October 2025

THE LINK







In this issue:

- fabulous fungi
- growing pains
- my perfect pooch
- an unlikely source of fuel

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the October Link

Deleting emails saves water! Odd but true, this is because of the enormous volume needed to cool the ever-growing number of data centres (IT nerve centres enabling our domestic systems to operate) in the UK. The fewer the unwanted emails (and photos etc) we store, the less hard the data centre has to work....

Water has of course been very short this year and as the season draws to a close, and harvest festivals abound, it has been a difficult year for farmers. Due to the drought, maize had a bad start and when the grass didn't grow back after the first cut in May/ June farmers were unable to cut again for silage. Straw is also short - so it will all be expensive. We are lucky here in NW Kent to have avoided a hosepipe ban because much of our water comes from well-stocked aquifers in the chalk downs, but our farmers are not geared up to irrigate in the way they are in East Anglia, spreading great pterodactyl-like booms of spray across their fields.

As for the birds - Cleeve the migrating cuckoo, John Cleeve of Markbeech's namesake, has been puzzling his minders at the British Trust for Ornithology by dallying in Spain while the rest of his cohort, all carrying tiny electronic tags (no doubt generating heat in a data centre) were heading into Africa. He then put on a spurt, covered 1,740 miles in a few days, and is now in Nigeria.

And I blush to report that there was a big mistake in last month's editorial about sparrows. Thanks to Fiona Paynter for gently pointing out that the tree sparrow and the house sparrow may be very similar in look but they are different species - and I failed to talk about the tree variety at all. Whilst the house sparrow is urban, the tree is rather shy and prefers farmland, the former has a pale cap and the latter a dark one with a black spot on its white cheek - I'm now busy looking at my birdfeeders to see which type of sparrow we get here in Hever.

Joanna Wade
thelink@hever.org


House sparrow


Tree sparrow



You're Invited! Help Shape Our New Village Hall!

The Hever Village Hall Management Committee would love for you to join us for an important open meeting. This is your chance to hear about exciting plans for our new village hall and share your ideas.

The meeting will be at the Hever Village Hall on Saturday, 4th October, at 3:00pm.

Our aim is to create a more functional and relevant community hub that truly serves everyone. We'll be sharing the various options for your new village hall building and, most importantly, we want to hear your thoughts on the facilities and improvements you'd like to see.

Your feedback is crucial in helping us enhance this vital community space, ensuring it can better meet local needs and contribute to the well-being of our wonderful village.

We really hope to see you there!

Hever bell ringers need YOU!

We are a friendly tower which welcomes beginners and more experienced ringers to our Thursday evening practices. We practice for an hour from 8pm and then usually go across the road for a drink. We ring our six bells for weddings and festivals and some Sunday morning church services - and so keep an old village tradition alive!



If you are interested in joining us please contact me, Jane Rosam on 07766 763124.

pet of the month



This is my dog Max, he is 8 months old and previously featured in an earlier edition of The Link with his mum Tikka and seven brothers and sisters. Max is a really affectionate dog and one of his favourite activities is licking people's faces. He also loves winding up our other dog Poppy, chasing balls and barking at the door even when nobody is there!

We recently took Max on our family holiday to Cornwall and he had the best time charging around Holywell beach and chasing his dog friends Hector and Harry. Max also loves swimming, and on holiday he looked like a seal in the sea with his head bobbing on top of the waves when we played fetch. He also loves the local streams and ponds although my mum and dad don't like how he smells when he gets out of them.

I fell in love with Max as soon as I saw him when he was just weeks old and even though we weren't supposed to be getting another dog, when I found out Max didn't have a home to go to, mum and dad said he could join our family.

Max keeps getting bigger and bigger – I think he may be the size of a horse by the time he stops growing! We recently started taking part in a local Parkrun and I hope Max can soon come with us. I think he will probably help me go even faster and if he continues growing could probably give me a ride all the way round the course! I love Max and I think he loves me too and I hope it carries on like that forever.

Tabitha, aged 7

what I do

“Eins, zwei, drei… I don’t know what comes next!” I dreaded German and French lessons at school. The words sounded so alien, and I was embarrassed by my accent when I tried to pronounce them. Little did I know then that this initial apprehension would transform into an enduring love of learning, and now teaching, languages. As a Modern Foreign Languages teacher, I often meet parents who worry that that their own negative experiences with language learning at school may hinder their child’s progress. I always reassure them that linguistic ability is not genetic, and, with the right teaching and resources, we can all learn a language. In my current work as a private tutor, I focus on building my students’ confidence and self-belief alongside their linguistic knowledge. The reward is witnessing them experience “lightbulb moments” as all the components fall into place.

Language teachers draw from a range of theories and practices, from total immersion in the target language to more grammar-centred learning. Passions recently ran high in a teachers’ social media group, with one teacher brandishing the hashtag #CallingOutTheBS as she challenged the dominance of Gianfranco Conti’s method of Extensive Processing Instruction. I have been fortunate to observe a range of teachers in action. During one GCSE French lesson, the teacher instructed his students to write about their summer holidays, not in their exercise books, but on their desks! The students created some good paragraphs. They also created a lot of mess. But what really works? A wise friend of mine claims that grammar is essentially a skeleton, and vocabulary is the flesh that you add to it. Without a solid understanding of tense formation, verb conjugation and word order, it is impossible to accurately form your own sentences, even if you have memorised every word in your vocabulary book. That said, grammar-centred lessons must include a good deal of speaking and listening practice to ensure that students are able to communicate with confidence.

By persevering with my own language studies, I changed my life for the better. Two degrees, a year abroad and a teaching certificate later, I am now doing what I love for a living. I tutor German up to A-Level, French up to GCSE and English up to Key Stage 3. I also offer tuition to adult learners at various levels. Whether you are working towards an official qualification, want to brush up on the French you learnt at school or would like to learn German from scratch, my advice is to take the leap – you won’t regret it!

Jade Johnson
07761 287517 www.jadejohnson.uk



happy birthday eden valley museum

Have you discovered the Eden Valley Museum in Edenbridge High Street? We do hope you have and we hope those who haven't made it to our door will come and find us and discover all the fascinating objects, photographs and stories we have about the people and places of this area.



Bayleaf farmhouse lamp

The museum opened in June 2000 so we are celebrating our 25th Anniversary this year and have mounted 2 displays which reflect this period. **Around the Eden Valley in 25 Objects** shows items that have not been on display before but also includes some of our favourites. You will see 25 random objects all with a local story to tell. **Change in the Eden Valley** features a series of panels reflecting elements of local change and development and we hope it will encourage the ongoing collection of 'memories' for many years to come. Technology has changed our lives a great deal since the museum opened so we can anticipate that less 'actual' space will be taken up with these memories but the real thing in front of you or in your hands will always retain that certain magic…… someone made it or used it many years ago.

We have a substantial photographic collection and many of these photos can be seen in our collection of 'Blue Books'. This collection of folders has printed versions of most of the past temporary displays and is available in the Buttery and Pantry. An ideal place to stop, sit down and enjoy so much of the work our volunteers have done in the last quarter century.

The museum also has permanent displays which are mainly upstairs. They feature farming, hop picking, the tannery, schools, household and builders. There is a display of chemist's items and toys through the ages; see if you can find Una Higgs' beloved teddy bear.

Jane Higgs Guest Curator for EVM 25

Inspired by Jane's piece I went to have a look at the two exhibitions which are indeed fascinating. One of the 25 objects on show is a stoolball bat and ball, the bat of willow with the words "Invincible" and "super" written on the lower blade and the ball small and hard like a cricket ball. The game originated in medieval times in south-east England and it is said that the bat evolved from milkmaids'

stools, brandished lustily in their few free hours between milkings. The game is still played and there are active West Kent leagues in the Eden Valley - Rosa Gower who many of you will remember from her newspaper delivery rounds (all the dogs definitely remember her for the treats she always had in her pocket) is the Kent President and keen to offer advice to new players. Contact details are on the Stoolball England website stoolball.org.uk

Another object is a piece of ephemera which triggered an outbreak of nostalgia in me - a green shield stamp book full of unspent green stamps. The predecessor of the loyalty card, they were introduced in 1958 and took the country by storm enabling shoppers to save stamps, one issued for every 6d spent, and then go to the catalogue and buy their heart's desire. A book held 1,280 stamps and you could in theory buy a motorboat, but 217,600 stamps were needed. I remember contenting myself with a football!

Talking of shopping, the "Change in the Eden Valley" exhibition features the development of the Lidl site over the years. The area was originally quite rural, the first building, Barlow's sweet factory, arriving in the 1930s. It was then developed by the London County Council in the early 60s when it relocated some factories from London to Edenbridge and encouraged workers to move down to the new estate in Stangrove Park; the plan became known locally as " the great migration". Also moving to Edenbridge from Slough was the racing driver John Surtees who arrived in 1969-70. He had won the Formula 1 championship in a Ferrari in 1964 and now wanted to build his own cars and to race them himself; he had mixed success and the operation closed on 1979 but he remained on the Edenbridge scene as a businessman until his death in 2017.



staff at edenbrdge station circa 1925

And finally - a visit to the museum is worthwhile just to see the elegant lamp in the lobby. It came from Bayleaf Farmhouse, a medieval hall house which was dismantled to make way for Bough Beech reservoir - but lives again in the Weald and Downland museum near Chichester. Do go and have a look!

Joanna Wade

not to be poo pooed

You know you are part of the farming community when your friend comes round to pick up samples of cow, pig and horse poo for the local small holders club, "name that poo" competition.....



Please forgive the scatalogical nature of this article which actually began when I was given a box of 8 colourfully wrapped loo rolls in lieu of an Easter egg called "who gives a crap!" The product is 100% recycled, 50% of the profits go to charity and it makes sustainability fun. Then came a leaflet titled "This idea is a load of crap" - the charity Practical Action is fundraising to buy biodigesters for African communities who are rich in very little but cow dung. A small digester can provide lighting and cooking gas for one household for only £75 and the residue makes good fertiliser (practicalaction.org). And yet another use of poo.....cloning. Scientists at Oxford and Chester zoo have started to try to clone animals threatened with extinction by harvesting stem cells from their faeces. That way a shy animal needn't be found in order to be saved. Good luck to them!

Closer to home the Guardian ran a spread on dog poo.... This is a serious problem with 13 million dogs in the UK producing 1,000 tons of poo every day and the well known health risks to people and animals of not picking up after your dog. There is no easy solution: "stick and flick" can have an adverse effect on the local ecosystem and so called compostable poo bags are a menace as they cost a lot of energy to make and don't biodegrade, particularly if hung on branches and abandoned! I'm afraid the recommended least worst is to make "second use" bags out of plastic envelopes etc and hope for the best.



To end on a higher and cleaner note - research has shown that whilst dogs have adapted to live alongside humans, often watching their every move, in order to have an easy life, they do feel love for their poo-picking people. Scientists have found that both humans and dogs experience a surge in oxytocin when they gaze at each other. Making it all worthwhile!

Joanna Wade

VILLAGE SCREEN FILM CLUB 2025/2026

The film season begins in November at the usual venue, Hever Castle Golf Club. Our first film will be:

Friday 21 November
Rye Lane
A critically acclaimed film from 2023 described as "a primary-coloured romance bursting with wit, grit and charm". It is set in Peckham in South London and has been feted as south London's response to "Notting Hill".

Save these dates in 2026 for more films:
Friday 16 January - Widow Cliquot
Champagne! This is the story behind the Veuve Clicquot champagne family and business that began in the late 18th century - featuring the grandaughter of one of our regular audience members.

Friday 13 February - Big Night
A 1996 classic rated 97% by The website "Rotten Tomatoes" stars Stanley Tucci as one of two Italian brothers, a chef and a businessman, who must do whatever it takes to impress a famous American-Italian singer and save their failing restaurant. One to make your mouth water!

Friday 13 March - Paddington in Peru
Mrs Brown has morphed from Sally Hawkins into Emily Mortimer but otherwise the brilliant cast returns (some disguised as bears) supported by Olivia Colman as a Reverend mother leading to high jinx in the jungle.

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 £16.00 to include the meal (the same price as last year) - scampi and chips or baked potato with cheese and/or beans. 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 and please bring cash if possible.



Hever barn dance 2025

fungal mania

Where there are trees there are fungi and where there are dying trees there are even more fungi..... What is the difference between a mushroom and a fungus I hear you ask. All mushrooms are fungi but not all fungi produce mushrooms which are essentially the fruit produced by the fungus to enable it to reproduce by releasing tiny spores. The fungus behind or below the mushroom lives off nutrients from their environment which is why they are so good at, and indeed crucial for, decomposing vegetation. Mushroom-free fungi include yeast, mould and rust and all fungi can be destructive rather than content to live alongside the organisms they feed off. Ash die-back and the tragic disappearance of elms from the landscape in the '60s due to Dutch elm disease are examples of that destructive side (though as I found out when I interviewed Kevin Agate, elms do still thrive in hedgerows, it is only when they get above a certain height that they are blighted).

There have been some real show-stoppers around this year, accretions erupting from trees which I thought of as fungi but are strictly speaking mushrooms as they are the fruit of their underlying fungus. I thought this one on the left, seen round the back of Hever Castle, was a discarded piece of plastic until my clever phone identified what it saw and told me it was a "scarlet elf cup", very suitable for thirsty elves and apparently edible though rather tough and not worth the bother. Bridget spotted what looked like fresh bread rolls on a walk - it is probably a young "chicken of the woods" or the giant polypore. And then there's chocolate mousse and cream aka Artist's Conk fungus, luscious enough to feast the eye on but tough as an old conker.


scarlet elf cup


artist's conk fungus


giant polypore

So in these days when poisonous death cap mushrooms are in the news as a means of murdering your in-laws it is worth remembering that there is much to admire and we hope you enjoy these photos.

Joanna Wade

Hever Parish Council

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

The Four Elms Pond was a hot topic of conversation at the recent Hever Parish Council Meeting. Unfortunately, there have been issues with some visitors to the pond with anti-social behaviour, not following fishing rules or etiquette and lack of consideration for wildlife and local residents. The Councillors have worked hard to find a solution which is to potentially go into partnership with a local Angling Club. This will allow fishing by licence only, with residents of the parish being issued with a free licence. We are very much hoping this will enable all to have a better experience of life in and around the pond. More information will be available once details have been finalised.

We were disappointed to hear that Sevenoaks District Council have cancelled the Saturday Bulk Refuse Freighter service that HPC pays for residents to use and visits the parish four times a year. We know this service is valued (and well used) by residents so are taking steps to see if an alternative provider can be found. SDC are unfortunately unable to staff the service so there will be no more collections unless an alternative can be found.

On the Gatwick front, an update to the changes is expected in October. In the meantime, CAGNE is offering residents sessions on how the proposed changes to airspace will affect households. More information can be found here: https://cagne.org/online-events-to-understand-the-airspace-above-your-home/

We have an Autumn Community Litter Pick in the diary for Saturday 4th October, so please do come along with your gloves at the ready to join your neighbours and Councillors for an hour or two of rubbish clearing work and chat. Four Elms and Hever will be at 9.30 am and Markbeech at 1.00 pm.

New play equipment is needed for the Four Elms play area for the younger audience (pre-school aged children). Input as to what might be preferred has been asked of the local nursery and Four Elms School. If you have any thoughts as to what might be well used by younger children in the park please contact the Clerk.

The date for the next HPC meeting has changed to Tuesday 4th November. For all information relating to your Parish Council, please visit www.hever.org . Agendas for meetings and the associated documents (including financial information) can be found http://hever.org/parish-council/agendas

Rachael Turner
Clerk and RFO
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clerk@hever.org


trooping funnel

As the new school year begins at Four Elms Primary School, we are delighted to welcome our newest members - our Reception children and their families. It has been heart warming to see how quickly they've settled into school life, embracing their new environment with curiosity, laughter, and a love of learning.

Across the school, our children have launched into their new learning experiences with enthusiasm and energy. From exploring ecosystems to uncovering ancient civilizations, the term is already shaping up to be full of discovery and growth. In Class 4, pupils have begun their journey into the fascinating world of the Ancient Maya, delving into the culture, traditions, and innovations of this remarkable civilization. Meanwhile, in Class 3, our Great Outdoors experience is taking learning outside the classroom, with children investigating the water cycle and making a compelling case for why the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty deserves national park status. In another exciting topic, Class 2 is exploring *The Circle of Life*, where children are learning about food chains and the delicate balance of nature. These experiences not only deepen their understanding of the world around them but also encourage critical thinking and environmental awareness.

We are also incredibly proud to announce that Four Elms has achieved Rights Respecting Gold Award re-accreditation. This prestigious recognition highlights the ongoing commitment of our children and wider school community to uphold the values of respect, kindness, and global citizenship. The report praised our school for having *"a strong and well-established well-being curriculum that supports pupils' mental health and emotional literacy through a rights-based lens"* and for providing *"meaningful opportunities for pupils to lead advocacy and campaigning initiatives that promote positive change within the school community."* These affirmations reflect the heart of our ethos at Four Elms.

As we look ahead to the rest of the term, we are excited for the adventures yet to come. With creativity, compassion, and curiosity at the heart of everything we do, Four Elms continues to be a place where children thrive.

Anna Cheddie
Co-Head of School



news from hever primary

September is such a lovely time to be in school! Our Year 6 pupils seem to grow up so much over the summer break and return to school ready to take on their new roles and responsibilities. Our new head boy and head girl have already welcomed our first visitor, the Director of Education for the Diocese, who was very impressed by their confidence and enthusiasm. All the Year 6 children have the opportunity to take on some additional responsibilities, building their confidence and independence and helping to prepare them for the transition into secondary school.

September is also the time when we welcome our new children and families into our school community. We are already seeing the positive impact of a carefully planned transition, with children building new relationships and settling into the routines. Our experienced reception team are ably supported by our Year 6 buddies, who take this role very seriously. Throughout the year, the Year 6 pupils 'look after' their buddies on the playground, they read with them in class and generally do a great job of modelling our school value of Belonging and ensuring that our youngest children are included in the wider school community.

Choosing the right school for your child is an important decision. Here at Hever Primary, we have a committed teaching team who are passionate about education and ensuring the very best for our children. We offer a rich curriculum, including Forest School, with a range of enhancement opportunities, including trips and workshops and a wide range of clubs.

We are proud of our school and our children and would love to meet you and share all that Hever Primary has to offer. If you are looking for a place for September 2026, please contact the school office (01732 862304 or email office@hever.kent.sch.uk) to arrange a tour with our Headteacher, or to join one of our **Open Mornings on Friday 10th October or Wednesday 19th November at 9.15am**. Our current reception class is full but we do have a few spaces further up the school if you are looking for a place for an older child. Please contact the office for more information.



Helene Bligh
Headteacher

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Building & Design Services

Andy Sayers Electrical Services	maintenance and repairs	07836 256 146
Albourne roofing	slating, tiling, flat roofing, repairs	01892 836777
APH Electrical & Property Maintenance		07816 291713
Beauproperty	house design and building	01892 249000
Causeway Joinery	bespoke joinery for the public and trade	01342 850170
Eden Valley Builders	extensions, conversions and general building	07778431470
Clare Elizabeth	painting and decorating	0777 5328781
HJM Plumbing & Heating	general plumbing, heating and maintenance	07908854881
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
Michael Beall	bespoke carpentry and joinery	07796 175140
Richard A Maslen	Fine furniture and bespoke joinery	07930 341415
W Smithers & Sons	listed building, conversions, extensions,	01342 850 559

Dog Training

Claire Cook, Positive Reinforcement Dog Trainer in Edenbridge		07818 070672

Education

Chiddingstone Nursery School for children 2-5 years		01892 871315
Jade Johnson language tuition in German, French & English online or in person		07761 287517

Fitness and Health

BDHL private & group health insurance and corporate wellbeing		01892 891900
Beauty By Molly- Massage, Facials, lash lift & tint, House of Health Hever		07516897225
Flexi Foot Care, Diane Fletcher - home visiting podiatrist/chiropodist		0790 3293533
Hever Castle Golf Club	golf course	01732 700771
Step by Step, Michelle Hogan, mobile foot care practice		07786 038149
Falconhurst Cricket Club	cricket and training sessions	07771 892762
Paul Marro Cognitive Hypnotherapy www.htherapy.co.uk		01732 808211
Realign, osteopathy and personal training www.realign-osteo.co.uk		07841 776591
Smart Nutrition and Fitness personal training for midlife women & beyond		0771 8588847
Tennis by Nature	kids tennis coaching by Gary Markham	07802 842554

Food - Catering and Restaurants

Gorard Dean Catering -	all events undertaken call Melanie Dean	07710 005 635
Greyhound at Hever, Restaurant with rooms,	open to non-residents	01732 862221

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
MCF Garden Maintenance	local, reliable, catering for all garden needs	079307 29059
SA Landscaping	landscaping, garden maintenance, fencing, driveways and more	01732 671146
Thompson Tree Care Ltd,	tree surgery, tree felling, hedge cutting	07747345815

Home Services

Container Storage, low monthly rates - Gaywood Farm, Edenbridge		07973210361
Daren Wood	chimney sweep, pots and cowls fitted	01959 564263
MOLE CATCHER, Peter King		Mob:07432 813614 or 01892 520287
Pegrum	fuels, boilers, plumbing, solar panels, water/oil tanks	01732 463256
Stuff and Buttons, traditional and modern upholstery services		07791 689346
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

Restaurants

Greyhound at Hever restaurant with rooms, open to non-residents	01732 862221

Taxis

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 october

We have two Harvest services this month at Four Elms and Hever. Please bring gifts but see the guidance from the Edenbridge foodbank below. If you would like to choose a hymn or song for Songs of Praise on 5th October, please let Simon know. Please watch out for any late changes with details of services below. Readings and full details are at https://threespires.wordpress.com/diary/

Date & time	Service details	Sunday
5th Oct 10am	All Age Holy Communion and Harvest festival St.Paul's Four Elms	Trinity 16
5th Oct 6pm	Songs of Praise Holy Trinity Markbeech	Trinity 16
12th Oct 8am	Said Morning Prayer St.Peter's Hever	Trinity 17
12th Oct 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	Trinity 17
12th Oct 4pm	Harvest Forest Church at St.Peter's Hever	Trinity 17
19th Oct 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Trinity 18
26th Oct 8am	Said communion St.Peter's Hever	Trinity 19
26th Oct 10am	Family service Holy Trinity Markbeech	Trinity 19

Our Home Group meets at 7.30pm on Tuesdays at various locations and Zoe Joannou's 'life group' is on alternate Wednesdays. The next Men's Discussion group is at 6.30pm at Saxby's Mead on 23rd October on 'Poverty and generosity'. For details of any of these please contact Simon. Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone or any other help.

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simonbraid@icloud.com

Administrator
Ana Roxburgh
beneficeemail@gmail.com

Wardens

Four Elms
Christina Hodson
01732 700247

Hever
Mandy Yarnold
01342 850028

Markbeech
Lynnie Rowan
01342 850776



Examples of Harvest gifts suitable for the Edenbridge Foodbank

Tinned ham, corned beef, meatballs, steak, mince-meat, hotdogs; pasta and rice; pasta sauces (Bolognese etc) and rice sauces (korma jars, stir-fry sachets etc); tinned vegetables and tomatoes; tinned fruits; jams and puddings; pulses; coffee and tea; cereals; long-life milk; tinned pasta with sausages; cooking oil; biscuits and soup

All in date

our rector's thoughts

Recently, Gary Grant, a Christian businessman who set up a successful chain of 160 toy stores, announced that he was handing the business over to a trust to be run by its 2,000 employees. It's an example of extraordinary generosity. Harvest is a time to thank God for all the 'good gifts around us' and also a time to be generous given that there are so many in our world who lack even basic necessities. It's very appropriate that our next Men's discussion group is on poverty and generosity.

But we're all hard pressed: we've had the financial crisis, Covid, the cost of living crisis and now the Chancellor's fiscal 'black hole' means tax rises and benefit cuts are threatened. In any case, how can our small gift make a difference? There's a story that starts on a beach where a storm had caused thousands of star fish to be washed up onto the shore. Unable to get back into the sea, they wouldn't last long. A little boy walked along picking up star fish and throwing them back into the sea. A man approached and said to the boy: 'There's thousands of star fish, you can't possibly make a difference!' The boy bent down and picked up another star fish, threw it into the sea and said: 'I made a difference for that one'. We can all make a difference however small our gift or action.

Jesus spoke a lot about greed, possessions and money. Generosity and giving is good for us: *'it is more blessed to give than to receive'* (Acts 20:35). Jesus also said: *Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you* (Luke 6:38). Money is a good servant but a poor master. Giving helps us to break the power of money on our lives. The Bible encourages us to be radically generous and to give regularly in proportion to our income. Some Christians follow the principle of 'tithing' 10% of their income. So I encourage you to think and pray about what you might be able to do. Then start small and see what God can do – and do include our churches in your giving if you can, whether you're a regular church goer or not. The prophet Malachi declared…. *Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse… Test me in this," says the Lord "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing…"*

Go on, put God to the test!

Simon



news from the pews

Four Elms

Being a churchwarden in a small rural church has its special moments and none more so than being in the church for a summer wedding. The weddings this summer have been quite lovely. Not just because the brides were beautiful but because the occasions were so full of happiness, sunshine and our church was so wonderfully decorated. I especially loved the brides arriving in decorated classic cars. Thank you wedding couples you made a churchwarden very happy. (I felt I was involved in a Jane Austen novel)

And yet another source of happiness for a churchwarden. On a sunny Saturday morning a lady and gentleman arrived and walked to the Quiet Garden (our second graveyard). When they came back they told me they had come from Orpington and always stopped in Four Elms to have their flask of tea in the Quiet Garden "a little oasis" was our visitors' expression. So pleasing to know we are special and enjoyed.

The beginning of October is Harvest Festival time. During the first week in October, Four Elms Primary School have their harvest service in St. Paul's. The annual Harvest Supper is on Saturday 4th October and then the All Age Harvest Holy Communion on Sunday 5th October at 10 am.

Our Enjoy a Cuppa on the second Tuesday of the month has been a little thin on the ground since the summer. Everyone is welcome to have a cuppa and a chat, irrespective of whether you are a regular churchgoer or not. This is a meet your neighbour morning so do please join us. If you haven't reserved your Harvest Supper tickets please do so before arriving at the Village Hall.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever

A fantastic time was had by everyone at the Hever Barn Dance. We raised a significant sum for the church. Thank you to everyone who helped to organise, contributed to and ran the event.

Donations will be collected for the Edenbridge Foodbank from Monday 6th October until Monday 20th October. The Food Bank have asked for non-perishable goods such as pasta sauces, cooking oil, cereals and tinned fruit or vegetables. There will be a collection box in front of the altar for donations.

Our faculty application for the proposed Anne Boleyn memorial in the Bullen Chapel has been approved by the Diocesan Advisory Committee and the Notice of Advice will be issued by the DAC secretary shortly.

The next Parish Lunch will be on Thursday 9th October 12.30 for 1pm lunch. We normally have around 24 people and serve soup, cheese, bread, fruit and a delicious home-made cake. Everyone in the Parish is warmly invited 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

Markbeech

Our 31st August service was lovely – a gathering of the congregation and choir and exchange of holidays enjoyed. A lot of us had relished in the local Edenbridge and Oxted Agricultural Show with its enormous variety of entertainment – the grand parade of farm animals – beautiful horses – and of course, who can forget the Dancing Diggers. Then many of us met again in Chiddingstone for the Streatfeild family play – a joy for so many, including I hope the family – all in aid of the Epilepsy Charity.

Then, schools open again and some rain falls, much to the relief of the farmers and gardeners. Markbeech had a quiet but lovely service on 14th September when Simon kindly reminded us all about the Harvest Festivals. Ours is the first one of the Benefice on 28th September which will be a family service, delicious recipes have been shared, so please either telephone our churchwarden or book in online! The Benefice Website has the details. The Service is at 11am, an hour later than normal, so people can pop across the road, looking right and left, and into the Village Hall for wine, squash and a warm welcome. During the lunch, Gemma and her young actors, will be putting on excerpts from A Midsummer Nights Dream.

On 5th October we have our Songs of Praise at 6pm. This is kindly being accompanied on the organ by Tim Higgs – very grateful. Please choose your favourite hymn and email it to Simon. Our popular Family Service is at the end of October – the 26th.

We have been planning the Winter Fair, held by kind permission of Falconhurst, in their Barn. This is on November 22nd, please put a note in your diaries.

Janey Cooper
PCC Secretary



petals for a purpose

When our daughter signed up for a conservation expedition to Malaysia, one rainy day in February 2024, we smiled proudly. Then we saw the fundraising target! Cue our big fundraising idea: *grow and sell cut flowers*. After all, how hard could it be? As it turns out, it's much harder than it looks. We began in the spring of 2024 with naïve optimism. Seeds were lovingly planted, no-dig beds prepared, and dreams of frothy bouquets danced around in our minds. The first few days were bliss. Tiny green shoots poked through the seed compost. "We're naturals!" we thought. The slugs, apparently, thought so too. They silently decimated dozens of seedlings overnight. We tried crushed eggshells, and midnight torch patrols. Nothing worked. Then came the persistent rain. Weeks and weeks of rain! Our lovingly prepared beds became boggy trenches, and we started to question our strategy. Fast forward to summer 2025 and our peak fundraising period before Heidi's departure. The plants that had survived slugs and root rot were doing superbly. "We're not doing too badly, after all", we decided, cheerfully. Naturally, then came multiple heat waves, which turned our sweet peas into crispy little offerings to Helios.

But eventually, our perseverance began to pay off. The many survivors grew into strong, beautiful blooms tall proud stems defying pests, puddles, temperatures and our initial incompetence. We bundled them into jars for the fetes at Edenbridge, Hever



and Four Elms before those beautiful blooms could change their minds. Selling the flowers has been a delight. People love them—not just because they are beautiful, but because they haven't been flown halfway across the world in a plastic sleeve, no carbon footprint, no chemicals.

So, yes, growing cut flowers isn't easy. It involves plenty of windowsill space, backbreaking physical work, close attention to the weather forecast, and the occasional slug-based meltdown. But it raised both plenty of funds towards Heidi's expedition, and everyone's spirits. Cosmos are probably the easiest cut flower to grow - they thrive in poor soil and with little water, the more you cut them, the more they produce. They are not hardy though, so you need to sow in spring and only plant out after the last frost. Easy hardy annuals that you can sow now and overwinter in the garden include cornflowers, ammi and nigella. Thank you to all our local friends and neighbours who supported our floral adventure. You can follow the highs and lows of our accidentally becoming obsessed with flowers on instagram @the_girls_with_the_flowers.

Melanie Murray

benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
FOUR ELMS													
2023	60	9	105	83	27	27	41.0	23	39	152	122	109	797
2024	58	122	94	61	49	27	64.0	28	165	86	77	78	909
2025	89	61	4	36	13	28	57.0	38					326
HEVER													
2023	80	2	111	93.5	37	33.5	58.5	23.5	59	152	131	110	890.5
2024	73	136	81.5	57.5	48.5	25	73.5	31.5	183	82.5	62	52	906
2025	126	54.5	4	29.5	14	31	71.5	27					357.5
MARKBEECH													
2023	90	4	123	105	31	34	56.0	32	48	161	142	106	932
2024	80	139	95	71	61	29	62.0	44	186	77	79	60	983
2025	114	71	4	25	21	33	52.0	22					342

HALL BOOKINGS

Four Elms – Kevin Haydon 07787 394 806
Hever – Mrs Ryan 01732 864168
Markbeech – Mrs Paige 01342 850328

COUNCILS

Kent County Councillor
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Subscriptions cost £5 pa if delivered by a volunteer and £18 if sent by post. To pay there are 3 options:
a) 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.
b) If you can't send by bank transfer then please send a five pound note with your name and address to 1 Triangle Cottage, Hever Road, Hever TN8 7NL or
c) Send a cheque payable to the Link to the above address for **£5.50** as we now have to pay bank charges of 50p per cheque
A copy of The Link can be viewed in The Link section of the community website www.hever.org

october diary

Eden Valley Museum celebrating 25 years with two exhibitions 'Discover History through 25 Objects' and 'Explore Change in the Eden Valley'
2nd & 4th Wed each month **Bore Place 'Wilder Wellbeing'** nature sessions for adults – free, book online www.boreplace.org/whats-on

28 Sept **Markbeech Harvest Lunch**, MB Village Hall after service, suggested donation £12.50 adults or £30 for a family
4 Oct **Parish litter pick** – Four Elms and Hever 9.30am, Markbeech 1pm
4 Oct **Consultation Meeting at Hever Village Hall re future developments** 3pm
4 Oct **Four Elms Harvest Supper**, FE Village Hall, £12pp cash bar 01732 700247 or harvest2021@btinternet.com 7pm for 7.30pm
5 Oct **Kefir Making Workshop**, Bore Place, tickets £35 10.30 - 1pm
7 Oct **Cream Cheese & Paneer workshop**, Bore Place, tickets £35 10.30 - 1pm
7 Oct **Knit and Natter**, Markbeech Village Hall 2.30 – 4.30
7 Oct **Harvest Moon Night Walk**, Bore Place, adult £12.50 child £7 6.30 – 8.30pm
9 Oct **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall 12.30 for 1pm
10 and 11 Oct **Wild Seasoning Street Food** at Falconhurst 12-3pm
11 Oct **Come and Sing Handel's Messiah** Rose Hill School, Tunbridge Wells details www.penshurstchoralsociety.co.uk 2-6pm
14 Oct **Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms from 10.45am
16 Oct **Owl Walk**, Bore Place, adult £15, child £9 7 – 9pm
17 Oct **Kitchen '94 Supper Club**, Falconhurst 7 – 10pm
18 Oct **Kitchen '94 Supper Club**, Falconhurst 5 - 9pm
22 Oct **Biofluorescent Night Walk**, Bore Place, adult £15, child £8 6.30 – 7.30pm
23 Oct **Family Bat Safari**, Bore Place, adult £12.50, child 4+ £8 6-7.30pm
24 and 25 Oct **Amthuc Viet Supper club**, Falconhurst 12-3pm
28 Oct **Biofluorescent Night Walk**, Bore Place, adult £15, child £8 6.30 – 7.30pm
29 Oct **Stargazing Walk,** Bore Place, adult £12, child £8 6.30 – 8pm
30 Oct **Meet the Animals Children's Activity**, Falconhurst 10-11am & 11.30-12.30pm
30 Oct **Owl Walk**, Bore Place, adult £15, child £9 7 – 9pm
31 Oct & 1 Nov **Art & Home Sale**, Hever Village Hall 10 - 4pm
4 Nov **Knit and Natter**, Markbeech Village Hall 2.30 – 4.30
4 Nov **Hever Parish Council meeting**, Hever VH planning 7pm full council 7.30pm
8 Nov **Fresh Pasta without a machine**, Bore Place, Adults £60 10am – 2pm
11 Nov **Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms from 10.45am
13 Nov **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall 12.30 for 1pm
16 Nov **Cowden Christmas Fair & Bric-a-brac**, Cowden Village Hall 12-3pm
21 Nov **Hever Village Film Club – Rye Lane**, Hever Golf Club 7.30pm
22 Nov **Markbeech Winter Fair**, Falconhurst Barn 11 - 4pm
30 Nov **Wreath making workshop**, Falconhurst 10.30 - 12.30 & 1 - 3.30pm