which cannot be found elsewhere in Edenbridge and on saving customers from having to tangle with internet shopping, very valuable to older shoppers in particular. New home owners are welcome because a flurry of DIY needs will inevitably result. Pet owners and those battling seasonal problems such as wasps beat their way to the door as bees to a honey




Bradfords flooded in 1968



Cheals decorated for the coronation of George V

pot and wild bird seed flies off the shelf. Christmas is now upon us and the best-selling seasonal stock includes bird seed, firelighters, candles, socks, stocking filler toys and of course useful things like secateurs (you can never have too many!)..... And don't forget: Bradfords will deliver locally for a fee of £2 and if it isn't in stock "we will get it in for you".

Well done Bradfords - here's to another 60 years!

**Joanna Wade**



## Village screen film 2023/24



**All are very welcome as the film season continues in January at the usual venue, Hever Castle Golf Club.** The film will be:

Friday 19 January 2024 - The Lost King. Sally Hawkins and Steve Coogan in a drama about the discovery of the remains of Richard III under a car park in Leicester. An amateur historian defies the stodgy academic establishment in her efforts to find King Richard III's remains, which were lost for over 500 years.




Save the date for the remaining two films of the season:
Friday 16 February - A Man Called Otto, Tom Hanks meets a cat, what's not to like?!?

Friday 15 March - Legally Blonde, Reece Witherspoon in what is now a golden oldie from 2001, a hilarious romantic comedy with a bit of law thrown in.

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 £2 for the film or £15.50 to include the meal - scampi and chips (there is a vegetarian alternative). You can book with Joanna Wade on 07958 919631 or heverbrocas@gmail.com. Please book your meal by the Wednesday before the show if you would like to eat. Please bring cash and pay on the door.

# Christmas Events

**SUN 26TH NOV**
**10AM CHRISTINGLE FAMILY SERVICE HOLY TRINITY MB**

**SAT 9TH DEC**
**5.30PM COMMUNITY CAROLS ST PETER'S H**

**SUN 10TH DEC**
**3PM CHRISTMAS FOREST CHURCH IN ST PETER'S H**
**5.30PM CAROLS AND DRINKS AT THE KENTISH HORSE**

**TUE 12TH DEC 2023**
**10.45AM ENJOY A CUPPA & CAROLS SUNG BY THE FOUR ELMS PRIMARY SCHOOL CHOIR, FE**
**6.30PM CAROLS AND DRINKS AT THE FOUR ELMS INN**

**THU 14TH DEC**
**12.30PM CHRISTMAS PARISH LUNCH IN THE HEVER VH**

**FRI 15TH DEC 2023**
**6PM NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS AT ST PETER'S HEVER FOLLOWED BY SUPPER IN THE VILLAGE HALL**
**£10 FOR 2 COURSE MEAL. TO BOOK, PLEASE CALL 01342 850028 OR EMAIL HEVERPCC@GMAIL.COM**

**SUN 17TH DEC 2023**
**3PM CAROLS WITH THE EDENBRIDGE TOWN BAND AT ST PAUL'S FE FOLLOWED BY MINCE PIES AND MULLED WINE**
**6PM SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS AT HOLY TRINITY MB FOLLOWED BY DRINKS IN THE VH**

**SUN 24TH DEC 2023**
**4PM CRIB SERVICE AT ST PETER'S H**
**11.30PM MIDNIGHT COMMUNION AT ST PETER'S H**

**MON 25TH DEC 2023**
**9:15AM CHRISTMAS DAY FAMILY COMMUNION MB**
**11AM CHRISTMAS DAY FAMILY COMMUNION AT FE**

**Hever Parish Christmas Post**

Back again this year by popular demand!

The deliverers will be walking, riding, cycling or dropping off en route to elsewhere, to deliver your cards to their destinations around the Parish in good time. Simply pop your cards into the Blue Postbox at Brocas opposite Brocas Road and the post elves along with their dogs, horses and cycles, will cheerily do the rest.

The Post Box will open on Friday 1st of December and the last post leaves at 4pm on Friday 23rd December.

Merry Christmas everyone

**Jane Rosam**



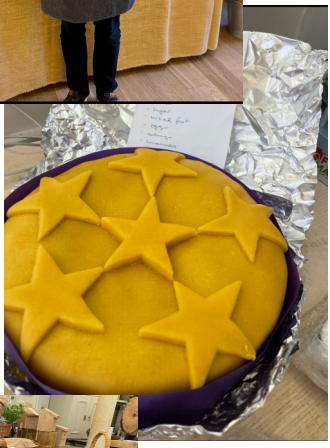
# Hever christmas fair



**The sun was shining, at last!** What a beautiful day for the 26th Hever Castle Christmas Fair. We welcomed 27 talented local vendors to the Guthrie Pavilion and what talent there was. Over 500 shoppers were delighted with everything on offer - art work, candles, jewellery, cheese and much much more. A beautiful setting for a festive day, a truly delightful way to kick off this year's Christmas celebrations. A special moment to note was the excellent Hever Primary School Choir opening the event.




Local cake makers came in their plenty, over 30 cakes were donated for this year's cake stall as well as jams and chutneys donated (and made!) by a local resident. A huge amount of effort was put in by Hever residents and Hever Primary parents. Absolutely delighted to say the event made in excess of £5000 which will be shared between the church and the school. A triumph. Roll on next year.



With thanks to Hever Castle, St Peter's church, Hever PTA and all who supported this event. **Megan Park**





# news from hever primary

**It is hard to believe we are midway through November and teachers are starting to plan for all the excitement of Christmas, including our KS1 Nativity and KS2 Carol Service.** Last week, our Year 6 pupils represented the school beautifully, opening the Hever Castle Christmas Fair with carols to get everyone in the festive spirit. They also led us in a short but reflective Remembrance Service in St. Peter's Church where I was impressed by the maturity and respect shown by the whole school, including our younger children.



We have also had all the excitement of the Edenbridge Bonfire Procession and many of you will have seen the impressive work of our amazing PTA, to create our float marking 160 years of the London Underground. The float was incredible and the costumes were so imaginative; the rain did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the children and winning the Whitmore Challenge Cup for the overall best tableau was well and truly deserved!

I write this as we come to the end of Anti-Bullying Week. Like most theme weeks, this is not a message that can be taught in a few days each year and is a key thread that runs throughout our curriculum and through all the interactions we have with one another in our school community.

At the start of the week, we participated in Odd Socks Day which is designed to be a fun way to encourage people to express themselves and celebrate their individuality and links well to our school value of BELONGING - treating everyone with respect and courtesy. Our Year 6 Anti-Bullying Ambassadors led our worship on Monday, focusing on the 2023 theme, 'Make a noise about bullying'. We thought about our school value of COURAGE and having the courage to speak out and our value of TRUST, which is built through being thoughtful and honest.

We ended the week by going spotty to support Children in Need, which links to our value of COMPASSION through acts of kindness and forgiveness. The week's events have provided a fun and memorable way to reinforce important messages, all of which are underpinned by our School Values.

**Helene Bligh**
Headteacher






OPEN 24/7

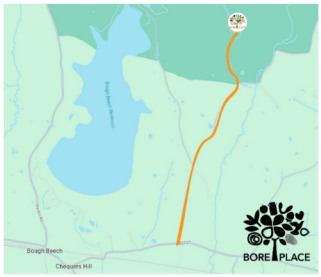
Fresh farm produce available

Visit our state-of-the-art vending machine stocked with Bore Place produce including:

- Organic vegetables
- Blackwoods' cheese
- Yoghurt, kefir and other dairy products
- Honey from our hives
- Ice cream

Learn about our farm and see the cows during milking times
**5:30-7:30am**
**2:45-4:30pm**

Find us at:
Bore Place, Bore Place Road, Chiddingstone, TN8 7AR
**Just over a mile off the B2027**




Explore our site by heading out on a farm trail:

BORE PLACE FAMILY TRAIL **0.6km** BORE PLACE FARM TRAIL **1.5km**





**Anyone for table tennis?**

Following the closure of the table tennis club, we have a full sized indoor table tennis table looking for a new home. It folds in half for storage and has wheels to move it around. A donation to the village hall would be appreciated. Collection from Hever Village Hall. For more information, please telephone Mandy Yarnold, Chair, on 01342 850028

# Letter to the editors



*Hello,*

*my name is Charlie.*

*I have just come to live in the area. Please look out for me if you are taking a woodland walk and say 'hello' as it is quite lonely being all on my own.*

*Happy Christmas*



Parakeet puzzle. How many can you spot?

# news from SDC

**As Christmas fast approaches I appreciate it's a busy time for all of us,** however I would strongly urge you to take a little time over the festive season to comment on the Sevenoaks 2040 Local Plan.

Indicated on the map there are two sites I believe are of concern bordering our ward, The Sevenacre Farm site was subject to an application that I considered previously at Development Control committee. After careful consideration, I deemed it to be inappropriate development within the greenbelt which opposed the view of our officers. Our decision to reject this application was later appealed and I'm pleased to say after I accompanied the Secretary of State's inspectorate on a site visit, my initial view was upheld. However the same site is now indicated as appropriate in the Local plan? It's my belief that as the main coach and tourist approach to Hever Castle we should all make our views clear in the coming consultation.

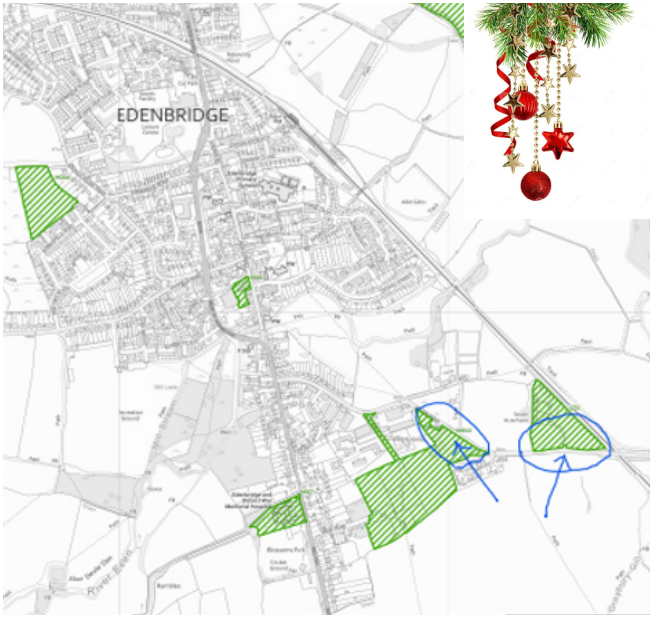
Consultation will run from 27th November 2023 - 9th January 2024. It's only with your views clearly stated that I have the ammunition to continue robustly protecting our ward from the negative effects of inappropriate development, so please, please! make your comments heard.

On a lighter note I would like to thank all those who have contacted me in support of a community bus service relinking us to Sevenoaks. I am determined to succeed with this project so watch this space.

Armistice was marked with a bang at the castle which I was honoured to attended on Saturday as well as Sunday's act of remembrance in Hever churchyard. Big well done to Joanna for delivering such an informative monologue.

Should I not see any of you before, I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

**Cllr James Barnett**
**Hever & Cowden Ward 07831 112 901**



# Hever Parish Council

Your Hever Parish Council
PROUDLY REPRESENTING HEVER, MARKBEECH & FOUR ELMS
Any questions? Please contact clerk@hever.org

With the festive season upon us, please see below for some free ways to dispose of your real Christmas tree:

**Option 1 – Sevenoaks District Council's Garden Waste collection service (for permit holders only)**
If you hold a Garden Waste collection permit, simply place the tree in or next to your green bin and it will be picked up on your usual collection days throughout January. Trees with a trunk of up to 90mm (3.5") in diameter can be collected.

**Option 2 – Take your tree to a local collection point**
Take your tree to one of the District Council's collection points, at the dates and times listed below. SDC can take trees with a trunk of up to 90mm (3.5") in diameter.
**Edenbridge :** Leisure Centre Car Park. Wellingtonia Way, TN8 5RE Thurs 11 & 18 Jan 9 – 9.45am
**Four Elms :** Layby by St Paul's Church, TN8 6NE Thurs 11 & 18 Jan 10 – 10.45am
**Hever :** Recycling site, Hever Castle Car Park, Hever Road, TN8 7NH Fri 12 & 19 Jan 7.30 - 8.15am



**Option 3 – Take your tree to a Household Waste Recycling Site**
Take your tree to one of Kent County Council's Household Waste Recycling Sites (informally known as the tip or the dump). They will take larger trees that are too big for Sevenoaks District Council to collect. Visit **www.kent.gov.uk/recycling** or call **03000 41 73 73** to book a slot.

The new Beat Officer for our Parish, PC Harry Kemp, recently attended the HPC meeting. PC Kemp commented that, reassuringly, reported crime in the Parish was low. Ideas for crime prevention included:

- Use of good quality CCTV
- Installation of trackers onto vehicles, including farm machinery
- Use of Faraday boxes to prevent car key cloning

Please do report any crimes that occur, including rural thefts and fly tipping. Residents can also sign up to the Kent Police My Community Voice website which provides updates and alerts from local officers. To sign up please visit https://mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk/

With the season of giving, please remember the Bridges Centre who are looking for volunteers, so if you can spare a few hours a month please visit https://www.bridgescentre.org/ for more information. The Bridges Centre is a Community Café and offers a warm and welcoming environment for all. In addition to the café, they host a range of activities and clubs for all ages.
Our next Hever Parish Council Meeting is on Thursday 11th January at 7.30 pm in Markbeech Village Hall to which everyone is welcome to attend.

**Mrs Rachael Turner**

# business directory

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

## Building & Design Services

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Albourne roofing | slating, tiling, flat roofing, repairs | 01892 836777 |
| 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 |
| Jem Pickard | painting and decorating 07850 371558 or | 01732 863062 |
| M & M Walker | painting & decorating, plumbing, heating | 07774 218 684 |
| Nadia Mulder art for interiors, murals, paintings etc | | 07960 610018 |
| Richard A Maslen | Fine furniture and bespoke joinery | 07930 341415 |
| 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 |

## Dog Training

| | |
|---|---|
| Claire Cook, Positive Reinforcement Dog Trainer in Edenbridge | 07818 070672 |

## Education

| | |
|---|---|
| Chiddingstone Nursery School for children 2-5 years | 01892 871315 |
| Singing lessons and workshops in Hever contact Jane | 07970 594601 |

## Fitness

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Hever Castle Golf Club | golf course | 01732 700771 |
| Gyrotonics at the barn with Stephanie Bates | | 07803 876816 |
| Chiddingstones' Tennis Club | | 07434 841421 |
| Falconhurst Cricket Club | cricket and training sessions | 07771 892762 |
| 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 |
| Tennis by Nature | kids tennis coaching by Gary Markham | 07802 842554 |

## 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 715037 |

## 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

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BDHL | private & group health insurance and corporate wellbeing | 01892 891900 |
| 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 |
| Markbeech Village Hall | 01342 850328 |


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# Church in December

We have our normal full programme of Christmas services this year and we are sending this round in a Christmas card. Please see https://threespires.wordpress.com/2021/06/08/our-next-service/

| Date & time | Service details | Readings/Theme | Sunday |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3rd Dec 10am | Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms | Isaiah 64:1-9; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 3:24-37 | Advent Sunday |
| 3rd Dec 6pm | Contemporary service at St.Peter's Hever | Advent theme | Advent Sunday |
| 9th Dec 5.30pm | Hever Family Christmas carols in St.Peter's | | |
| 10th Dec 10am | Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech | Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8 | 2nd in Advent |
| 10th Dec 3pm | Forest Church at St.Peter's Hever | Christmas by the outdoor crib | 2nd in Advent |
| 10th Dec 5.30pm | Carols at the Kentish Horse | | 2nd in Advent |
| 12th Dec 6.30pm | Carols in the Four Elms Inn | | |
| 15th Dec 6pm | Carol service at St.Peter's Hever | Nine lessons & carols | |
| 17th Dec 8am | Said Communion St.Peter's Hever | Romans 15:4-13; Luke 21:25-33 | 3rd in Advent |
| 17th Dec 3pm | Carols at St Paul's Four Elms | | 3rd in Advent |
| 17th Dec 6pm | Carol service at Holy Trinity Markbeech | Service of lessons & carols | 3rd in Advent |
| 24th Dec 4pm | Crib Service at St.Peter's Hever | | Christmas Eve |
| 24th Dec 11.30pm | Midnight communion at St.Peter's Hever | Isaiah 62:6-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:1-20 | Christmas Eve |
| 25th Dec 9.15am | Christmas Family Eucharist at Holy Trinity Markbeech | Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:1-20 | Christmas Day |
| 25th Dec 11am | Christmas Family Communion at St.Paul's Four Elms | Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:1-20 | Christmas Day |
| 31st Dec 8am | Said Communion St.Paul's Four Elms | Galatians 4:1-7; Matthew 1:18-21 | 1st of Christmas |

Our weekly Bible studies continue on Mondays at 6.00pm on Zoom and in person at 8.00pm and our Zoom Evening prayer is on Thursdays at 6.00pm. For details of any of these please contact Simon.

Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone.

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## our rector's thoughts

As I write this, the conflict in Gaza and Israel seems to go from bad to worse. Thinking towards Christmas, the message of the angels *'Peace on earth and goodwill toward men'* rings hollow.

But it was ever thus. On 25th December 1914, during the First World War, while the Germans and the Allies faced each other across No Man's Land, someone began singing the carol 'Silent Night' and the soldiers on both sides joined in the song. Men who had spent weeks trying to kill each other climbed out of the trenches, exchanged souvenirs and cigarettes - they even played a game of football! Then on 26th December, they went back to their trenches once again to continue fighting.

Could that happen in Palestine? Peace in our world? Peace in our nation? Peace in our homes? We all want peace, so what's the problem?

In the New Testament, the apostle James writes: *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight.…*(James 4:1-2) As someone once said,*"the heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart".*

In 2012, Susie and I went to Israel and visited Bethlehem, a Palestinian administered town surrounded by a tall security barrier. The Church of the Nativity was over-crowded and manned by a bad-tempered priest. The centre of the town, known as 'Manger square', was full of tacky gift shops. I couldn't wait to get out. But then I realised that it was here, in all the mess of humanity, that at Christmas, God chose to enter our world with all its problems.

The true meaning of Christmas is this: the baby at Bethlehem was the one who came to sort it all out. In Jesus, God came right down into the mess of this world and grew up to suffer and die on our behalf. The way back to God is open because of Jesus. As Archbishop Justin Welby said launching an earlier year's Church of England Christmas campaign "*The constant refrain of Christmas, in carols and readings, is that God is with us. In whatever situations you find yourself this Christmas, God is with you - you need only turn to him and ask to know his presence*".

I hope this Christmas, as we continue to pray for peace in Palestine and across the world, you will be able to join with us and encounter Jesus, who is called Emmanuel, which means God with us.

God bless you all

**Simon**

# news from the pews

**Hever**

A huge thank you to Megan Park, Ana Roxburgh and their team for organising the Hever Christmas Fair which raised just over £5,000 for the church and school. A magnificent result!

Watch out for the Hever Benefice Christmas cards which will feature all the services across the Benefice which will be available to pick up in the churches and, where possible, delivered. We would love to deliver more straight to the door so if you can deliver some to your neighbours then please get in touch.

The nine lessons and carols on Friday 15th December will be followed by a carol supper. There will be two courses followed by cheese and biscuits, satsumas and hot drinks. Tickets are £12 per head, please call me on 01342 850028 to book your tickets.

The church will be open for services and special events but will not be open on a daily basis from 2nd January 2024 until 10th February. Should you wish to visit the church during the week then please get in touch with me and we will do our best to accommodate you.

The next Parish Lunch will be on Thursday 14th December, 12.30 for 1pm lunch, this month's menu will have a special Christmas slant to it. We normally have around 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.



Wishing all of you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year, we look forward to seeing you at our services.

**Mandy Yarnold**

Churchwarden

**Four Elms**

The sombre occasion of the Act of Remembrance took place, as is usual, at the War Memorial in Four Elms. Of course, this year we are all acutely aware of the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East while not forgetting other wars throughout the world. Prayers for peace were uppermost as well as remembering and saluting those who fell in the two World Wars in the 20th century.

Advent begins on 3rd December, a period of contemplation before the Nativity of Christ. The church altar frontals are purple indicating this as a quiet period. However, it is difficult in today's world to understand this. "Quiet and contemplative" doesn't match the frantic time of shopping, planning and meeting family and friends during December. Therefore, may I suggest that you come to some of the pre Christmas events we have. Tuesday 12th December our "Enjoy a Cuppa" is a Christmas celebration, with the Four Elms Primary school choir singing Christmas Carols. In the evening there are carols in the Four Elms Inn, (6.30pm) and on Sunday 17th December the usual Carol Service in St. Paul's followed by mulled wine, hot chocolate and mince pies. It goes without

saying that everyone is very welcome to all these events.

If you attended the Remembrance Service you will have heard Nick Hely-Hutchinson read a lesson and lay a wreath on behalf of the Lord Lieutenant of Kent. Nick's passion in life is classical music – indeed he is an authority. If you would like to learn more on the subject listen to Nick's podcasts "Perfect Pitch". You won't be disappointed. (In your quiet and contemplative time!) A happy and blessed Christmas to you all.

**Christina Hodson**
Churchwarden

**Markbeech**

It has always been said that time gathers speed as one ages and as I look back on this year - just where has it gone? It's now the build up for Christmas, yet it seems like yesterday Christmas cards were being written, presents wrapped and now it's time to do it all over again!



We have recently had a wonderful Choral Evensong at Holy Trinity, where Withyham choir joined the Markbeech choir, ably conducted by Charles Talbot. During the service there was a commemoration of the recently departed and candles were lit in memory of loved ones. It was a very moving service. On 11th November we held a service outside the church at 11am to remember our fallen soldiers. In our church we now have a wonderful painting by Peter Clarke. It is a silhouette of a larger than life soldier cut in wood painted black against a landscape of poppies. We are so grateful to him.



We can now look forward to Carols at the Kentish Horse on Sunday, 10th December at 5.30pm and to our Service of Lessons and Carols at Holy Trinity on Sunday, 17th December at 6pm.

Such an anxious time we are living through. It is impossible to imagine - as we live in relative security here, just how terrible life must be for those caught up in the wars in the Middle East, Ukraine and many other unsettled parts of the world. We can only pray for them all.

Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas.

**Lynne Rowan**
Churchwarden

# gardening

**Geoff Davis and David Dutton were caught by the Hort 30 years ago, not long after they moved in as neighbours to Parsons Croft in Hever, and they have been on the committee ever since!** The Society has benefited from their many skills over the years; both compete and Geoff has even beaten Norman Greenaway a couple of times in a dahlia class! Now the two have got together to make some suggestions for gardening in the Christmas season:



"Winter is upon us, and whilst not a lot is growing, there are still plenty of jobs to do. This year the leaves have hung on so there hasn't been too much raking, but once they fall it is time to clear and compost them or take them to the dump. Another idea is to tie them up in black plastic sacks and cover delicate plants with the bags as a sort of mobile mulch. Alternatively, delicate plants should be dug up, dried out and kept frost free, insulated in a cardboard box. You can over-winter geraniums if you pot them up and put them in a warm, light area - they may even flower again! During the early winter, clear the vegetable patch, turn over the soil, removing weeds and vegetable roots and sprinkle Jeyes fluid on the soil to kill mildew, mould et cetera.

Around the rest of the garden cut back perennials ready for sprouting again in the spring and since roses will have given their best throughout the summer, pruning will encourage strong new growth - prune a third in the winter, and then a third again in the spring. Once the garden has been put to bed, this is a good opportunity to plant spring flowering bulbs, such as snowdrops, daffodils, tulips and hyacinth but don't delay! During the winter, the lawn will stop growing, but if there is a prolonged mild spell, you might want to give it a high cut. Do not cut low as any frost will cause damage. Look after your grass by removing dead leaves. Then sit back and wait for the warmer spring days - happy gardening!"

Geoff adds that now is the time to install an automatic watering system which really helps with pots and hanging baskets in the summer. The photograph is of Geoff and the elegant Jay in front of his apple tree which produces three different types of apples every year, two eaters, and one cooker!



## Benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters



| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FOUR ELMS** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2021 | 134 | 46 | 30 | 6 | 56 | 79 | 45.0 | 54 | 41 | 121 | 21 | 78 |
| 2022 | 22 | 55 | 27 | 7 | 58 | 12 | 7.0 | 36 | 79 | 75 | 201 | 86 |
| 2023 | 60 | 9 | 105 | 83 | 27 | 27 | 41.0 | 23 | 39 | 152 | | |
| **HEVER** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2021 | 127 | 42 | 41.5 | 5 | 65.5 | 84 | 61.0 | 73 | 41 | 139 | 14.5 | 87.5 |
| 2022 | 16.5 | 44 | 22.5 | 2 | 62 | 19 | 15.0 | 39 | 85.5 | 58 | 195 | 80 |
| 2023 | 80 | 2 | 111 | 93.5 | 37 | 33.5 | 58.5 | 23.5 | 59 | 152 | | |
| **MARKBEECH** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2021 | 120 | 40 | 51 | 4 | 55.5 | 38.5 | 48.0 | 0 | 39 | 141 | 11.5 | 86 |
| 2022 | 21 | 80 | 23 | 12 | 55.5 | 21 | 3.0 | 0 | 82 | 76 | 226 | 114 |
| 2023 | 90 | 4 | 123 | 105 | 31 | 34 | 56.0 | 32 | 48 | 161 | | |

## 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

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Copy for the **January** edition should reach us no later than **12 December**
Subscriptions cost £5 pa if delivered by a volunteer and £18 if sent by post.
For payment there are 2 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

# December diary

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 26 Nov | **Gin Foraging Experience**, Wild Botanical Infusions, tickets £75, Bore Place | 10am – 3pm |
| 9 Dec | **Carols in the Cowshed**, Bore Place, tickets adults £5, children £2.50, | 3 – 5pm |
| 9 Dec | **Mulled wine and mince pie**s at the Henry before the Carols | 4.30pm |
| 9 Dec | **Family Christmas Carols** at St Peter's Hever | 5.30pm |
| 10 Dec | **Carols and Drinks at the Kentish Horse**, Markbeech | 5.30pm |
| 11 – 15 Dec | **How Green Nursery Christmas pop up shop**, How Green Lane | 9 – 5pm |
| 12 Dec | **Enjoy a Cuppa with Four Elms School choir** singing carols, St Paul's Four Elms | from 10.45am |
| 12 Dec | **Carols and Drinks at the Four Elms Inn** | 6.30pm |
| 14 Dec | **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall, | 12.30pm |
| 15 Dec | **Hever Carol supper** after the nine lessons service, tickets £12 pre booked | |
| 18 – 21 Dec | **How Green Nursery Christmas pop up shop**, How Green Lane | 9 – 5pm |
| 11 Jan | **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall, | 12.30pm |
| 11 Jan | **Hever Parish Council meeting**, Markbeech Village Hall | 7.30pm |
| 19 Jan | **How to use your telescope,** Bore Place tickets £9 adult, £6 child | 6.30 – 8.30 pm |
| 19 Jan | **Film – The Lost King**, Hever Castle Golf Club, | 7.30pm |
| 8 Feb | **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall, | 12.30pm |
| 16 Feb | **Film - A Man Called Otto**, Hever Castle Golf Club, | 7.30pm |
| 25 Feb | **Astrophotography for Beginners**, Bore Place, tickets £10 adults, | 5 - 7pm |
| 15 Mar | **Film - Legally Blonde**, Hever Castle Golf Club, | 7.30pm |

